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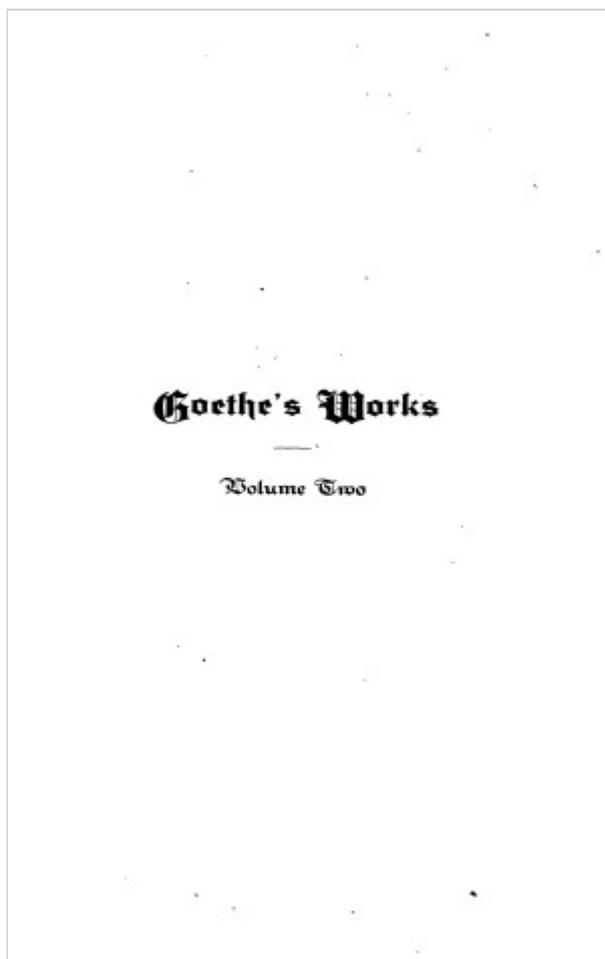
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Author: [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#)

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Volume 2 of a five volume collection of Goethe's works. This edition is sumptuously illustrated. Vol. 2 contains Goethe's plays.

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A Tragedy

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DEDICATION.



DIM forms, ye hover near, a shadowy train,
As erst upon my troubl'd sight ye stole.
Say, shall I strive to hold you once again?
Still for the fond illusion yearns my soul?
Ye press around! Come, then, resume your reign,
As upwards from the vapory mist ye roll;
Within my breast youth's throbbing pulses bound,
Fann'd by the magic air that breathes your march around.
Shades fondly lov'd appear, your train attending,
And visions fair of many a blissful day;
First-love and friendship their fond accents blending,
Like to some ancient, half expiring lay;
Sorrow revives, her wail of anguish sending
Back o'er life's devious labyrinthine way,
The dear ones naming who, in life's fair morn,
By Fate beguiled, from my embrace were torn.
They hearken not unto my later song,
The souls to whom my earlier lays I sang;
Dispers'd for ever is the friendly throng,

Mute are the voices that responsive rang.
My song resoundeth stranger crowds among,
E'en their applause is to my heart a pang;
And those who heard me once with joyful heart,
If yet they live, now wander far apart.
A strange unwonted yearning doth my soul,
To yon calm solemn spirit-land, upraise;
In faltering cadence now my numbers roll,
As when, on harp Æolian, Zephyr plays;
My pulses thrill, tears flow without control,
A tender mood my steadfast heart o'ersways;
What I possess as from afar I see;
Those I have lost become realities to me.

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PROLOGUE FOR THE THEATRE.



Manager. Dramatic Poet. Merryman.

MANAGER.

Ye twain, whom I so oft have found
True friends in trouble and distress,
Say, in our scheme on German ground,
What prospect have we of success?
Fain would I please the public, win their thanks;
Because they live and let live, as is meet.
The posts are now erected and the planks,
And all look forward to a festal treat.
Their places taken, they, with eyebrows rais'd,
Sit patiently, and fain would be amaz'd.
I know the art to hit the public taste,
Yet so perplex'd I ne'er have been before;
'Tis true, they're not accustom'd to the best,
But then they read immensely, that's the bore.
How make our entertainment striking, new,
And yet significant and pleasing too?

For to be plain, I love to see the throng,
As to our booth the living tide progresses;
As wave on wave successive rolls along,
And through heaven's narrow portal forceful presses;
Still in broad daylight, ere the clock strikes four,
With blows their way towards the box they take;
And, as for bread in famine, at the baker's door,
For tickets are content their necks to break.
Such various minds the bard alone can sway,
My friend, oh work this miracle to-day!

POET.

Oh speak not of the motley multitude,
At whose aspect the spirit wings its flight;
Shut out the noisy crowd, whose vortex rude
Still draws us downward with resistless might.
Lead to some nook, where silence loves to brood,
Where only for the bard blooms pure delight,
Where love and friendship, gracious heavenly pair,
Our hearts true bliss create, and tend with fostering care.
What there up-welleth deep within the breast,
What there the timid lip shap'd forth in sound,
A failure now, now haply well express'd
In the wild tumult of the hour is drown'd;
Oft doth the perfect form then first invest
The poet's thought, when years have sped their round;

What dazzles satisfies the present hour,
The genuine lives, of coming years the dower.

MERRYMAN.

This cant about posterity I hate;
About posterity were I to prate,
Who then the living would amuse? For they
Will have diversion, ay, and 'tis their due.
A sprightly fellow's presence at your play,
Methinks, should always go for something too;
Whose genial wit the audience still inspires,
Is not embittered by its changeful mood;
A wider circle he desires,
To move with greater power, the multitude.
To work, then! Prove a master in your art!
Let phantasy with all her choral train,
Sense, reason, feeling, passion, bear their part,
But mark! let folly also mingle in the strain!

MANAGER.

And, chief, let incidents enough arise!
A show they want; they come to feast their eyes.
When stirring scenes before them are display'd,
At which the gaping crowd may wondering gaze,
Your reputation is already made,
The man you are all love to praise.
The masses you alone through masses can subdue,

Each then selects in time what suits his bent.

Bring much, you somewhat bring to not a few,

And from the house goes every one content.

You give a piece, in pieces give it, friend!

Such a ragout, success must needs attend;

'Tis easy to serve up, as easy to invent.

A finish'd whole what boots it to present!

'Twill be in pieces by the public rent.

POET.

How mean such handicraft as this you cannot feel!

How it revolts the genuine artist's mind!

The sorry trash in which these coxcombs deal,

Is here approved on principle, I find.

MANAGER.

Such a reproof disturbs me not a whit!

Who on efficient work is bent,

Must choose the fittest instrument.

Consider! 'tis soft wood you have to split;

Think too for whom you write, I pray!

One comes to while an hour away;

One from the festive board, a sated guest;

Others, more dreaded than the rest,

From journal-reading hurry to the play.

As to a masquerade, with absent minds, they press,

Sheer curiosity their footsteps winging;

Ladies display their persons and their dress,

Actors unpaid their service bringing.

What dreams beguile you on your poet's height?

What puts a full house in a merry mood?

More closely view your patrons of the night!

The half are cold, the other half are rude.

One, the play over, craves a game of cards;

Another a wild night in wanton joy would spend.

Poor fool, the muses' fair regards

Why court for such a paltry end?

I tell you, give them more, still more, 'tis all I ask,

Thus you will ne'er stray widely from the goal;

Your audience seek to mystify, cajole;—

To satisfy them—that's a harder task.

What ails thee? art enraptur'd or distress'd?

POET.

Depart! elsewhere another servant choose!

What! shall the bard his godlike power abuse?

Man's loftiest right, kind nature's high bequest,

For your mean purpose basely sport away?

Whence comes his mastery o'er the human breast,

Whence o'er the elements his sway,

But from the harmony that, gushing from his soul,

Draws back into his heart the wondrous whole?

When round her spindle, with unceasing drone,

Nature still whirls th' unending thread of life;
When Being's jarring crowds, together thrown,
Mingle in harsh inextricable strife;
Who deals their course unvari'd till it falls,
In rhythmic flow to music's measur'd tone?
Each solitary note whose genius calls,
To swell the mighty choir in unison?
Who in the raging storm sees passion lour,
Or flush of earnest thought in evening's glow,
Who, in the springtide, every fairest flower
Along the lov'd one's path would strow?
From green and common leaves whose hand doth twine,
The wreath of glory, won in every field?
Makes sure Olympos, blends the powers divine?—
Man's mighty spirit, in the bard reveal'd!

MERRYMAN.

Come then, employ your lofty inspiration,
And carry on the poet's avocation,
Just as we carry on a love affair.
Two meet by chance, are pleas'd they linger there,
Insensibly are link'd, they scarce know how;
Fortune seems now propitious, adverse now,
Then come alternate rapture and despair;
And 'tis a true romance ere one's aware.
Just such a drama let us now compose.

Plunge boldly into life—its depths disclose!
Each lives it, not to many is it known,
'Twill interest wheresoever seiz'd and shown;
Bright pictures, but obscure their meaning:
A ray of truth through error gleaming,
Thus you the best elixir brew,
To charm mankind, and edify them too.
Then youth's fair blossoms crowd to view your play,
And wait as on an oracle; while they,
The tender souls, who love the melting mood,
Suck from your work their melancholy food;
Now this one, and now that, you deeply stir,
Each sees the working of his heart laid bare;
Their tears, their laughter, you command with ease,
The lofty still they honor, the illusive love,
Your finish'd gentlemen you ne'er can please;
A growing mind alone will grateful prove.

POET.

Then give me back youth's golden prime,
When my own spirit too was growing,
When from my heart th' unbidden rhyme
Gush'd forth, a fount for ever flowing;
Then shadowy mist the world conceal'd,
And every bud sweet promise made,
Of wonders yet to be reveal'd,

As through the vales, with blooms inlaid,
Culling a thousand flowers I stray'd.
Naught had I, yet a rich profusion;
The thirst for truth, joy in each fond illusion.
Give me unquell'd those impulses to prove;—
Rapture so deep, its ecstasy was pain,
The power of hate, the energy of love,
Give me, oh give me back my youth again!

MERRYMAN.

Youth, my good friend, you certainly require
When foes in battle round you press,
When a fair maid, her heart on fire,
Hangs on your neck with fond caress,
When from afar, the victor's crown,
Allures you in the race to run;
Or when in revelry you drown
Your sense, the whirling dance being done.
But the familiar chords among
Boldly to sweep, with graceful cunning,
While to its goal, the verse along
Its winding path is sweetly running;
This task is yours, old gentlemen, to-day;
Nor are you therefore in less reverence held;
Age does not make us childish, as folk say,
It finds us genuine children e'en in eld.

MANAGER.

A truce to words, mere empty sound,
Let deeds at length appear, my friends!
While idle compliments you round,
You might achieve some useful ends.
Why talk of the poetic vein?
Who hesitates will never know it;
If bards ye are, as ye maintain,
Now let your inspiration show it.
To you is known what we require,
Strong drink to sip is our desire;
Come, brew me such without delay!
To-morrow sees undone, what happens not to-day;
Still forward press, nor ever tire!
The possible, with steadfast trust,
Resolve should by the forelock grasp;
Then she will ne'er let go her clasp,
And labors on, because she must.
On German boards, you're well aware,
The taste of each may have full sway;
Therefore in bringing out your play,
Nor scenes nor mechanism spare!
Heaven's lamps employ, the greatest and the least,
Be lavish of the stellar lights,
Water, and fire, and rocky heights,

Spare not at all, nor birds nor beast.

Thus let creation's ample sphere

Forthwith in this our narrow booth appear,

And with considerate speed, through fancy's spell,

Journey from heaven, thence through the world, to hell!

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PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.



The Lord. The Heavenly Hosts. *Afterwards* Mephistopheles.

The three Archangels come forward.

RAPHAEL.

Still quiring as in ancient time
With brother spheres in rival song,
The sun with thunder-march sublime
Moves his predestin'd course along.
Angels are strengthen'd by his sight,
Though fathom him no angel may;
Resplendent are the orbs of light,
As on creation's primal day.

GABRIEL.

And lightly spins earth's gorgeous sphere,
Swifter than thought its rapid flight;
Alternates Eden-brightness clear,
With solemn, dread-inspiring night;
The foaming waves, with murmurs hoarse,
Against the rocks' deep base are hurl'd;

And in the sphere's eternal course
Are rocks and ocean swiftly whirl'd.

MICHAEL.

And rival tempests rush amain
From sea to land, from land to sea,
And raging form a wondrous chain
Of deep mysterious agency;
Full in the thunder's fierce career,
Flaming the swift destructions play;
But, Lord, thy messengers revere
The mild procession of thy day.

THE THREE.

Angels are strengthened by thy sight,
Though fathom thee no angel may;
Thy works still shine with splendor bright,
As on creation's primal day.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Since thou, O Lord, approachest us once more,
And how it fares with us, to ask art fain,
Since thou hast kindly welcom'd me of yore,
Thou seest me also now among thy train.
Excuse me, fine harangues I cannot make,
Though all the circle look on me with scorn;
My pathos soon thy laughter would awake,
Hadst thou the laughing mood not long forsworn.

Of suns and worlds I nothing have to say,
I see alone mankind's self-torturing pains.
The little world-god still the self-same stamp retains,
And is as wondrous now as on the primal day.
Better he might have fared, poor wight,
Hadst thou not given him a gleam of heavenly light;
Reason he names it, and doth so
Use it, than brutes more brutish still to grow.
With deference to your grace, he seems to me
Like any long-legged grasshopper to be,
Which ever flies, and flying springs,
And in the grass its ancient ditty sings.
Would he but always in the grass repose
In every heap of dung he thrusts his nose.

THE LORD.

Hast thou naught else to say? Is blame
In coming here, as ever, thy sole aim?
Does nothing on the earth to thee seem right?

MEPHIS.

No, Lord! I find things there in miserable plight.
Men's wretchedness in sooth I so deplore,
Not even I would plague the sorry creatures more.

THE LORD.

Know'st thou my servant, Faust?

MEPHIS.

The doctor?

THE LORD.

Right.

MEPHIS.

He serves thee in strange fashion, as I think.

Poor fool! Not earthly is his food or drink.

An inward impulse hurries him afar,

Himself half conscious of his frenzied mood;

From heaven claimeth he its brightest star,

And from the earth craves every highest good,

And all that's near, and all that's far,

Fails to allay the tumult in his blood.

THE LORD.

Though now he serves me with imperfect sight,

I will ere long conduct him to the light.

The gard'ner knoweth, when the green appears,

That flowers and fruit will crown the coming years.

MEPHIS.

What wilt thou wager? Him thou yet shalt lose,

If leave to me thou wilt but give,

Gently to lead him as I choose!

THE LORD.

So long as he on earth doth live,

So long 'tis not forbidden thee.

Man still must err, while he doth strive.

MEPHIS.

I thank you; for not willingly

I traffic with the dead, and still aver

That youth's plump blooming cheek I very much prefer.

I'm not at home to corpses; 'tis my way,

Like cats with captive mice to toy and play.

THE LORD.

Enough! 'tis granted thee! Divert

This mortal spirit from his primal source;

Him, canst thou seize, thy power exert

And lead him on thy downward course,

Then stand abash'd, when thou perforce must own,

A good man, in the direful grasp of ill,

His consciousness of right retaineth still.

MEPHIS.

Agreed!—the wager will be quickly won.

For my success no fears I entertain;

And if my end I finally should gain,

Excuse my triumphing with all my soul.

Dust he shall eat, ay, and with relish take,

As did my cousin, the renowned snake.

THE LORD.

Here too thou'rt free to act without control;

I ne'er have cherished hate for such as thee.
Of all the spirits who deny,
The scoffer is least wearisome to me.
Ever too prone is man activity to shirk,
In uncondition'd rest he fain would live;
Hence this companion purposely I give,
Who stirs, excites, and must, as devil, work.
But ye, the genuine sons of heaven, rejoice!
In the full living beauty still rejoice!
May that which works and lives, the ever-growing,
In bonds of love enfold you, mercy-fraught,
And Seeming's changeful forms, around you flowing,
Do ye arrest, in ever-during thought!
[Heaven closes, the Archangels disperse.]

MEPHIS.

(Alone.) The ancient one I like sometimes to see,
And not to break with him am always civil;
'Tis courteous in so great a lord as he,
To speak so kindly even to the devil.



The Tragedy First Part.



Night.

A high vaulted narrow Gothic chamber.

Faust, restless, seated at his desk.

FAUST.

ERE have I, alas! Philosophy,
Medicine, Jurisprudence too,
And to my cost Theology,
With ardent labor, studied through.
And yet I stand, with all my lore,
Poor fool, no wiser than before.
Magister, doctor styled, indeed,
Already these ten years I lead,
Up, down, across, and to and fro,
My pupils by the nose,—and learn,
That we in truth can nothing know!
This in my heart like fire doth burn.
'Tis true, I've more cunning than all your dull tribe,
Magister and doctor, priest, parson, and scribe;
Scruple or doubt comes not to enthrall me,

Neither can devil nor hell now appall me—
Hence also my heart must all pleasure forego!
I may not pretend, aught rightly to know,
I may not pretend, through teaching, to find
A means to improve or convert mankind.
Then I have neither goods nor treasure,
No worldly honor, rank, or pleasure;
No dog in such fashion would longer live!
Therefore myself to magic I give,
In hope, through spirit-voice and might,
Secrets now veiled to bring to light,
That I no more, with aching brow,
Need speak of what I nothing know;
That I the force may recognize
That binds creation's inmost energies;
Her vital powers, her embryo seeds survey,
And fling the trade in empty words away.
O full-orb'd moon, did but thy rays
Their last upon mine anguish gaze!
Beside this desk, at dead of night,



artist: franz simm.

FAUST. FIRST PART.

the spirit appearing to faust.

Art hovering near!

Unveil thyself!

Ha! How my heart is riven now!

Each sense, with eager palpitation,

Is strain'd to catch some new sensation!

I feel my heart surrender'd unto thee!

Thou must! Thou must! Though life should be the fee!

[He seizes the book, and pronounces mysteriously the sign of the spirit. A ruddy flame flashes up; the spirit appears in the flame.]

SPIRIT.

Who calls me?

FAUST.

(Turning aside.) Dreadful shape!

SPIRIT.

With might,

Thou hast compell'd me to appear,

Long hast been sucking at my sphere,

And now—

FAUST.

Woe's me! I cannot bear thy sight.

SPIRIT.

To know me thou didst breathe thy prayer,

My voice to hear, to gaze upon my brow;

Me doth thy strong entreaty bow—
Lo! I am here!—What pitiful despair
Grasps thee, the demigod! Where's now the soul's deep cry?
Where is the breast which in its depths a world conceiv'd
And bore and cherish'd; which, with ecstasy,
To rank itself with us, the spirits, heav'd?
Where art thou, Faust? whose voice I heard resound,
Who towards me press'd with energy profound?
Art thou he? Thou—whom thus my breath can blight,
Whose inmost being with affright
Trembles, a crush'd and writhing worm!

FAUST.

Shall I yield, thing of flame, to thee?
Faust, and thine equal, I am he!

SPIRIT.

In the currents of life, in action's storm,

I float and I wave
With billowy motion!
Birth and the grave,
A limitless ocean,
A constant weaving,
With change still rife,
A restless heaving,
A glowing life—

Thus time's whirring loom unceasing I ply,
And weave the life-garment of deity.

FAUST.

Thou, restless spirit, dost from end to end

O'ersweep the world; how near I feel to thee!

SPIRIT.

Thou'rt like the spirit, thou dost comprehend,

Not me!

[Vanishes.]

FAUST.

(Deeply moved.) Not thee?

Whom then?

I, God's own image!

And not rank with thee!

[A knock.]

O death! I know it—'tis my famulus—

My fairest fortune now escapes!

That all these visionary shapes

A soulless groveller should banish thus!

[Wagner in his dressing-gown and nightcap, a lamp in his hand. Faust turns round reluctantly.]

WAGNER.

Pardon! I heard you here declaim;

A Grecian tragedy you doubtless read?

Improvement in this art is now my aim,

For now-a-days it much avails. Indeed

An actor, oft I've heard it said at least,

May give instruction even to a priest.

FAUST.

Ay, if your priest should be an actor too,

As not improbably may come to pass.

WAGNER.

When in his study pent the whole year through,

Man views the world as through an optic glass,

On a chance holiday, and scarcely then,

How by persuasion can be govern men?

FAUST.

If feeling prompt not, if it doth not flow

Fresh from the spirit's depths, with strong control

Swaying to rapture every listener's soul,

Idle your toil; the chase you may forego!

Brood o'er your task! Together glue,

Cook from another's feast your own ragout,

Still prosecute your paltry game,

And fan your ash-heaps into flame!

Thus children's wonder you'll excite,

And apes', if such your appetite:

But that which issues from the heart alone

Will bend the hearts of others to your own.

WAGNER.

The speaker in delivery will find

Success alone; I still am far behind.

FAUST.

A worthy object still pursue!
Be not a hollow tinkling fool!
Sound understanding, judgment true,
Find utterance without art or rule;
And when with earnestness you speak,
Then is it needful cunning words to seek?
Your fine harangues, so polish'd in their kind,
Wherein the shreds of human thought ye twist,
Are unrefreshing as the empty wind,
Whistling through wither'd leaves and autumn mist!

WAGNER.

O Heavens! art is long and life is short!
Still as I prosecute with earnest zeal
The critic's toil, I'm haunted by this thought,
And vague misgivings o'er my spirit steal.
The very means how hardly are they won
By which we to the fountains rise!
And, haply, ere one half the course is run,
Check'd in his progress, the poor devil lies.

FAUST.

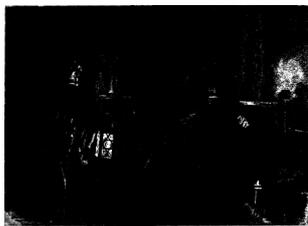
Parchment, is that the sacred fount whence roll
Waters, he thirsteth not who once hath quaffed?
Oh, if it gush not from thine inmost soul,
Thou hast not won the life-restoring draught.

WAGNER.

Your pardon! 'tis delightful to transport
One's self into the spirit of the past,
To see in times before us how a wise man thought,
And what a glorious height we have achiev'd at last.

FAUST.

Ay truly! even to the loftiest star!
To us, my friend, the ages that are pass'd
A book with seven seals, close-fasten'd, are;
And what the spirit of the times men call,
Is merely their own spirit after all,
Wherein, distorted oft, the times are glass'd.



Then truly, 'tis a sight to grieve the soul!
At the first glance we fly it in dismay;
A very lumber-room, a rubbish-hole;
At best a sort of mock-heroic play,
With saws pragmatical, and maxims sage,
To suit the puppets and their mimic stage.

WAGNER.

But then the world and man, his heart and brain!
Touching these things all men would something know.

FAUST.

Ay! what 'mong men as knowledge doth obtain!
Who on the child its true name dares bestow?
The few who somewhat of these things have known,
Who their full hearts unguardedly reveal'd,
Nor thoughts nor feelings from the mob conceal'd,
Have died on crosses, or in flames been thrown.—
Excuse me, friend, far now the night is spent,
For this time we must say adieu.

WAGNER.

Still to watch on I had been well content,
Thus to converse so learnedly with you.
But as to-morrow will be Easter-day,
Some further questions grant, I pray;
With diligence to study still I fondly cling;
Already I know much, but would know everything.

[*Exit.*

FAUST.

(*Alone.*) How he alone is ne'er bereft of hope,
Who clings to tasteless trash with zeal untir'd,
Who doth, with greedy hand, for treasure grope,
And finding earth-worms, is with joy inspir'd!
And dare a voice of merely human birth,
E'en here, where shapes immortal throng'd, intrude?
Yet ah! thou poorest of the sons of earth,

For once, I e'en to thee feel gratitude.
Despair the power of sense did well-nigh blast,
And thou didst save me ere I sank dismay'd;
So giant-like the vision seem'd, so vast,
I felt myself shrink dwarf'd as I survey'd!
I, God's own image, from this toil of clay
Already freed, with eager joy who hail'd
The mirror of eternal truth unveil'd,
Mid light effulgent and celestial day—
I, more than cherub, whose unfetter'd soul
With penetrative glance aspir'd to flow
Through nature's veins, and, still creating, know
The life of gods,—how am I punish'd now!
One thunder-word hath hurl'd me from the goal!
Spirit! I dare not lift me to thy sphere.
What though my power compell'd thee to appear,
My art was powerless to detain thee here.
In that great moment, rapture-fraught,
I felt myself so small, so great;
Fiercely didst thrust me from the realm of thought
Back on humanity's uncertain fate!
Who'll teach me now? What ought I to forego?
Ought I that impulse to obey?
Alas! our every deed, as well as every woe,
Impedes the tenor of life's onward way!

E'en to the noblest by the soul conceiv'd,
Some feelings cling of baser quality;
And when the goods of this world are achiev'd,
Each nobler aim is term'd a cheat, a lie.
Our aspirations, our soul's genuine life,
Grow torpid in the din of earthly strife.
Though youthful phantasy, while hope inspires,
Stretch o'er the infinite her wing sublime,
A narrow compass limits her desires,
When wreck'd our fortunes in the gulf of time.
In the deep heart of man care builds her nest.
O'er secret woes she broodeth there,
Sleepless she rocks herself and scareth joy and rest;
Still is she wont some new disguise to wear;
She may as house and court, as wife and child appear,
As dagger, poison, fire and flood;
Imagin'd evils chill thy blood,
And what thou ne'er shall lose, o'er that dost shed the tear.
I am not like the gods! Feel it I must;
I'm like the earth-worm, writhing in the dust,
Which, as on dust it feeds, its native fare,
Crush'd 'neath the passer's tread, lies buried there.
Is it not dust, wherewith this lofty wall,
With hundred shelves, confines me round,
Rubbish, in thousand shapes, may I not call

What in this moth-world doth my being bound?
Here, what doth fail me, shall I find?
Read in a thousand tomes that, everywhere,
Self-torture is the lot of human-kind,
With but one mortal happy, here and there?
Thou hollow skull, that grin, what should it say,
But that thy brain, like mine, of old perplex'd,
Still yearning for the truth, hath sought the light of day,
And in the twilight wander'd, sorely vex'd?
Ye instruments, forsooth, ye mock at me,—
With wheel, and cog, and ring, and cylinder;
To nature's portals ye should be the key;
Cunning your wards, and yet the bolts ye fail to stir.
Inscrutable in broadest light,
To be unveil'd by force she doth refuse,
What she reveals not to thy mental sight,
Thou wilt not wrest from her with levers and with screws.
Old useless furnitures, yet stand ye here,
Because my sire ye serv'd, now dead and gone.
Old scroll, the smoke of years dost wear,
So long as o'er this desk the sorry lamp hath shone.
Better my little means have squander'd quite away,
Than burden'd by that little here to sweat and groan!
Wouldst thou possess thy heritage, essay,
By use to render it thine own!

What we employ not, but impedes our way,
That which the hour creates, that can it use alone!
But wherefore to yon spot is riveted my gaze?
Is yonder flasket there a magnet to my sight?
Whence this mild radiance that around me plays,
As when, 'mid forest gloom, reigneth the moon's soft light?
Hail, precious phial! Thee, with reverent awe,
Down from thine old receptacle I draw!
Science in thee I hail and human art.
Essence of deadliest powers, refin'd and sure,
Of soothing anodynes abstraction pure,
Now in thy master's need thy grace impart!
I gaze on thee, my pain is lull'd to rest;
I grasp thee, calm'd the tumult in my breast;
The flood-tide of my spirit ebbs away;
Onward I'm summon'd o'er a boundless main,
Calm at my feet expands the glassy plain,
To shores unknown allures a brighter day.
Lo, where a car of fire, on airy pinion,
Comes floating towards me! I'm prepar'd to fly
By a new track through ether's wide dominion,
To distant spheres of pure activity.
This life intense, this godlike ecstasy—
Worm that thou art such rapture canst thou earn?
Only resolve with courage stern and high,

Thy visage from the radiant sun to turn;
Dare with determin'd will to burst the portals
Past which in terror others fain would steal!
Now is the time, through deeds, to show that mortals
The calm sublimity of gods can feel;
To shudder not at yonder dark abyss,
Where phantasy creates her own self-torturing brood,
Right onward to the yawning gulf to press,
Around whose narrow jaws rolleth hell's fiery flood;
With glad resolve to take the fatal leap,
Though danger threaten thee, to sink in endless sleep!
Pure crystal goblet, forth I draw thee now,
From out thine antiquated case, where thou
Forgotten hast reposed for many a year!
Oft at my father's revels thou didst shine,
To glad the earnest guests was thine,
As each to other pass'd the generous cheer.
The gorgeous brede of figures, quaintly wrought,
Which he who quaff'd must first in rhyme expound,
Then drain the goblet at one draught profound,
Hath nights of boyhood to fond memory brought.
I to my neighbor shall not reach thee now,
Nor on thy rich device shall I my cunning show.
Here is a juice, makes drunk without delay;
Its dark brown flood thy crystal round doth fill;

Let this last draught, the product of my skill,
My own free choice, be quaff'd with resolute will,
A solemn festive greeting, to the coming day!

[He places the goblet to his mouth.]

[The ringing of bells, and choral voices.]



CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ is arisen!
Mortal, all hail to thee,
Thou whom mortality,
Earth's sad reality,
Held as in prison.

FAUST.

What hum melodious, what clear silvery chime,
Thus draws the goblet from my lips away?
Ye deep-ton'd bells, do ye with voice sublime,
Announce the solemn dawn of Easter-day?
Sweet choir! are ye the hymn of comfort singing,
Which once around the darkness of the grave,
From seraph-voices, in glad triumph ringing,
Of a new covenant assurance gave?

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

We, his true-hearted,
With spices and myrrh,
Embalm'd the departed,
And swath'd Him with care;
Here we convey'd Him,
Our Master, so dear;
Alas! Where we laid Him,
The Christ is not here.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ is arisen!
Perfect through earthly rath,
Radiant with love and truth,
He to eternal youth
Soars from earth's prison.

FAUST.

Wherefore, ye tones celestial, sweet and strong,
Come ye a dweller in the dust to seek?
Ring out your chimes believing crowds among,
The message well I hear, my faith alone is weak;
From faith her darling, miracle, hath sprung.
Aloft to yonder spheres I dare not soar,
Whence sound the tidings of great joy;
And yet, with this sweet strain familiar when a boy,
Back it recalleth me to life once more.
Then would celestial love, with holy kiss,
Come o'er me in the Sabbath's stilly hour,
While, fraught with solemn meaning and mysterious power,
Chim'd the deep-sounding bell, and prayer was bliss;
A yearning impulse, undefin'd yet dear,

Drove me to wander on through wood and field;
With heaving breast and many a burning tear,
I felt with holy joy a world reveal'd.
Gay sports and festive hours proclaim'd with joyous pealing,
This Easter hymn in days of old;
And fond remembrance now doth me, with childlike feeling,
Back from the last, the solemn step, withhold.
O still sound on, thou sweet celestial strain!
The tear-drop flows—Earth, I am thine again!

CHORUS OF DISCIPLES.

He whom we mourn'd as dead,
Living and glorious,
From the dark grave hath fled,
O'er death victorious;
Almost creative bliss
Waits on his growing powers;
Ah! Him on earth we miss;
Sorrow and grief are ours.
Yearning He left his own,
Mid sore annoy;
Ah! we must needs bemoan,
Master, thy joy!

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ is arisen,
Redeem'd from decay.
The bonds which imprison
Your souls, rend away!
Praising the Lord with zeal,
By deeds that love reveal,
Like brethren true and leal
Sharing the daily meal,
To all that sorrow feel
Whisp'ring of heaven's weal,
Still is the Master near,
Still is He here!



Before the Gate.

Promenaders of all sorts pass out.

ARTISANS.

Why choose ye that direction, pray?

OTHERS.

To the hunting-lodge we're on our way.

THE FIRST.

We towards the mill are strolling on.

A MECHANIC.

A walk to Wasserhof were best.

A SECOND.

The road is not a pleasant one.

THE OTHERS.

What will you do?

A THIRD.

I'll join the rest.

A FOURTH.

Let's up to Burghof, there you'll find good cheer,

The prettiest maidens and the best of beer,

And brawls of a prime sort.

A FIFTH.

You scapegrace! How!

Your skin still itching for a row?

Thither I will not go, I loathe the place.

SERVANT GIRL.

No, no! I to the town my steps retrace.

ANOTHER.

Near yonder poplars he is sure to be.

THE FIRST.

And if he is, what matters it to me!

With you he'll walk, he'll dance with none but you,

And with your pleasures what have I to do?

THE SECOND.

To-day he will not be alone, he said

His friend would be with him, the curly-head.

STUDENT.

Why how those buxom girls step on!

Come, brother, we will follow them anon.

Strong beer, a damsel smartly dress'd,

Stinging tobacco,—these I love the best.

BURGHER'S DAUGHTER.

Look at those handsome fellows there!

'Tis really shameful, I declare,

The very best society they shun,

After those servant-girls forsooth, to run.

SECOND STUDENT.

(To the first) Not quite so fast! for in our rear,

Two girls, well-dress'd, are drawing near;

Not far from us the one doth dwell,

And sooth to say, I like her well.

They walk demurely, yet you'll see,

That they will let us join them presently.

THE FIRST.

Not I! restraints of all kinds I detest.

Quick! let us catch the wild-game ere it flies,

The hand on Saturday the mop that plies

Will on the Sunday fondle you the best.

BURGHHER.

No, this new Burgomaster, I like him not; each hour

He grows more arrogant, now that he's rais'd to power;

And for the town, what doth he do for it?

Are not things worse from day to day?

To more restraints we must submit;

And taxes more than ever pay.

BEGGAR.

(Sings.) Kind gentlemen and ladies fair,

So rosy-cheek'd and trimly dress'd,

Be pleas'd to listen to my prayer,

Relieve and pity the distress'd.

Let me not vainly sing my lay!

His heart's most glad whose hand is free.
Now when all men keep holiday,
Should be a harvest-day to me.

ANOTHER BURGHER.

I know naught better on a holiday,
Than chatting about war and war's alarms;
When folk in Turkey are all up in arms,
Fighting their deadly battles far away,
We at the window stand, our glasses drain,
And watch adown the stream the painted vessels glide,
Then, blessing peace and peaceful times, again
Homeward we turn our steps at eventide.

THIRD BURGHER.

Ay, neighbor! So let matters stand for me!
There they may scatter one another's brains,
And wild confusion round them see—
So here at home in quiet all remains!

OLD WOMAN.

(*To the* Burghers' Daughters.) Heyday! How smart! The fresh young blood!
Who would not fall in love with you?
Not quite so proud! 'Tis well and good!
And what you wish, that I could help you to.

BURGHER'S DAUGHTER.

Come, Agatha! I care not to be seen
Walking in public with these witches. True,
My future lover, last St. Andrew's E'en,

In flesh and blood she brought before my view.

ANOTHER.

And mine she show'd me also in the glass,

A soldier's figure, with companions bold:

I look around, I seek him as I pass,

In vain, his form I nowhere can behold.

SOLDIERS.

Fortress with turrets
Rising in air,
Damsel disdainful,
Haughty and fair,
These be my prey!
Bold is the venture,
Costly the pay!
Hark how the trumpet
Thither doth call us,
Where either pleasure
Or death may befall us.
Hail to the tumult!
Life's in the field!
Damsel and fortress
To us must yield.
Bold is the venture,
Costly the pay!
Gayly the soldier
Marches away.

Faust and Wagner.

FAUST.

Loos'd from their fetters are streams and rills

Through the gracious spring-tide's all-quickening glow;

Hope's budding joy in the vale doth blow;

Old Winter back to the savage hills

Withdraweth his force, decrepit now.

Thence only impotent icy grains
Scatters he as he wings his flight,
Striping with sleet the verdant plains;
But the sun endureth no trace of white;
Everywhere growth and movement are rife,
All things investing with hues of life:
Though flowers are lacking, varied of dye,
Their colors the motley throng supply.
Turn thee around, and from this height,
Back to the town direct thy sight.
Forth from the hollow, gloomy gate,
Stream forth the masses, in bright array.
Gladly seek they the sun to-day;
The Resurrection they celebrate:
For they themselves have risen, with joy,
From tenement sordid, from cheerless room,
From bonds of toil, from care and annoy,
From gable and roof's o'erhanging gloom,
From crowded alley and narrow street,
And from the churches' awe-breathing night,
All now have issued into the light.
But look! how spreadeth on nimble feet
Through garden and field the joyous throng,
How o'er the river's ample sheet,
Many a gay wherry glides along!

And see, deep sinking in the tide,
Pushes the last boat now away.
E'en from yon far hill's path-worn side,
Flash the bright hues of garments gay.
Hark! Sounds of village mirth arise;
This is the people's paradise.
Both great and small send up a cheer;
Here am I man, I feel it here.

WAGNER.

Sir Doctor, in a walk with you
There's honor and instruction too;
Yet here alone I care not to resort,
Because I coarseness hate of every sort.
This fiddling, shouting, skittling, I detest;
I hate the tumult of the vulgar throng;
They roar as by the evil one possess'd,
And call it pleasure, call it song.



artist: franz simm.

FAUST. FIRST PART.

under the linden tree

PEASANTS.

(Under the linden tree.)

Dance and song.

The shepherd for the dance was dress'd,
With ribbon, wreath and colored vest,
A gallant show displaying.
And round about the linden tree,
They footed it right merrily.
Juchhe! Juchhe!
Juchheisa! Heisa! He!
So fiddle-bow was braying.
Our swain amidst the circle press'd,
He push'd a maiden trimly dress'd,
And jogg'd her with his elbow;
The buxom damsel turn'd her head,
"Now that's a stupid trick!" she said,
Juchhe! Juchhe!
Juchheisa! Heisa! He!
Don't be so rude, good fellow!
Swift in the circle they advance,
They dance to right, to left they dance,
The skirts abroad are swinging.
And they grow red, and they grow warm,
Elbow on hip, they arm in arm,
Juchhe! Juchhe!
Juchheisa! Heisa! He!
Rest, talking now or singing.
Don't make so free! How many a maid
Has been betroth'd and then betray'd;
And has repented after!
Yet still he flatter'd her aside,
And from the linden, far and wide,
Juchhe! Juchhe!
Juchheisa! Heisa! He!
Sound fiddle-bow and laughter.

OLD PEASANT.

Doctor, 'tis really kind of you,
To condescend to come this way,
A highly learned man like you,
To join our mirthful throng to-day.

Our fairest cup I offer you,
Which we with sparkling drink have crown'd,
And pledging you, I pray aloud,
That every drop within its round,
While it your present thirst allays,
May swell the number of your days.

FAUST.

I take the cup you kindly reach,
Thanks and prosperity to each!
[The crowd gather round in a circle.]

OLD PEASANT.

Ay, truly! 'tis well done, that you
Our festive meeting thus attend;
You, who in evil days of yore,
So often show'd yourself our friend!
Full many a one stands living here,
Who from the fever's deadly blast,
Your father rescued, when his skill
The fatal sickness stay'd at last.
A young man then, each house you sought,
Where reign'd the mortal pestilence.
Corpse after corpse was carried forth,
But still unscath'd you issued thence.
Sore then your trials and severe;
The Helper yonder aids the helper here.

ALL.

Heaven bless the trusty friend, and long

To help the poor his life prolong!

FAUST.

To Him above in homage bend,

Who prompts the helper and Who help doth send.

[He proceeds with Wagner.

WAGNER.

With what emotions must your heart o'erflow,

Receiving thus the reverence of the crowd!

Great man! How happy, who like you doth know

Such use for gifts by heaven bestow'd!

You to the son the father shows;

They press around, inquire, advance,

Hush'd is the fiddle, check'd the dance.

Still where you pass they stand in rows,

And each aloft his bonnet throws,

They fall upon their knees, almost

As when there passeth by the Host.

FAUST.

A few steps further, up to yonder stone!

Here rest we from our walk. In times long past,

Absorb'd in thought, here oft I sat alone,

And disciplin'd myself with prayer and fast.

Then rich in hope, with faith sincere,

With sighs, and hands in anguish press'd,
The end of that sore plague, with many a tear,
From heaven's dread Lord, I sought to wrest.
These praises have to me a scornful tone.
Oh, could'st thou in my inner being read,
How little either sire or son,
Of such renown deserve the meed!
My sire, of good repute, and sombre mood,
O'er nature's powers and every mystic zone,
With honest zeal, but methods of his own,
With toil fantastic loved to brood;
His time in dark alchemic cell,
With brother adepts he would spend,
And there antagonists compel,
Through numberless receipts to blend.
A ruddy lion there, a suitor bold,
In tepid bath was with the lily wed.
Thence both, while open flames around them roll'd,



Were tortur'd to another bridal bed.
Was then the youthful queen descri'd
With many a hue, to crown the task;—
This was our medicine; the patients died,

“Who were restor’d?” none car’d to ask.
With our infernal mixture thus, ere long,
These hills and peaceful vales among,
We rag’d more fiercely than the pest;
Myself the deadly poison did to thousands give;
They pined away, I yet must live,
To hear the reckless murderers blest.

WAGNER.

Why let this thought your soul o’ercast?
Can man do more than with nice skill,
With firm and conscientious will,
Practise the art transmitted from the past?
If duly you revere your sire in youth,
His lore you gladly will receive;
In manhood, if you spread the bounds of truth,
Then may your son a higher goal achieve.

FAUST.

O blest, whom still the hope inspires,
To lift himself from error’s turbid flood!
What a man knows not, he to use requires,
And what he knows, he cannot use for good.
But let not moody thoughts their shadow throw
O’er the calm beauty of this hour serene!
In the rich sunset see how brightly glow
Yon cottage homes, girt round with verdant green!

Slow sinks the orb, the day is now no more;
Yonder he hastens to diffuse new life.
Oh for a pinion from the earth to soar,
And after, ever after him to strive!
Then should I see the world below,
Bath'd in the deathless evening beams,
The vales reposing, every height a-glow,
The silver brooklets meeting golden streams.
The savage mountain, with its cavern'd side,
Bars not my godlike progress. Lo, the ocean,
Its warm bays heaving with a tranquil motion,
To my rapt vision opes its ample tide!
But now at length the god appears to sink!
A new-born impulse wings my flight,
Onward I press, his quenchless light to drink,
The day before me, and behind the night,
The pathless waves beneath, and over me the skies.
Fair dream, it vanish'd with the parting day!
Alas! that when on spirit-wing we rise,
No wing material lifts our mortal clay.
But 'tis our inborn impulse, deep and strong,
Upwards and onwards still to urge our flight,
When far above us pours its thrilling song
The sky-lark, lost in azure light,
When on extended wing amain

O'er pine-crown'd height the eagle soars,
And over moor and lake, the crane
Still striveth towards its native shores.

WAGNER.

To strange conceits oft I myself must own,
But impulse such as this I ne'er have known:
Nor woods, nor fields, can long our thoughts engage,
Their wings I envy not the feather'd kind;
Far otherwise the pleasures of the mind,
Bear us from book to book, from page to page!
Then winter nights grow cheerful; keen delight
Warms every limb; and ah! when we unroll
Some old and precious parchment, at the sight
All heaven itself descends upon the soul.

FAUST.

Your heart by one sole impulse is possess'd;
Unconscious of the other still remain!
Two souls, alas! are lodg'd within my breast,
Which struggle there for undivided reign:
One to the world, with obstinate desire,
And closely-cleaving organs, still adheres;
Above the mist, the other doth aspire,
With sacred vehemence, to purer spheres.
Oh, are there spirits in the air,
Who float 'twixt heaven and earth dominion wielding.

Stoop hither from your golden atmosphere,
Lead me to scenes, new life and fuller yielding!
A magic mantle did I but possess,
Abroad to waft me as on viewless wings,
I'd prize it far beyond the costliest dress,
Nor would I change it for the robe of kings.

WAGNER.

Call not the spirits who on mischief wait!
Their troop familiar, streaming through the air,
From every quarter threaten man's estate,
And danger in a thousand forms prepare!
They drive impetuous from the frozen north,
With fangs sharp-piercing, and keen arrowy tongues;
From the ungenial east they issue forth,
And prey, with parching breath, upon your lungs;
If, wafted on the desert's flaming wing,
They from the south heap fire upon the brain,
Refreshment from the west at first they bring,
Anon to drown thysself and field and plain.
In wait for mischief, they are prompt to hear;
With guileful purpose our behests obey;
Like ministers of grace they oft appear,
And lisp like angels, to betray.
But let us hence! Gray eve doth all things blend,
The air grows chill, the mists descend!

'Tis in the evening first our home we prize—

Why stand you thus, and gaze with wondering eyes?

What in the gloom thus moves you?

FAUST.

Yon black hound

Seest thou, through corn and stubble scampering round?

WAGNER.

I've mark'd him long, naught strange in him I see!

FAUST.

Note him! What takest thou the brute to be?

WAGNER.

But for a poodle, whom his instinct serves

His master's track to find once more.

FAUST.

Dost mark how round us, with wide spiral curves,

He wheels, each circle closer than before?

And, if I err not, he appears to me

A fiery whirlpool in his track to leave.

WAGNER.

Naught but a poodle black of hue I see;

'Tis some illusion doth your sight deceive.

FAUST.

Methinks a magic coil our feet around,

He for a future snare doth lightly spread.

WAGNER.

Around us as in doubt I see him shyly bound,
Since he two strangers seeth in his master's stead.

FAUST.

The circle narrows, he's already near.

WAGNER.

A dog dost see, no spectre have we here;



He growls, doubts, lays him on his belly too,
And wags his tail—as dogs are wont to do.

FAUST.

Come hither, Sirrah! join our company!

WAGNER.

A very poodle, he appears to be!
Thou standest still, for thee he'll wait;
Thou speak'st to him, he fawns upon thee straight;
Aught you may lose, again he'll bring,
And for your stick will into water spring.

FAUST.

Thou'rt right indeed; no traces now I see
Whatever of a spirit's agency.
'Tis training—nothing more.

WAGNER.

A dog well taught

E'en by the wisest of us may be sought.

Ay, to your favor he's entitled too,

Apt scholar of the students, 'tis his due!

[They enter the gate of the town.]

Study.

FAUST.

(Entering with the poodle.)

Behind me now lie field and plain,

As night her veil doth o'er them draw,

Our better soul resumes her reign

With feelings of foreboding awe.

Lull'd is each stormy deed to rest,

And tranquilliz'd each wild desire;

Pure charity doth warm the breast,

And love to God the soul inspire.

Peace, poodle, peace! Scamper not thus; obey me!

Why at the threshold snuffest thou so?

Behind the stove now quietly lay thee,

My softest cushion to thee I'll throw.

As thou, without, didst please and amuse me,

Running and frisking about on the hill,

Neither shelter will I refuse thee;

A welcome guest, if thou'lt be still.

Ah! when within our narrow room
The friendly lamp again doth glow,
An inward light dispels the gloom
In hearts that strive themselves to know.
Reason begins again to speak,
Again the bloom of hope returns,
The streams of life we fain would seek,
Ah, for life's source our spirit yearns.

Cease, poodle, cease! with the tone that arises,
Hallow'd and peaceful, my soul within,
Accords not thy growl, thy bestial din.
We find it not strange, that man despises
What he conceives not;
The good and the fair he misprizes;
What lies beyond him he doth contemn;
Snarleth the poodle at it, like men?
But ah! E'en now I feel, howe'er I yearn for rest,
Contentment welleteth up no longer in my breast.
Yet wherefore must the stream, alas, so soon be dry,
That we once more athirst should lie?
This sad experience oft I've approv'd!
The want admitteth of compensation;
We learn to prize what from sense is remov'd,
Our spirits yearn for revelation,
Which nowhere burneth with beauty blent,
More pure than in the New Testament.
To the ancient text an impulse strong
Moves me the volume to explore,

And to translate its sacred lore,
Into the tones beloved of the German tongue.
[He opens a volume and applies himself to it.
'Tis writ, "In the beginning was the Word!"
I pause, perplex'd! Who now will help afford?
I cannot the mere Word so highly prize;
I must translate it otherwise,
If by the spirit guided as I read.
"In the beginning was the Sense!" Take heed,
The import of this primal sentence weigh,
Lest thy too hasty pen be led astray!
Is force creative then of Sense the dower?
"In the beginning was the Power!"
Thus should it stand: yet, while the line I trace,
A something warns me, once more to efface.
The spirit aids! from anxious scruples freed,
I write, "In the beginning was the Deed!"
Am I with thee my room to share,
Poodle, thy barking now forbear,
Forbear thy howling!
Comrade so noisy, ever growling,
I cannot suffer here to dwell.
One or the other, mark me well,
Forthwith must leave the cell.
I'm loath the guest-right to withhold;

The door's ajar, the passage clear;
But what must now mine eyes behold!
Are nature's laws suspended here?
Real is it, or a phantom show?
In length and breadth how doth my poodle grow!
He lifts himself with threat'ning mien,
In likeness of a dog no longer seen!
What spectre have I harbor'd thus!
Huge as a hippopotamus,
With fiery eye, terrific tooth!
Ah! now I know thee, sure enough!
For such a base, half-hellish brood,
The key of Solomon is good.

SPIRITS.

(Without.)

Captur'd there within is one!
Stay without and follow none!
Like a fox in iron snare,
Hell's old lynx is quaking there,
But take heed!
Hover round, above, below,
To and fro,
Then from durance is he freed!
Can ye aid him, spirits all,
Leave him not in mortal thrall!
Many a time and oft hath he
Served us, when at liberty.

FAUST.

The monster to confront, at first,
The spell of Four must be rehears'd;

Salamander shall kindle,
Writhe nymph of the wave,
In air sylph shall dwindle,
And Kobold shall slave.

Who doth ignore
The primal Four,
Nor knows aright
Their use and might,
O'er spirits will he
Ne'er master be!



Vanish in the fiery glow,
Salamander!
Rushing together flow,
Undine!
Shimmer in the meteor's gleam,
Sylphide!
Hither bring thine homely aid,
Incubus! Incubus!
Step forth! I do adjure thee thus!

None of the Four
Lurks in the beast:
He grins at me, untroubled as before;
I have not hurt him in the least.
A spell of fear
Thou now shalt hear.

Art thou, comrade fell,
Fugitive from Hell?

See then this sign,
Before which incline
The murky troops of Hell!

With bristling hair now doth the creature swell.

Canst thou, reprobate,
Read the uncreate,
Unspeakable, diffused
Throughout the heavenly sphere,
Shamefully abused,
Transpierc'd with nail and spear!

Behind the stove, tam'd by my spells,

Like an elephant he swells;

Wholly now he fills the room,

He into mist will melt away.

Ascend not to the ceiling! Come,

Thyself at the master's feet now lay!

Thou seest that mine is no idle threat.

With holy fire I will scorch thee yet!

Wait not the might

That lies in the triple-glowing light!

Wait not the might

Of all my arts in fullest measure!

MEPHIS.

(As the mist sinks, comes forward from behind the stove, in the dress of a travelling scholar.)

Why all this uproar? What's the master's pleasure?

FAUST.

This then the kernel of the brute!

A travelling scholar? Why I needs must smile.

MEPHIS.

Your learned reverence humbly I salute!

You've made me swelter in a pretty style.

FAUST.

Thy name?

MEPHIS.

The question trifling seems from one,

Who it appears the Word doth rate so low;

Who, undeluded by mere outward show,

To Being's depths would penetrate alone.

FAUST.

With gentlemen like you indeed

The inward essence from the name we read,

As all too plainly it doth appear,

When Beelzebub, Destroyer, Liar, meets the ear.

Who then art thou!

MEPHIS.

Part of that power which still

Produceth good, whilst ever scheming ill.

FAUST.

What hidden mystery in this riddle lies?

MEPHIS.

The spirit I, which evermore denies!

And justly; for whate'er to light is brought

Deserves again to be reduc'd to naught;
Then better 'twere that naught should be.
Thus all the elements which ye
Destruction, Sin, or briefly, Evil, name,
As my peculiar element I claim.

FAUST.

Thou nam'st thyself a part, and yet a whole I see.

MEPHIS.

The modest truth I speak to thee.
Though folly's microcosm, man, it seems,
Himself to be a perfect whole esteems,
Part of the part am I, which at the first was all.
A part of darkness, which gave birth to light.
Proud light, who now his mother would enthrall,
Contesting space and ancient rank with night.
Yet he succeedeth not, for struggle as he will,
To forms material he adhereth still;
From them he streameth, them he maketh fair,
And still the progress of his beams they check;
And so, I trust, when comes the final wreck,
Light will, ere long, the doom of matter share.

FAUST.

Thy worthy avocation now I guess!
Wholesale annihilation won't prevail,
So thou'rt beginning on a smaller scale.

MEPHIS.

And, to say truth, as yet with small success.
Oppos'd to nothingness, the world,
This clumsy mass, subsisteth still;
Not yet is it to ruin hurl'd,
Despite the efforts of my will.
Tempests and earthquakes, fire and flood, I've tried;
Yet land and ocean still unchang'd abide!
And then of humankind and beasts, the accursed brood,—
Neither o'er them can I extend my sway.
What countless myriads have I swept away!
Yet ever circulates the fresh young blood.



artist: franz bimm.

FAUST. FIRST PART.

the vision of faust

It is enough to drive me to despair!
As in the earth, in water, and in air,
In moisture and in drought, in heat and cold,
Thousands of germs their energies unfold!
If fire I had not for myself retain'd,
No sphere whatever had for me remain'd.

FAUST.

So thou with thy cold devil's fist,
Still clench'd in malice impotent,
Dost the creative power resist,
The active, the beneficent!
Henceforth some other task essay,
Of Chaos thou the wondrous son!

MEPHIS.

We will consider what you say,
And talk about it more anon!
For this time have I leave to go?

FAUST.

Why thou shouldst ask, I cannot see.
Since one another now we know,
At thy good pleasure, visit me.
Here is the window, here the door,
The chimney, too, may serve thy need.

MEPHIS.

I must confess, my stepping o'er
Thy threshold a slight hindrance doth impede;
The wizard-foot doth me retain.

FAUST.

The pentagram thy peace doth mar?
To me, thou son of hell, explain,
How camest thou in, if this thine exit bar!

Could such a spirit aught ensnare?

MEPHIS.

Observe it well, it is not drawn with care,
One of the angles, that which points without,
Is, as thou seest, not quite closed.

FAUST.

Chance hath the matter happily dispos'd!
So thou my captive art? No doubt!
By accident thou thus art caught!

MEPHIS.

In sprang the dog, indeed, observing naught;
Things now assume another shape,
The devil's in the house and can't escape.

FAUST.

Why through the window not withdraw?

MEPHIS.

For ghosts and for the devil 'tis a law,
Where they stole in, there they must forth. We're free
The first to choose; as to the second, slaves are we.

FAUST.

E'en hell hath its peculiar laws, I see!
I'm glad of that! a pact may then be made,
The which, you gentlemen, will surely keep?

MEPHIS.

Whate'er therein is promis'd thou shalt reap,

No tittle shall remain unpaid.

But such arrangements time require;

We'll speak of them when next we meet;

Most earnestly I now entreat,

This once permission to retire.

FAUST.

Another moment prithee here remain,

Me with some happy word to pleasure.

MEPHIS.

Now let me go! ere long I'll come again,

Then thou mayst question at thy leisure.

FAUST.

To capture thee was not my will.

Thyself hast freely entered in the snare:

Let him who holds the devil, hold him still!

A second time so soon he will not catch him there.

MEPHIS.

If it so please thee, I'm at thy command;

Only on this condition, understand;

That worthily thy leisure to beguile,

I here may exercise my arts awhile.

FAUST.

Thou'rt free to do so! Gladly I'll attend;

But be thine art a pleasant one!

MEPHIS.

My friend,

This hour enjoyment more intense,

Shall captivate each ravish'd sense,

Than thou could'st compass in the bound

Of the whole year's unvarying round;

And what the dainty spirits sing,

The lovely images they bring,

Are no fantastic sorcery.

Rich odors shall regale your smell,

On choicest sweets your palate dwell,

Your feelings thrill with ecstasy.

No preparation do we need,

Here we together are. Proceed!

SPIRITS.

Hence overshadowing gloom
Vanish from sight!
O'er us thine azure dome,
Bend, beauteous light!
Dark clouds that o'er us spread,
Melt in thin air!
Stars, your soft radiance shed,
Tender and fair.
Girt with celestial might,
Winging their airy flight,
Spirits are thronging.
Follows their forms of light
Infinite longing!

Flutter their vestures bright
O'er field and grove!
Where in their leafy bower
Lovers the livelong hour
Vow deathless love.
Soft bloometh bud and bower!
Bloometh the grove!
Grapes from the spreading vine
Crown the full measure;
Fountains of foaming wine
Gush from the pressure.
Still where the currents wind,
Gems brightly gleam.
Leaving the hills behind
On rolls the stream;
Now into ample seas,
Spreadeth the flood;
Laving the sunny leas,
Mantled with wood.
Rapture the feather'd throng,
Gayly careering,
Sip as they float along;
Sunward they're steering;
On towards the isles of light
Winging their way,
That on the waters bright
Dancingly play.
Hark to the choral strain,
Joyfully ringing!
While on the grassy plain
Dancers are springing;
Climbing the steep hill's side,
Skimming the glassy tide,
Wander they there;
Others on pinions wide
Wing the blue air;
On towards the living stream,
Towards yonder stars that gleam,
Far, far away;
Seeking their tender beam
Wing they their way.

MEPHIS.

Well done, my dainty spirits! now he slumbers;

Ye have entranc'd him fairly with your numbers;

This minstrelsy of yours I must repay.—
Thou art not yet the man to hold the devil fast!—
With fairest shapes your spells around him cast,
And plunge him in a sea of dreams!
But that this charm be rent, the threshold pass'd,
Tooth of rat the way must clear.
I need not conjure long it seems,
One rustles hitherward, and soon my voice will hear.
The master of the rats and mice,
Of flies and frogs, of bugs and lice,
Commands thy presence; without fear
Come forth and gnaw the threshold here,
Where he with oil has smear'd it.—Thou
Com'st hopping forth already! Now
To work! The point that holds me bound
Is in the outer angle found.
Another bite—so—now 'tis done—
Now, Faustus, till we meet again, dream on.

FAUST.

(Awaking.) Am I once more deluded! must I deem
This troop of thronging spirits all ideal?
The devil's presence, was it nothing real?
The poodle's disappearance but a dream?



Study.

Faust. Mephistopheles.

FAUST.

A knock? Come in! Who now would break my rest?

MEPHIS.

'Tis I!

FAUST.

Come in!

MEPHIS.

Thrice be the words express'd.

FAUST.

Then I repeat, Come in!

MEPHIS.

'Tis well,

I hope that we shall soon agree!

For now your fancies to expel,

Here, as a youth of high degree,

I come in gold-lac'd scarlet vest,

And stiff silk mantle richly dress'd,

A cock's gay feather for a plume,

A long and pointed rapier, too;

And briefly I would counsel you
To don at once the same costume,
And, free from trammels, speed away,
That what life is you may essay.

FAUST.

In every garb I needs must feel oppress'd,
My heart to earth's low cares a prey.
Too old the trifler's part to play,
Too young to live by no desire possess'd.
What can the world to me afford?
Renounce! renounce! is still the word;
This is the everlasting song
In every ear that ceaseless rings,
And which, alas, our whole life long,
Hoarsely each passing moment sings.
But to new horror I awake each morn,
And I could weep hot tears to see the sun
Dawn on another day, whose round forlorn
Accomplishes no wish of mine—not one;
Which still, with froward captiousness, impairs
E'en the presentiment of every joy,
While low realities and paltry cares
The spirit's fond imaginings destroy.
And must I then, when falls the veil of night,
Stretch'd on my pallet languish in despair;

Appalling dreams my soul affright;
No rest vouchsaf'd me even there.
The god, who thron'd within my breast resides,
Deep in my soul can stir the springs;
With sovereign sway my energies he guides,
He cannot move external things;
And so existence is to me a weight,
Death fondly I desire, and life I hate.

MEPHIS.

And yet, methinks, by most 'twill be confess'd
That Death is never quite a welcome guest.

FAUST.

Happy the man around whose brow he binds
The bloodstain'd wreath in conquest's dazzling hour;
Or whom, excited by the dance, he finds
Dissolv'd in bliss, in love's delicious bower!
Oh that before the lofty spirit's might,
Enraptured, I had render'd up my soul!

MEPHIS.

Yet did a certain man refrain one night,
Of its brown juice to drain the crystal bowl.

FAUST.

To play the spy diverts you then?

MEPHIS.

I own,

Though not omniscient, much to me is known.

FAUST.

If o'er my soul the tone familiar, stealing,
Drew me from harrowing thought's bewild'ring maze,
Touching the ling'ring chords of childlike feeling,
With the sweet harmonies of happier days:
So curse I all, around the soul that windeth
Its magic and alluring spell,
And with delusive flattery bindeth
Its victim to this dreary cell!
Curs'd before all things be the high opinion,
Wherewith the spirit girds itself around!
Of shows delusive curs'd be the dominion,
Within whose mocking sphere our sense is bound!
Accurs'd of dreams the treacherous wiles,
The cheat of glory, deathless fame!
Accurs'd what each as property beguiles,
Wife, child, slave, plough, whate'er its name!
Accurs'd be mammon, when with treasure
He doth to daring deeds incite:
Or when to steep the soul in pleasure,
He spreads the couch of soft delight!
Curs'd be the grape's balsamic juice!

Accurs'd love's dream, of joys the first!

Accurs'd be hope! accurs'd be faith!

And more than all, be patience curs'd!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

(Invisible.) Woe! woe!

Thou hast destroy'd

The beautiful world

With violent blow;

'Tis shiver'd! 'tis shatter'd!

The fragments abroad by a demigod scatter'd!

Now we sweep

The wrecks into nothingness!

Fondly we weep

The beauty that's gone!

Thou, 'mongst the sons of earth,

Lofty and mighty one,

Build it once more!

In thine own bosom the lost world restore!

Now with unclouded sense

Enter a new career;

Songs shall salute thine ear,

Ne'er heard before!

MEPHIS.

My little ones these spirits be.

Hark! with shrewd intelligence,

How they recommend to thee,
Action, and the joys of sense!
In the busy world to dwell,
Fain they would allure thee hence:
For within this lonely cell,
Stagnates sap of life and sense.
Forbear to trifle longer with thy grief,
Which, vulture-like, consumes thee in this den.
The worst society is some relief,
Making thee feel thyself a man with men.
Nathless it is not meant, I trow,
To thrust thee 'mid the vulgar throng.
I to the upper ranks do not belong;
Yet if, by me companion'd, thou
Thy steps through life forthwith wilt take,
Upon the spot myself I'll make
Thy comrade;—
Should it suit thy need,
I am thy servant, and thy slave indeed!

FAUST.

And how must I thy services repay?

MEPHIS.

Thereto thou lengthen'd respite hast!

FAUST.

No! no!

The devil is an egotist I know:
And, for Heaven's sake, 'tis not his way
Kindness to any one to show.
Let the condition plainly be express'd;
Such a domestic is a dangerous guest.

MEPHIS.

I'll pledge myself to be thy servant *here*,
Still at thy back alert and prompt to be;
But when together *yonder* we appear,
Then shalt thou do the same for me.

FAUST.

But small concern I feel for yonder world;
Hast thou this system into ruin hurl'd,
Another may arise the void to fill.
This earth the fountain whence my pleasures flow,
This sun doth daily shine upon my woe,
And if this world I must forego,
Let happen then,—what can and will.
I to this theme will close mine ears,
If men hereafter hate and love,
And if there be in yonder spheres
A depth below or height above.

MEPHIS.

In this mood thou mayst venture it. But make
The compact, and at once I'll undertake

To charm thee with mine arts. I'll give thee more
Than mortal eye hath e'er beheld before.

FAUST.

What, sorry Devil, hast thou to bestow?
Was ever mortal spirit, in its high endeavor,
Fathom'd by Being such as thou?
Yet food thou hast which satisfieth never,
Hast ruddy gold, that still doth flow
Like restless quicksilver away,
A game thou hast, at which none win who play,
A girl who would, with amorous eyen,
E'en from my breast, a neighbor snare,
Lofty ambition's joy divine,
That, meteor-like, dissolves in air.
Show me the fruit that, ere 'tis pluck'd, doth rot,
And trees, whose verdure daily buds anew.

MEPHIS.

Such a commission scares me not,
I can provide such treasures, it is true;
But, my good friend, a season will come round
When on what's good we may regale in peace.

FAUST.

If e'er upon my couch, stretch'd at my ease, I'm found,
Then may my life that instant cease;
Me canst thou cheat with glozing wile

Till self-reproach away I cast?—

Me with joy's lure canst thou beguile?—

Let that day be for me the last!

Be this our wager!

MEPHIS.

Settl'd!

FAUST.

Sure and fast!

When to the moment I shall say,

“Linger awhile, so fair thou art!”

Then mayst thou fetter me straightway,

Then to the abyss will I depart;

Then may the solemn death-bell sound,

Then from thy service thou art free,

The index then may cease its round,

And time be never more for me!

MEPHIS.

I shall remember: pause, ere 'tis too late.

FAUST.

Thereto a perfect right hast thou.

My strength I do not rashly overrate.

Slave am I here, at any rate,

If thine, or whose, it matters not, I trow.

MEPHIS.

At thine inaugural feast I will this day

Attend, my duties to commence.—

But one thing!—Accidents may happen, hence

A line or two in writing grant, I pray.



FAUST.

A writing, Pedant! dost demand from me?

Man, and man's plighted word, are these unknown to thee?

Is't not enough, that by the word I gave,

My doom for evermore is cast?

Doth not the world in all its currents rave,

And must a promise hold me fast?

Yet fixed is this delusion in our heart;

Who, of his own free will, therefrom would part?

How blest within whose breast truth reigneth pure!

No sacrifice will he repent when made!

A formal deed, with seal and signature,

A spectre this from which all shrink afraid.

The word its life resigneth in the pen,

Leather and wax usurp the mastery then.

Spirit of evil! what dost thou require?

Brass, marble, parchment, paper, dost desire?

Shall I with chisel, pen, or graver write?

Thy choice is free; to me 'tis all the same.

MEPHIS.

Wherefore thy passion so excite,

And thus thine eloquence inflame?

A scrap is for our compact good.

Thou undersignest merely with a drop of blood.

FAUST.

If this will satisfy thy mind,

Thy whim I'll gratify, howe'er absurd.

MEPHIS.

Blood is a juice of very special kind.

FAUST.

Be not afraid that I shall break my word!

The scope of all my energy

Is in exact accordance with my vow.

Vainly I have aspir'd too high;

I'm on a level but with such as thou;

Me the great spirit scorn'd, defi'd;

Nature from me herself doth hide;

Rent is the web of thought; my mind

Doth knowledge loathe of every kind.

In depths of sensual pleasure drown'd,

Let us our fiery passions still!

Enwrapp'd in magic's veil profound,
Let wondrous charms our senses thrill!
Plunge we in time's tempestuous flow,
Stem we the rolling surge of chance!
There may alternate weal and woe,
Success and failure, as they can,
Mingle and shift in changeful dance!
Excitement is the sphere for man.

MEPHIS.

Nor goal, nor measure is prescrib'd to you.
If you desire to taste of everything,
To snatch at joy while on the wing,
May your career amuse and profit too!
Only fall to and don't be over coy!

FAUST.

Hearken! The end I aim at is not joy;
I crave excitement, agonizing bliss,
Enamour'd hatred, quickening vexation.
Purg'd from the love of knowledge, my vocation,
The scope of all my powers henceforth be this,
To bare my breast to every pang,—to know
In my heart's core all human weal and woe,
To grasp in thought the lofty and the deep,
Men's various fortunes on my breast to heap,
And thus to theirs dilate my individual mind,

And share at length with them the shipwreck of mankind.

MEPHIS.

Oh, credit me, who still as ages roll,
Have chew'd this bitter fare from year to year,
No mortal, from the cradle to the bier,
Digests the ancient leaven! Know, this Whole
Doth for the Deity alone subsist!
He in eternal brightness doth exist,
Us unto darkness he hath brought, and here
Where day and night alternate, is your sphere.

FAUST.

But 'tis my will!

MEPHIS.

Well spoken, I admit!
But one thing puzzles me, my friend;
Time's short, art long; methinks 'twere fit
That you to friendly counsel should attend.
A poet choose as your ally!
Let him thought's wide dominion sweep,
Each good and noble quality,
Upon your honored brow to heap;
The lion's magnanimity,
The fleetness of the hind,
The fiery blood of Italy,
The Northern's steadfast mind!

Let him to you the mystery show
To blend high aims and cunning low;
And while youth's passions are aflame
To fall in love by rule and plan!
I fain would meet with such a man;
Would him Sir Microcosmus name.

FAUST.

What then am I, if I aspire in vain
The crown of our humanity to gain,
Towards which my every sense doth strain?

MEPHIS.

Thou'rt after all—just what thou art.
Put on thy head a wig with countless locks,
Raise to a cubit's height thy learned socks,
Still thou remainest ever, what thou art.

FAUST.

I feel it, I have heap'd upon my brain
The gather'd treasure of man's thought in vain;



Fr. Pecht del.

published by George Barrie

[Editor: illegible word]

Margaret.

And when at length from studious toil I rest,

No power, new-born, springs up within my breast;

A hair's breadth is not added to my height,

I am no nearer to the infinite.

MEPHIS.

Good sir, these things you view indeed,

Just as by other men they're view'd;

We must more cleverly proceed,

Before life's joys our grasp elude.

The devil! thou hast hands and feet,

And head and heart are also thine;

What I enjoy with relish sweet,

Is it on that account less mine?

If for six stallions I can pay,

Do I not own their strength and speed?

A proper man I dash away,

As their two dozen legs were mine indeed.

Up then, from idle pondering free,

And forth into the world with me!

I tell you what:—your speculative churl

Is like a beast which some ill spirit leads,

On barren wilderness, in ceaseless whirl,

While all around lie fair and verdant meads.

FAUST.

But how shall we begin?

MEPHIS.

We will go hence with speed,
A place of torment this indeed!
A precious life, thyself to bore,
And some few youngsters evermore!
Leave it to neighbor Paunch;—withdraw,
Why wilt thou plague thyself with thrashing straw?
The very best that thou dost know
Thou dar'st not to the striplings show.
One in the passage now doth wait!

FAUST.

I'm in no mood to see him now.

MEPHIS.

Poor lad! He must be tired, I trow;
He must not go disconsolate.
Hand me thy cap and gown; the mask
Is for my purpose quite first rate.
[He changes his dress.]
Now leave it to my wit! I ask
But quarter of an hour; meanwhile equip,
And make all ready for our pleasant trip!
[Exit Faust.]

MEPHIS.

(In Faust's long gown.) Mortal! the loftiest attributes of men,
Reason and Knowledge, only thus contemn,

Still let the Prince of lies, without control,
With shows, and mocking charms delude thy soul,
I have thee unconditionally then!—
Fate hath endow'd him with an ardent mind,
Which unrestrain'd still presses on for ever,
And whose precipitate endeavor
Earth's joys o'erleaping, leaveth them behind.
Him will I drag through life's wild waste,
Through scenes of vapid dulness, where at last
Bewilder'd, he shall falter, and stick fast;
And, still to mock his greedy haste,
Viands and drink shall float his craving lips beyond—
Vainly he'll seek refreshment, anguish-toss'd,
And were he not the devil's by his bond,
Yet must his soul infallibly be lost!

A Student enters.

STUDENT.

But recently I've quitted home,
Full of devotion am I come
A man to know and hear, whose name
With reverence is known to fame.

MEPHIS.

Your courtesy much flatters me!
A man like other men you see;
Pray have you yet applied elsewhere?

STUDENT.

I would entreat your friendly care!
I've youthful blood and courage high;
Of gold I bring a fair supply;
To let me go my mother was not fain;
But here I long'd true knowledge to attain.

MEPHIS.

You've hit upon the very place.

STUDENT.

And yet my steps I would retrace.
These walls, this melancholy room,
O'erpower me with a sense of gloom;
The space is narrow, nothing green,
No friendly tree is to be seen:
And in these halls, with benches lin'd,
Sight, hearing fail, fails too my mind.

MEPHIS.

It all depends on habit. Thus at first
The infant takes not kindly to the breast,
But before long, its eager thirst
Is fain to slake with hearty zest:
Thus at the breasts of wisdom day by day
With keener relish you'll your thirst allay.

STUDENT.

Upon her neck I fain would hang with joy;

To reach it, say, what means must I employ?

MEPHIS.

Explain, ere further time we lose,

What special faculty you choose?

STUDENT.

Profoundly learned I would grow,

What heaven contains would comprehend,

O'er earth's wide realm my gaze extend,

Nature and science I desire to know.

MEPHIS.

You are upon the proper track, I find,

Take heed, let nothing dissipate your mind.

STUDENT.

My heart and soul are in the chase!

Though to be sure I fain would seize,

On pleasant summer holidays,

A little liberty and careless ease.

MEPHIS.

Use well your time, so rapidly it flies;

Method will teach you time to win;

Hence, my young friend, I would advise,

With college logic to begin!

Then will your mind be so well brac'd,

In Spanish boots so tightly lac'd,

That on 'twill circumspectly creep,
Thought's beaten track securely keep,
Nor will it, ignis-fatuus like,
Into the path of error strike.
Then many a day they'll teach you how
The mind's spontaneous acts, till now
As eating and as drinking free,
Require a process;—one! two! three!
In truth the subtle web of thought
Is like the weaver's fabric wrought:
One treadle moves a thousand lines,
Swift dart the shuttles to and fro,
Unseen the threads together flow,
A thousand knots one stroke combines.
Then forward steps your sage to show,
And prove to you, it must be so;
The first being so, and so the second,
The third and fourth deduc'd we see;
And if there were no first and second,
Nor third nor fourth would ever be.
This, scholars of all countries prize,—
Yet 'mong themselves no weavers rise.
He who would know and treat of aught alive,
Seeks first the living spirit thence to drive:
Then are the lifeless fragments in his hand,

There only fails, alas! the spirit-band.

This process, chemists name, in learned thesis,

Mocking themselves, *Nature encheiresis*.

STUDENT.

Your words I cannot fully comprehend.

MEPHIS.

In a short time you will improve, my friend,

When of scholastic forms you learn the use;

And how by method all things to reduce.

STUDENT.

So doth all this my brain confound.

As if a mill-wheel there were turning round.

MEPHIS.

And next, before aught else you learn,

You must with zeal to metaphysics turn!

There see that you profoundly comprehend,

What doth the limit of man's brain transcend;

For that which is or is not in the head

A sounding phrase will serve you in good stead.

But before all strive this half year

From one fix'd order ne'er to swerve!

Five lectures daily you must hear;

The hour still punctually observe!

Yourself with studious zeal prepare,

And closely in your manual look,

Hereby may you be quite aware
That all he utters standeth in the book;
Yet write away without cessation,
As at the Holy Ghost's dictation!

STUDENT.

This, Sir, a second time you need not say!
Your counsel I appreciate quite;
What we possess in black and white,
We can in peace and comfort bear away.

MEPHIS.

A faculty I pray you name.

STUDENT.

For jurisprudence some distaste I own.

MEPHIS.

To me this branch of science is well known,
And hence I cannot your repugnance blame.
Customs and laws in every place,
Like a disease, an heir-loom dread,
Still trail their curse from race to race,
And furtively abroad they spread.
To nonsense, reason's self they turn;
Beneficence becomes a pest;
Woe unto thee, that thou'rt a grandson born!
As for the law born with us, unexpressed;—
That law, alas, none careth to discern.

STUDENT.

You deepen my dislike. The youth
Whom you instruct, is blest in sooth.
To try theology I feel inclined.

MEPHIS.

I would not lead you willingly astray,
But as regards this science, you will find,
So hard it is to shun the erring way,
And so much hidden poison lies therein,
Which scarce can you discern from medicine.
Here too it is the best, to listen but to one,
And by the master's words to swear alone.
To sum up all—To words hold fast!
Then the safe gate securely pass'd,
You'll reach the fane of certainty at last.

STUDENT.

But then some meaning must the words convey.

MEPHIS.

Right! But o'er-anxious thought, you'll find of no avail,
For there precisely where ideas fail,
A word comes opportunely into play.
Most admirable weapons words are found,
On words a system we securely ground,
In words we can conveniently believe,
Nor of a single jot can we a word bereave.

STUDENT.

Your pardon for my importunity;

Yet once more must I trouble you:

On medicine, I'll thank you to supply

A pregnant utterance or two!



Three years! how brief the appointed tide!

The field, heaven knows, is all too wide!

If but a friendly hint be thrown,

'Tis easier then to feel one's way.

MEPHIS.

(Aside.) I'm weary of the dry pedantic tone,

And must again the genuine devil play.

(Aloud.) Of medicine the spirit's caught with ease,

The great and little world you study through,

That things may then their course pursue,

As heaven may please.

In vain abroad you range through science' ample space,

Each man learns only that which learn he can;

Who knows the moment to embrace,

He is your proper man.

In person you are tolerably made,
Nor in assurance will you be deficient:
Self-confidence acquire, be not afraid,
Others will then esteem you a proficient.
Learn chiefly with the sex to deal!
Their thousand ahs and ohs,
These the sage doctor knows,
He only from one point can heal.
Assume a decent tone of courteous ease,
You have them then to humor as you please.
First a diploma must belief infuse,
That you in your profession take the lead:
You then at once those easy freedoms use
For which another many a year must plead;
Learn how to feel with nice address
The dainty wrist;—and how to press,
With ardent furtive glance, the slender waist,
To feel how tightly it is lac'd.

STUDENT.

There is some sense in that one sees the how and why.

MEPHIS.

Gray is, young friend, all theory:
And green of life the golden tree.

STUDENT.

I swear it seemeth like a dream to me,

May I some future time repeat my visit,
To hear on what your wisdom grounds your views?

MEPHIS.

Command my humble service when you choose.

STUDENT.

Ere I retire, one boon I must solicit:
Here is my album, do not, Sir, deny
This token of your favor!

MEPHIS.

Willingly!

[He writes and returns the book.]

STUDENT.

(Reads.) Eritis sicut Deus, scientes bonum et malum.

[He reverently closes the book and retires.]

MEPHIS.

Let but this ancient proverb be your rule,
My cousin follow still, the wily snake,
And with your likeness to the gods, poor fool,
Ere long be sure your poor sick heart will quake!

FAUST.

(Enters.) Whither away?

MEPHIS.

'Tis thine our course to steer.
The little world, and then the great we'll view.

With what delight, what profit too,
Thou'lt revel through thy gay career!

FAUST.

Despite my length of beard I need
The easy manners that insure success;
Th' attempt I fear can ne'er succeed;
To mingle in the world I want address;
I still have an embarrass'd air, and then
I feel myself so small with other men.

MEPHIS.

Time, my good friend, with all that's needful give;
Be only self-possess'd, and thou hast learn'd to live.

FAUST.

But how are we to start, I pray?
Steeds, servants, carriage, where are they?

MEPHIS.

We've but to spread this mantle wide,
'Twill serve whereon through air to ride,
No heavy baggage need you take,
When we our bold excursion make,
A little gas, which I will soon prepare,
Lifts us from earth; aloft through air,
Light laden, we shall swiftly steer;—
I wish you joy of your new life-career.



UERBACH'S cellar in leipsic.

(A drinking party.)

FROSCH.

No drinking? Naught a laugh to raise?

None of your gloomy looks, I pray!

You, who so bright were wont to blaze,

Are dull as wetted straw to-day.

BRANDER.

'Tis all your fault; your part you do not bear,

No beastliness, no folly.

FROSCH.

(Pours a glass of wine over his head.) There,

You have them both!

BRANDER.

You double beast!

FROSCH.

'Tis what you ask'd me for, at least!

SIEBEL.

Whoever quarrels, turn him out!

With open throat drink, roar and shout.

Hollo! Hollo! Ho!

ALTMAYER.

Zounds, fellow, cease your deaf'ning cheers!

Bring cotton-wool! He splits my ears.

SIEBEL.

'Tis when the roof rings back the tone,

Then first the full power of the bass is known.

FROSCH.

Right! out with him who takes offence!

A tara lara la!

ALTMAYER.

A tara lara la!

FROSCH.

Our throats are tun'd. Come, let's commence.

(Sings.)

The holy Roman empire now,
How holds it still together?

BRANDER.

An ugly song! a song political!

A song offensive! Thank God, every morn

To rule the Roman empire, that you were not born!

I bless my stars at least that mine is not

Either a kaiser's or a chancellor's lot.

Yet 'mong ourselves should one still lord it o'er the rest;

That we elect a pope I now suggest.

Ye know, what quality ensures

A man's success, his rise secures.

FROSCH.

(Sings.)

Bear, lady nightingale above
Ten thousand greetings to my love.

SIEBEL.

No greetings to a sweetheart! No love-songs shall there be!

FROSCH.

Love-greetings and love-kisses! Thou shalt not hinder me!

(Sings.)

Undo the bolt! in stilly night.
Undo the bolt! thy love's awake!
Shut to the bolt! with morning light—

SIEBEL.

Ay, sing away, sing on, her praises sound;—the snake!

My turn to laugh will come some day.

Me hath she jilted once, you the same trick she'll play.

Some gnome her lover be! where cross-roads meet,

With her to play the fool; or old he-goat,

From Blocksberg coming in swift gallop, bleat

A good night to her, from his hairy throat!

A proper lad of genuine flesh and blood

Is for the damsel far too good;

The greeting she shall have from me,

To smash her window-panes will be!

BRANDER.

(Striking on the table.)

Silence! Attend! to me give ear!

Confess, sirs, I know how to live:

Some love-sick folk are sitting here!

Hence, 'tis but fit, their hearts to cheer,

That I a good-night strain to them should give.

Hark! of the newest fashion is my song!

Strike boldly in the chorus, clear and strong!

(He sings.)

Once in a cellar lived a rat,
He feasted there on butter,
Until his paunch became as fat
As that of Doctor Luther.
The cook laid poison for the guest,
Then was his heart with pangs oppress'd,
As if his frame love wasted.

CHORUS.

(Shouting.) As if his frame love wasted.

BRANDER.

He ran around, he ran abroad,

Of every puddle drinking.

The house with rage he scratch'd and gnaw'd,

In vain,—he fast was sinking;

Full many an anguish'd bound he gave,

Nothing the hapless brute could save,

As if his frame love wasted.

CHORUS.

As if his frame love wasted.

BRANDER.

By torture driven, in open day,
The kitchen he invaded,
Convuls'd upon the hearth he lay,
With anguish sorely jaded;
The poisoner laugh'd, Ha! ha! quoth she,
His life is ebbing fast, I see,
As if his frame love wasted.

CHORUS.

As if his frame love wasted.

SIEBEL.

How the dull boors exulting shout!
Poison for the poor rats to strew
A fine exploit it is no doubt.

BRANDER.

They, as it seems, stand well with you!

ALTMAYER.

Old bald-pate! with the paunch profound!
The rat's mishap hath tam'd his nature;
For he his counterpart hath found
Depicted in the swollen creature.
Faust *and* Mephistopheles.

MEPHIS.

I now must introduce to you
Before aught else, this jovial crew,
To show how lightly life may glide away;
With the folk here each day's a holiday.
With little wit and much content,
Each on his own small round intent,
Like sportive kitten with its tail;
While no sick headache they bewail,
And while their host will credit give,
Joyous and free from care they live.

BRANDER.

They're off a journey, that is clear,—
They look so strange; they've scarce been here
An hour.

FROSCH.

You're right! Leipsic's the place for me!
'Tis quite a little Paris; people there
Acquire a certain easy finish'd air.

SIEBEL.

What take you now these travellers to be?

FROSCH.

Let me alone! O'er a full glass you'll see,
As easily I'll worm their secret out
As draw an infant's tooth. I've not a doubt

That my two gentlemen are nobly born,
They look dissatisfied and full of scorn.

BRANDER.

They are but mountebanks, I'll lay a bet!

ALTMAYER.

Most like.

FROSCH.

Mark me, I'll screw it from them yet!

MEPHIS.

(*To Faust.*) These fellows would not scent the devil out,
E'en though he had them by the very throat!

FAUST.

Good-morrow, gentlemen!

SIEBEL.

Thanks for your fair salute.

[*Aside, glancing at Mephistopheles.*

How! goes the fellow on a halting foot?

MEPHIS.

Is it permitted here with you to sit?

Then though good wine is not forthcoming here,

Good company at least our hearts will cheer.

ALTMAYER.

A dainty gentleman, no doubt of it.

FROSCH.

You're doubtless recently from Rippach? Pray,
Did you with Master Hans there chance to sup?

MEPHIS.

To-day we pass'd him, but we did not stop!
When last we met him he had much to say
Touching his cousins, and to each he sent
Full many a greeting and kind compliment.

[With an inclination towards Frosch.]

ALTMAYER.

(Aside to Frosch.) You have it there!

SIEBEL.

Faith! he's a knowing one!

FROSCH.

Have patience! I will show him up anon!

MEPHIS.

Unless I err, as we drew near
We heard some practis'd voices pealing.
A song must admirably here
Re-echo from this vaulted ceiling!

FROSCH.

That you're an amateur one plainly sees!

MEPHIS.

Oh no, though strong the love, I cannot boast much skill.

ALTMAYER.

Give us a song!

MEPHIS.

As many as you will.

SIEBEL.

But be it a brand new one, if you please!

MEPHIS.

But recently returned from Spain are we,
The pleasant land of wine and minstrelsy.

(Sings.)

A king there was once reigning,
Who had a goodly flea—

FROSCH.

Hark! did you rightly catch the words? a flea!

An odd sort of a guest he needs must be.

MEPHIS.

(Sings.)

A king there was once reigning,
Who had a goodly flea,
Him lov'd he without feigning,
As his own son were he!
His tailor then he summon'd,
The tailor to him goes:
Now measure me the youngster
For jerkin and for hose!

BRANDER.

Take proper heed, the tailor strictly charge,

The nicest measurement to take,

And as he loves his head, to make
The hose quite smooth and not too large!

MEPHIS.

In satin and in velvet,
Behold the younker dressed;
Bedizen'd o'er with ribbons,
A cross upon his breast.
Prime minister they made him,
He wore a star of state!
And all his poor relations
Were courtiers, rich and great.
The gentlemen and ladies
At court were sore distress'd;
The queen and all her maidens
Were bitten by the pest,
And yet they dared not scratch them,
Or chase the fleas away.
If we are bit, we catch them,
And crack without delay.

CHORUS.

(Shouting.) If we are bit, etc.

FROSCH.

Bravo! That's the song for me.

SIEBEL.

Such be the fate of every flea!

BRANDER.

With clever finger catch and kill.

ALTMAYER.

Hurrah for wine and freedom still!

MEPHIS.

Were but your wine a trifle better, friend,

A glass to freedom I would gladly drain.

SIEBEL.

You'd better not repeat those words again!

MEPHIS.

I am afraid the landlord to offend!

Else freely would I treat each worthy guest

From our own cellar to the very best.

SIEBEL.

Out with it then! Your doings I'll defend.

FROSCH.

Give a good glass, and straight we'll praise you, one and all.

Only let not your samples be too small;

For if my judgment you desire,

Certes, an ample mouthful I require.

ALTMAYER.

(Aside.) I guess, they're from the Rhenish land.

MEPHIS.

Fetch me a gimlet here!

BRANDER.

Say, what therewith to bore?

You cannot have the wine-casks at the door.

ALTMAYER.

Our landlord's tool-basket behind doth yonder stand.

MEPHIS.

(Takes the gimlet.)(*To Frosch.*)

Now only say! what liquor will you take?

FROSCH.

How mean you that? have you of every sort?

MEPHIS.

Each may his own selection make.

ALTMAYER.

(To Frosch.) Ha! ha! You lick your lips already at the thought.

FROSCH.

Good, if I have my choice, the Rhenish I propose;

For still the fairest gifts the fatherland bestows.

MEPHIS.

(Boring a hole in the edge of the table opposite to where Frosch is sitting.)

Get me a little wax—and make some stoppers—quick!

ALTMAYER.

Why, this is nothing but a juggler's trick!

MEPHIS.

(To Brander.) And you?

BRANDER.

Champagne's the wine for me;

Right brisk and sparkling let it be!

[Mephistophelesbores; one of the party has in the meantime prepared the wax stoppers and stopped the holes.]

BRANDER.

What foreign is one always can't decline,

What's good is often scatter'd far apart.

The French your genuine German hates with all his heart,

Yet has a relish for their wine.

SIEBEL.

(AsMephistophelesapproaches him.) I like not acid wine, I must allow,

Give me a glass of genuine sweet!

MEPHIS.

(Bores.)

Tokay

Shall, if you wish it, flow without delay.

ALTMAYER.

Come! look me in the face! no fooling now!

You are but making fun of us, I trow.

MEPHIS.

Ah! ah! that would indeed be making free

With such distinguish'd guests. Come, no delay;

What liquor can I serve you with, I pray?

ALTMAYER.

Only be quick, it matters not to me.

[After the holes are all bored and stopped.]

MEPHIS.

(With strange gestures.)

Grapes the vine-stock bears,
Horns the buck-goat wears!
Wine is sap, the vine is wood,
The wooden board yields wine as good.
With a deeper glance and true
The mysteries of nature view!
Have faith and here's a miracle!
Your stoppers draw and drink your fill!



ALL.

(As they draw the stoppers, and the wine chosen by each runs into his glass.)

Oh beautiful spring, which flows so fair!

MEPHIS.

Spill not a single drop, of this beware!

[They drink repeatedly.]

ALL.

(Sing.) Happy as cannibals are we,

Or as five hundred swine.

MEPHIS.

They're in their glory, mark their elevation!

FAUST.

Let's hence, nor here our stay prolong.

MEPHIS.

Attend, of brutishness ere long
You'll see a glorious revelation.

SIEBEL.

(Drinks carelessly; the wine is spilt upon the ground, and turns to flame.)

Help! fire! help! Hell is burning!

MEPHIS.

(Addressing the flames.) Stop,

Kind element, be still, I say!

(To the company.)

Of purgatorial fire as yet 'tis but a drop.

SIEBEL.

What means the knave! For this you'll dearly pay!

Us, it appears, you do not know.

FROSCH.

Such tricks a second time he'd better show!

ALTMAYER.

Methinks 'twere well we pack'd him quietly away.

SIEBEL.

What, sir! with us your hocus-pocus play!

MEPHIS.

Silence! old wine-cask!

SIEBEL.

How! add insult too!

Vile broomstick!

BRANDER.

Hold! or blows shall rain on you!

ALTMAYER.

(Draws a stopper out of the table: fire springs out against him.)

I burn! I burn!

SIEBEL.

'Tis sorcery, I vow!

Strike home! The fellow is fair game, I trow!

[Draw knives and attack Mephistopheles.]

MEPHIS.

(With solemn gestures.)

Visionary scenes appear!
Words delusive cheat the ear!
Be ye there, and be ye here!

[They stand amazed and gaze on each other.]

ALTMAYER.

Where am I? What a beautiful land!

FROSCH.

Vineyards! unless my sight deceives?

SIEBEL.

And clust'ring grapes too, close at hand!

BRANDER.

And underneath the spreading leaves,

What stems there be! What grapes I see!

[He seizes Siebel by the nose. The others reciprocally do the same, raising their knives.]

MEPHIS.

(As above.) Delusion, from their eyes the bandage take!

Note how the devil loves a jest to break!

[He disappears with Faust; the fellows draw back from one another.]

SIEBEL.

What was it?

ALTMAYER.

How?

FROSCH.

Was that your nose?

BRANDER.

(To Siebel.) And look, my hand doth thine enclose!

ALTMAYER.

I felt a shock, it went through every limb!

A chair! I'm fainting! All things swim!

FROSCH.

Say what has happen'd, what's it all about?

SIEBEL.

Where is the fellow? Could I scent him out,

His body from his soul I'd soon divide!

ALT.

With my own eyes, upon a cask astride,

Forth through the cellar-door I saw him ride—

Heavy as lead my feet are growing.

[Turning to the table.

Would that the wine again were flowing!

SIEBEL.

'Twas all delusion, cheat and lie.

FROSCH.

'Twas wine I drank, most certainly.

BRANDER.

What of the grapes too,—where are they?

ALTMAYER.

Who now will miracles gainsay?



artist: franz simm.

FAUST. FIRST PART.

mephistopheles removing the spell



Witches' Kitchen.

[A large caldron hangs over the fire on a low hearth; various figures appear in the vapor rising from it. A female Monkey sits beside the caldron to skim it, and watch that it does not boil over. The male Monkey with the young ones is seated near, warming himself. The walls and ceiling are adorned with the strangest articles of witch-furniture.

Faust, Mephistopheles.

FAUST.

This senseless, juggling witchcraft I detest!

Dost promise that in this foul nest
Of madness, I shall be restor'd?
Must I seek counsel from an ancient dame?
And can she, by these rites abhorr'd,
Take thirty winters from my frame?
Woe's me, if thou naught better canst suggest!
Hope has already fled my breast.
Has neither nature nor a noble mind
A balsam yet devis'd of any kind?

MEPHIS.

My friend, you now speak sensibly. In truth,
Nature a method giveth to renew thy youth;
But in another book the lesson's writ;—
It forms a curious chapter, I admit.

FAUST.

I fain would know it.

MEPHIS.

Good! A remedy
Without physician, gold, or sorcery:
Away forthwith, and to the fields repair,
Begin to delve, to cultivate the ground,
Thy senses and thyself confine
Within the very narrowest round,
Support thyself upon the simplest fare,
Live like a very brute the brutes among,

Neither esteem it robbery

The acre thou dost reap, thyself to dung—

This the best method, credit me,

Again at eighty to grow hale and young.

FAUST.

I am not used to it, nor can myself degrade

So far as in my hand to take the spade.

For this mean life my spirit soars too high.

MEPHIS.

Then must we to the witch apply!

FAUST.

Will none but this old beldame do?

Canst not thyself the potion brew?

MEPHIS.

A pretty play our leisure to beguile!

A thousand bridges I could build meanwhile.

Not science only and consummate art,

Patience must also bear her part.

A quiet spirit worketh whole years long;

Time only makes the subtle ferment strong.

And all things that belong thereto

Are wondrous and exceeding rare!

The devil taught her, it is true;

But yet the draught the devil can't prepare.

[Perceiving the beasts.]

Look yonder, what a dainty pair!

Here is the maid! the knave is there!

[To the beasts.

It seems your dame is not at home?

THE MONKEYS.

Gone to carouse,

Out of the house,
Through the chimney and away!

MEPHIS.

How long is it her wont to roam?

THE MONKEYS.

While we can warm our paws she'll stay.

MEPHIS.

(To Faust.) What think you of the charming creatures?

FAUST.

I loathe alike their form and features!

MEPHIS.

Nay, such discourse, be it confess'd,

Is just the thing that pleases me the best.

To the Monkeys.

Tell me, ye whelps, accursed crew!

What stir ye in the broth about?

THE MONKEYS.

Coarse beggar's gruel here we stew.

MEPHIS.

Of customers you'll have a rout.

THE HE MONKEY.

(Approaching and fawning on Mephistopheles.)

Quick! quick! throw the dice,
Make me rich in a trice,
Oh give me the prize!
Alas, for myself!
Had I plenty of pelf,
I then should be wise.

MEPHIS.

How blest the ape would think himself, if he

Could only put into the lottery!

[In the meantime the young Monkeys have been playing with a large globe, which they roll forwards.]

THE HE MONKEY.

The world behold!

Unceasingly roll'd,
It riseth and falleth ever;
It ringeth like glass!
How brittle, alas!
'Tis hollow, and resteth never.
How bright the sphere,
Still brighter here!
Now living am I!
Dear son, beware!
Nor venture there!
Thou too must die!
It is of clay;
'Twill crumble away;
There fragments lie.

MEPHIS.

Of what use is the sieve?

THE HE MONKEY.

(Taking it down.) The sieve would show

If thou wert a thief or no.

[He runs to the Monkey, and makes her look through it.]

Look through the sieve!
Dost know him the thief,
And dar'st thou not call him so?

MEPHIS.

(Approaching the fire.) And then this pot?

THE MONKEYS.

The half-witted sot!

He knows not the pot!
He knows not the kettle!

MEPHIS.

Unmannerly beast!

Be civil at least!

THE HE MONKEY.

Take the whisk and sit down in the settle!

[He makes Mephistopheles sit down.]

FAUST.

(Who all this time has been standing before a looking-glass, now approaching, and now retiring from it.) What do I see? What form whose charms transcend

The loveliness of earth, is mirror'd here!

O Love, to waft me to her sphere,

To me the swiftest of thy pinions lend!

Alas! if I remain not rooted to this place,

If to approach more near I'm fondly lur'd,
Her image fades, in veiling mist obscur'd!—
Model of beauty both in form and face!
Is't possible? Hath woman charms so rare?
Is this recumbent form, supremely fair,
The very essence of all heavenly grace?
Can aught so exquisite on earth be found?

MEPHIS.

The six days' labor of a god, my friend,
Who doth himself cry bravo, at the end,
By something clever doubtless should be crown'd.
For this time gaze your fill, and when you please
Just such a prize for you I can provide;
How blest is he to whom kind fate decrees,
To take her to his home, a lovely bride!

[Faust continues to gaze into the mirror. Mephistopheles stretching himself on the settle and playing with the whisk, continues to speak.]

Here sit I, like a king upon his throne;
My sceptre this;—the crown I want alone.

THE MONKEYS.

(Who have hitherto been making all sorts of strange gestures, bring Mephistopheles a crown, with loud cries.)

Oh, be so good,
With sweat and with blood
The crown to lime!

[They handle the crown awkwardly and break it into two pieces, with which they skip about.]

'Twas fate's decree!
We speak and see!
We hear and rhyme.

FAUST.

(Before the mirror.) Woe's me! well-nigh distraught I feel!

MEPHIS.

(Pointing to the beasts.) And even my own head almost begins to reel.

THE MONKEYS.

If good luck attend,

If fitly things blend,
Our jargon with thought
And with reason is fraught!



FAUST.

(As above.) A flame is kindled in my breast!

Let us begone! nor linger here!

MEPHIS.

(In the same position.) It now at least must be confess'd,

That poets sometimes are sincere.

[The caldron which theshe Monkeyhas neglected begins to boil over; a great flame arises, which streams up the chimney. TheWitchcomes down the chimney with horrible cries.

THE WITCH.

Ough! ough! ough! ough!

Accursed brute! accursed sow!

Thou dost neglect the pot, for shame!

Accursed brute to scorch the dame!

[*Perceiving Faust and Mephistopheles.*

Whom have we here?
Who's sneaking here?
Whence are ye come?
With what desire?
The plague of fire
Your bones consume!

[*She dips the skimming-ladle into the caldron and throws flames at Faust, Mephistopheles and the Monkeys. The Monkeys whimper.*

MEPHIS.

(*Twirling the whisk which he holds in his hand, and striking among the glasses and pots.*)

Dash! Smash!
There lies the glass!
There lies the slime!
'Tis but a jest;
I but keep time,
Thou hellish pest,
To thine own chime!

[*While the Witch steps back in rage and astonishment.*

Dost know me? Skeleton! Vile scarecrow, thou!

Thy lord and master dost thou know?

What holds me, that I deal not now

Thee and thine apes a stunning blow?

No more respect to my red vest dost pay?

Does my cock's feather no allegiance claim?

Have I my visage mask'd to-day?

Must I be forc'd myself to name?

THE WITCH.

Master, forgive this rude salute!

But I perceive no cloven foot.

And your two ravens, where are they?

MEPHIS.

This once I must admit your plea—

For truly I must own that we

Each other have not seen for many a day.

The culture, too, that shapes the world, at last

Hath e'en the devil in its sphere embrac'd;

The northern phantom from the scene hath pass'd,

Tail, talons, horns, are nowhere to be traced!

As for the foot, with which I can't dispense,

'Twould injure me in company, and hence,

Like many a youthful cavalier,

False calves I now have worn for many a year.

THE WITCH.

(Dancing.) I am beside myself with joy,

To see once more the gallant Satan here!

MEPHIS.

Woman, no more that name employ!

THE WITCH.

But why? what mischief hath it done?

MEPHIS.

To fable it too long hath appertain'd;
But people from the change have nothing won.
Rid of the evil one, the evil has remain'd.
Lord Baron call thou me, so is the matter good;
Of other cavaliers the mien I wear.
Dost make no question of my gentle blood?
See here, this is the scutcheon that I bear!

[He makes an unseemly gesture.]

THE WITCH.

(Laughing immoderately.)

Ha! ha! Just like yourself! You are, I ween,
The same mad wag that you have ever been!

MEPHIS.

(To Faust.) My friend, learn this to understand, I pray!

To deal with witches this is still the way.

THE WITCH.

Now tell me, gentlemen, what you desire?

MEPHIS.

Of your known juice a goblet we require.
But for the very oldest let me ask;
Double its strength with years doth grow.

THE WITCH.

Most willingly! And here I have a flask,

From which I've sipp'd myself ere now;

What's more, it doth no longer stink;

To you a glass I joyfully will give.

[Aside.

If unprepar'd, however, this man drink,

He hath not, as you know, an hour to live.

MEPHIS.

He's my good friend, with whom 'twill prosper well;

I grudge him not the choicest of thy store.

Now draw thy circle, speak thy spell,

And straight a bumper for him pour!

[The Witch, with extraordinary gestures, describes a circle, and places strange things within it. The glasses meanwhile begin to ring, the caldron to sound, and to make music. Lastly, she brings a great book; places the Monkeys in the circle to serve her as a desk, and to hold the torches. She beckons Fausto to approach.

FAUST.

(To Mephistopheles.) Tell me, to what doth all this tend?

Where will these frantic gestures end?

This loathsome cheat, this senseless stuff

I've known and hated long enough.

MEPHIS.

Mere mummary, a laugh to raise!

Pray don't be so fastidious! She

But as a leech, her hocus-pocus plays,

That well with you her potion may agree.

[He compels Fausto to enter the circle.

(The Witch, with great emphasis, begins to declaim from the book.)

This must thou ken:
Of one make ten,
Pass two, and then
Make square the three,
So rich thou'lt be.
Drop out the four!
From five and six,
Thus says the witch,
Make seven and eight.
So all is straight!
And nine is one,
And ten is none,
This is the witch's one-time-one!

FAUST.

The hag doth as in fever rave.

MEPHIS.

To these will follow many a stave.

I know it well, so rings the book throughout;

Much time I've lost in puzzling o'er its pages,

For downright paradox, no doubt,

A mystery remains alike to fools and sages.

Ancient the art and modern too, my friend.

'Tis still the fashion as it used to be,

Error instead of truth abroad to send

By means of three and one, and one and three.

'Tis ever taught and babbled in the schools.

Who'd take the trouble to dispute with fools?

When words men hear, in sooth, they usually believe,

That there must needs therein be something to conceive.

THE WITCH.

(Continues.)

The lofty power
Of wisdom's dower,
From all the world conceal'd!
Who thinketh not,
To him I wot,
Unsought it is reveal'd.

FAUST.

What nonsense doth the hag propound?

My brain it doth well-nigh confound.

A hundred thousand fools or more,

Methinks I hear in chorus roar

MEPHIS.

Incomparable Sibyl cease, I pray!

Hand us thy liquor without more delay.

And to the very brim the goblet crown!

My friend he is, and need not be afraid;

Besides, he is a man of many a grade,

Who hath drunk deep already.

[The Witch, with many ceremonies, pours the liquor into a cup; as Faust lifts it to his mouth, a light flame arises.]

MEPHIS.

Gulp it down!

No hesitation! It will prove

A cordial, and your heart inspire!

What! with the devil hand and glove,

And yet shrink back afraid of fire?

[*The Witch dissolves the circle. Faust steps out.*

MEPHIS.

Now forth at once! thou dar'st not rest.

WITCH.

And much, sir, may the liquor profit you!

MEPHIS.

(*To the Witch.*) And if to pleasure thee I aught can do,
Pray on Walpurgis mention thy request.

WITCH.

Here is a song, sung o'er sometimes, you'll see,
That 'twill a singular effect produce.

MEPHIS.

(*To Faust.*) Come, quick, and let thyself be led by me;
Thou must perspire, in order that the juice
Thy frame may penetrate through every part.



Thy noble idleness I'll teach thee then to prize,
And soon with ecstasy thou'lt recognize
How Cupid stirs and gambols in thy heart.

FAUST.

Let me but gaze one moment in the glass!
Too lovely was that female form!

MEPHIS.

Nay! nay!

A model which all women shall surpass,
In flesh and blood ere long thou shalt survey.

[*Aside.*

As works the draught, thou presently shalt greet

A Helen in each woman thou dost meet.



A Street.

FAUST.

(Margaret *passing by.*)

FAUST.

Fair lady, may I thus make free
To offer you my arm and company?

MARGARET.

I am no lady, am not fair,
Can without escort home repair.

[*She disengages herself and exit.*

FAUST.

By heaven! This girl is fair indeed!
No form like hers can I recall.
Virtue she hath, and modest heed,

Is piquant too, and sharp withal.
Her cheek's soft light, her rosy lips,
No length of time will e'er eclipse!
Her downward glance in passing by,
Deep in my heart is stamp'd for aye;
How curt and sharp her answer too!
My ravish'd heart to rapture grew!
[Mephistopheles enters.]

FAUST.

This girl must win for me! Dost hear?

MEPHIS.

Which?

FAUST.

She who but now pass'd.

MEPHIS.

What! She?

She from confession cometh here,
From every sin absolv'd and free;
I crept near the confessor's chair.
All innocence her virgin soul,
For next to nothing went she there;
O'er such as she I've no control!

FAUST.

She's past fourteen.

MEPHIS.

You really talk
Like any gay Lothario,
Who every floweret from its stalk
Would pluck, and deems nor grace nor truth
Secure against his arts, forsooth!
This ne'ertheless won't always do.

FAUST.

Sir Moralizer, prithee pause;
Nor plague me with your tiresome laws!
To cut the matter short, my friend,
She must this very night be mine,—
And if to help me you decline,
Midnight shall see our compact end.

MEPHIS.

What may occur just bear in mind!
A fortnight's space, at least, I need,
A fit occasion but to find.

FAUST.

With but seven hours I could succeed;
Nor should I want the devil's wile,
So young a creature to beguile.

MEPHIS.

Like any Frenchman now you speak,
But do not fret, I pray; why seek

To hurry to enjoyment straight?
The pleasure is not half so great
As when at first, around, above,
With all the fooleries of love,
The puppet you can knead and mould
As in Italian story oft is told.

FAUST.

No such incentives do I need.

MEPHIS.

But now, without offence or jest!
You cannot quickly, I protest,
In winning this sweet child succeed.
By storm we cannot take the fort,
To stratagem we must resort.

FAUST.

Conduct me to her place of rest?
Some token of the angel bring!



artist: franz bimm.

FAUST. FIRST PART.

faust and margaret leaving church
A kerchief from her snowy breast,
A garter bring me,—anything!

MEPHIS.

That I my anxious zeal may prove,
Your pangs to sooth and aid your love,
A single moment will we not delay,
Will lead you to her room this very day.

FAUST.

And shall I see her?—Have her?

MEPHIS.

No!
She to a neighbor's house will go;
But in her atmosphere alone,
The tedious hours meanwhile you may employ,
In blissful dreams of future joy.

FAUST.

Can we go now?

MEPHIS.

'Tis yet too soon.

FAUST.

Some present for my love procure!

[*Exit.*

MEPHIS.

Presents so soon! 'tis well! success is sure!
I know full many a secret store
Of treasure, buried long before,

I must a little look them o'er.

[*Exit.*



Evening. A small and neat room.

MARGARET.

(Braiding and binding up her hair.) I would give something now to know,

Who yonder gentleman could be!

He had a gallant air, I trow,

And doubtless was of high degree:

That written on his brow was seen—

Nor else would he so bold have been.

[*Exit.*

MEPHIS.

Come in! tread softly! be discreet!

FAUST.

(After a pause.) Begone and leave me, I entreat!

MEPHIS.

(Looking round.) Not every maiden is so neat.

[*Exit.*

FAUST.

(Gazing round.) Welcome sweet twilight gloom which reigns,

Through this dim place of hallow'd rest!

Fond yearning love, inspire my breast,
Feeding on hope's sweet dew thy blissful pains!
What stillness here environs me!
Content and order brood around.
What fulness in this poverty!

In this small cell what bliss profound!

[He throws himself on the leather arm-chair beside the bed.]

Receive me thou, who hast in thine embrace,
Welcom'd in joy and grief the ages flown!
How oft the children of a bygone race
Have cluster'd round this patriarchal throne!
Haply she, also, whom I hold so dear,
For Christmas gift, with grateful joy possess'd,
Hath with the full round cheek of childhood, here,
Her grandsire's wither'd hand devoutly press'd.
Maiden! I feel thy spirit haunt the place,
Breathing of order and abounding grace.
As with a mother's voice it prompteth thee,
The pure white cover o'er the board to spread,
To strew the crisping sand beneath thy tread.
Dear hand! so godlike in its ministry!
The hut becomes a paradise through thee!
And here—

[He raises the bed-curtain.]

How thrills my pulse with strange delight!

Here could I linger hours untold;
Thou, Nature, didst in vision bright,
The embryo angel here unfold.
Here lay the child, her bosom warm
With life; while steeped in slumber's dew,
To perfect grace her godlike form
With pure and hallow'd weavings grew!
And thou! ah here what seekest thou?
How quails mine inmost being now!
What wouldst thou here? what makes thy heart so sore?
Unhappy Faust! I know thee now no more.
Do I a magic atmosphere inhale?
Erewhile, my passion would not brook delay!
Now in a pure love-dream I melt away.
Are we the sport of every passing gale?
Should she return and enter now,
How wouldst thou rue thy guilty flame!
Proud vaunter—thou wouldst hide thy brow,—
And at her feet sink down with shame.

MEPHIS.

Quick! quick! below I see her there.

FAUST.

Away! I will return no more!

MEPHIS.

Here is a casket, with a store

Of jewels, which I got elsewhere.

Just lay it in the press; make haste!

I swear to you, 'twill turn her brain;

Therein some trifles I have plac'd,

Wherewith another to obtain.

But child is child, and play is play.

FAUST.

I know not—shall I?

MEPHIS.

Do you ask?

Perchance you would retain the treasure?

If such your wish, why then, I say,

Henceforth absolve me from my task,

Nor longer waste your hours of leisure.

I trust you're not by avarice led!

I rub my hands, I scratch my head,—

[He places the casket in the press and closes the lock.]

Now quick! Away!

That soon the sweet young creature may

The wish and purpose of your heart obey;

Yet stand you there

As would you to the lecture-room repair,

As if before you stood,

Array'd in flesh and blood,

Physics and metaphysics weird and gray!—

Away!

MARGARET.

(With a lamp.) It is so close, so sultry now,

[She opens the window.

Yet out of doors 'tis not so warm.

I feel so strange, I know not how—

I wish my mother would come home,

Through me there runs a shuddering—

I'm but a foolish timid thing!

[While undressing herself she begins to sing.

There was a king in Thule,
True even to the grave;
To whom his dying mistress
A golden beaker gave.
At every feast he drain'd it,
Naught was to him so dear,
And often as he drain'd it,
Gush'd from his eyes the tear.
When death he felt approaching,
His cities o'er he told;
And grudg's his heir no treasure
Except his cup of gold.
Girt round with knightly vassals
At a royal feast sat he,
In yon proud hall ancestral,
In his castle o'er the sea.
Up stood the jovial monarch,
And quaff'd his last life's glow,
Then hurl'd the hallow'd goblet
Into the flood below.
He saw it splashing, drinking,
And plunging in the sea;
His eyes meanwhile were sinking,
And never again drank he.

[She opens the press to put away her clothes, and perceives the casket.

How comes this lovely casket here? The press

I lock'd, of that I'm confident.
'Tis very wonderful! What's in it I can't guess;
Perhaps 'twas brought by some one in distress,
And left in pledge for loan my mother lent.
Here by a ribbon hangs a little key!
I have a mind to open it and see!
Heavens! only look! what have we here!
In all my days ne'er saw I such a sight!
Jewels! which any noble dame might wear,
For some high pageant richly dight!
How would the necklace look on me!
These splendid gems, whose may they be?
[She puts them on and steps before the glass.
Were but the ear-rings only mine!
Thus one has quite another air.
What boots it to be young and fair?
It doubtless may be very fine;
But then, alas, none cares for you,
And praise sounds half like pity too.
Gold all doth lure,
Gold doth secure
All things. Alas, we poor!
Promenade.
Faust walking thoughtfully up and down.
To him Mephistopheles.

MEPHIS.

By love despis'd! By hell's fierce fires I curse,
Would I knew aught to make my imprecation worse!

FAUST.

What aileth thee? what chafes thee now so sore?
A face like that I never saw before!

MEPHIS.

I'd yield me to the devil instantly,
Did it not happen that myself am he!

FAUST.

There must be some disorder in thy wit!
To rave thus like a madman, is it fit?

MEPHIS.

Just think! The gems for Gretchen brought,
Them hath a priest now made his own!—
A glimpse of them the mother caught,
And 'gan with secret fear to groan.
The woman's scent is keen enough;
Doth ever in the prayer-book snuff;
Smells every article to ascertain
Whether the thing is holy or profane,
And scented in the jewels rare,
That there was not much blessing there.
"My child," she cries, "ill-gotten good
Ensnares the soul, consumes the blood;

With them we'll deck our Lady's shrine,
She'll cheer our souls with bread divine!"
At this poor Gretchen 'gan to pout;
'Tis a gift-horse, at least, she thought,
And sure, he godless cannot be,
Who brought them here so cleverly.
Straight for a priest the mother sent,
Who, when he understood the jest,
With what he saw was well content.
"This shows a pious mind!" Quoth he:
"Self-conquest is true victory.
The Church hath a good stomach; she, with zest,
Hath lands and kingdoms swallow'd down,
And never yet a surfeit known.
The Church alone, be it confess'd,
Daughters, can ill-got wealth digest."

FAUST.

It is a general custom, too,
Practised alike by king and jew.

MEPHIS.

With that, clasp, chain and ring he swept
As they were mushrooms; and the casket,
Without one word of thanks, he kept,
As if of nuts it were a basket.
Promis'd reward in heaven, then forth he hied:

And greatly they were edified.

FAUST.

And Gretchen!

MEPHIS.

In unquiet mood

Knows neither what she would or should;

The trinkets night and day thinks o'er,

On him who brought them, dwells still more.

FAUST.

The darling's sorrow grieves me, bring

Another set without delay!

The first, methinks, was no great thing.

MEPHIS.

All's to my gentleman child's play!

FAUST.

Plan all things to achieve my end!

Engage the attention of her friend!

No milk-and-water devil be,

And bring fresh jewels instantly!

MEPHIS.

Ay, sir! Most gladly I'll obey.

[*Faustexit.*

MEPHIS.

Your doting love-sick fool, with ease,

Merely his lady-love to please,
Sun, moon and stars in sport would puff away.

[Exit.]

The Neighbor's House.

MARTHA.

(Alone.) God pardon my dear husband, he

Doth not in truth act well by me!

Forth in the world abroad to roam,

And leave me on the straw at home.

And yet his will I ne'er did thwart,

God knows, I lov'd him from my heart!

[She weeps.]

Perchance he's dead!—oh wretched state!—

Had I but a certificate!

[Margaret comes.]

MARGARET.

Dame Martha!

MARTHA.

Gretchen!

MARGARET.

Only think!

My knees beneath me well-nigh sink!

Within my press I've found to-day,

Another case, of ebony.

And things—magnificent they are,

More costly than the first, by far.

MARTHA.

You must not name it to your mother!

It would to shrift, just like the other.

MARGARET.

Nay look at them! now only see!

MARTHA.

(Dresses her up.) Thou happy creature!

MARGARET.

Woe is me!

Them in the street I cannot wear,

Or in the church, or anywhere.

MARTHA.

Come often over here to me,

The gems put on quite privately;

And then before the mirror walk an hour or so,

Thus we shall have our pleasure too.

Then suitable occasions we must seize,

As at a feast, to show them by degrees:

A chain at first, then ear-drops,—and your mother

Won't see them, or we'll coin some tale or other.

MARGARET.

But who, I wonder, could the caskets bring?

I fear there's something wrong about the thing!

[*A knock.*

Good heavens! can that my mother be?

MARTHA.

(*Peering through the blind.*) 'Tis a strange gentleman I see.

Come in.

[*Mephistopheles enters.*

MEPHIS.

I've ventured to intrude to-day.

Ladies, excuse the liberty, I pray.

[*He steps back respectfully before Margaret.*

After dame Martha Schwerdtlein I inquire!

MARTHA.

'Tis I. Pray what have you to say to me?

MEPHIS.

(*Aside to her.*) I know you now,—and therefore will retire;

At present you've distinguish'd company.

Pardon the freedom, Madam, with your leave,

I will make free to call again at eve.

MARTHA.

(*Aloud.*) Why, child, of all strange notions, he

For some grand lady taketh thee!

MARGARET.

I am, in truth, of humble blood—

The gentleman is far too good—

Nor gems nor trinkets are my own.

MEPHIS.

Oh, 'tis not the mere ornaments alone;

Her glance and mien far more betray.

Rejoic'd I am that I may stay.

MARTHA.

Your business, Sir? I long to know—

MEPHIS.

Would I could happier tidings show!

I trust mine errand you'll not let me rue;

Your husband's dead, and greeteth you.

MARTHA.

Is dead? True heart! Oh misery!

My husband dead! Oh, I shall die!

MARGARET.

Alas! good Martha! don't despair!

MEPHIS.

Now listen to the sad affair!

MARGARET.

I for this cause should fear to love.

The loss my certain death would prove.

MEPHIS.

Joy still must sorrow, sorrow joy attend.

MARTHA.

Proceed, and tell the story of his end!

MEPHIS.

At Padua, in St. Anthony's,

In holy ground his body lies;

Quiet and cool his place of rest,

With pious ceremonials blest.

MARTHA.

And had you naught besides to bring?

MEPHIS.

Oh yes! one grave and solemn prayer;

Let them for him three hundred masses sing!

But in my pockets, I have nothing there.

MARTHA.

No trinket! no love-token did he send!

What every journeyman safe in his pouch will hoard

There for remembrance fondly stor'd,

And rather hungers, rather begs than spend!

MEPHIS.

Madam, in truth, it grieves me sore,

But he his gold not lavishly hath spent,

His failings too he deeply did repent,

Ay! and his evil plight bewail'd still more.

MARGARET.

Alas! That men should thus be doom'd to woe!

I for his soul will many a requiem pray.

MEPHIS.

A husband you deserve this very day,

A child so worthy to be loved.

MARGARET.

Ah no,

That time hath not yet come for me.

MEPHIS.

If not a spouse, a gallant let it be.

Among heaven's choicest gifts I place

So sweet a darling to embrace.

MARGARET.

Our land doth no such usage know.

MEPHIS.

Usage or not, it happens so.

MARTHA.

Go on, I pray!

MEPHIS.

I stood by his bedside.

Something less foul it was than dung;

'Twas straw half rotten; yet, he as a Christian died.

And sorely hath remorse his conscience wrung.

“Wretch that I was,” quoth he, with parting breath,

“So to forsake my business and my wife!

Ah! the remembrance is my death.

Could I but have her pardon in this life!”—

MARTHA.

(Weeping.) Dear soul! I’ve long forgiven him, indeed!

MEPHIS.

“Though she, God knows, was more to blame than I.”

MARTHA.

What, on the brink of death assert a lie!

MEPHIS.

If I am skill’d the countenance to read,

He doubtless fabled as he parted hence.—

“No time had I to gape, or take my ease,” he said,

“First to get children, and then get them bread;



And bread, too, in the very widest sense;

Nor could I eat in peace even my proper share.”

MARTHA.

What, all my truth, my love forgotten quite?

My weary drudgery by day and night!

MEPHIS.

Not so! He thought of you with tender care.

Quoth he: "Heaven knows how fervently I prayed

For wife and children when from Malta bound;—

The prayer hath Heaven with favor crown'd;

We took a Turkish vessel which convey'd

Rich store of treasure for the Sultan's court;

Its own reward our gallant action brought;

The captur'd prize was shared among the crew,

And of the treasure I receiv'd my due."

MARTHA.

How? Where? The treasure hath he buried, pray?

MEPHIS.

Where the four winds have blown it, who can say?

In Naples as he stroll'd, a stranger there,—

A comely maid took pity on my friend;

And gave such tokens of her love and care,

That he retain'd them to his blessed end.

MARTHA.

Scoundrel! to rob his children of their bread!

And all this misery, this bitter need,

Could not his course of recklessness impede!

MEPHIS.

Well, he hath paid the forfeit, and is dead.

Now were I in your place, my counsel hear;

My weeds I'd wear for one chaste year,
And for another lover meanwhile would look out.

MARTHA.

Alas, I might search far and near,
Not quickly should I find another like my first!
There could not be a fonder fool than mine,
Only he lov'd too well abroad to roam;
Lov'd foreign women too, and foreign wine,
And lov'd besides the dice accurs'd.

MEPHIS.

All had gone swimmingly, no doubt,
Had he but given you at home,
On his side, just as wide a range.
Upon such terms, to you I swear,
Myself with you would gladly rings exchange!

MARTHA.

The gentleman is surely pleas'd to jest!

MEPHIS.

(Aside.) Now to be off in time, were best!

She'd make the very devil marry her.

[*To Margaret.*

How fares it with your heart?

MARGARET.

How mean you, Sir?

MEPHIS.

(Aside.) The sweet young innocent!

[Aloud.

Ladies, farewell!

MARGARET.

Farewell!

MARTHA.

But ere you leave us, quickly tell!

I from a witness fain had heard,

Where, how and when my husband died and was interr'd.

To forms I've always been attach'd indeed,

His death I fain would in the journals read.

MEPHIS.

Ay, madam, what two witnesses declare

Is held as valid everywhere;

A gallant friend I have, not far from here,

Who will for you before the judge appear.

I'll bring him straight.

MARTHA.

I pray you do!

MEPHIS.

And this young lady, we shall find her too?

A noble youth, far travell'd, he,

Shows to the sex all courtesy.

MARGARET.

I in his presence needs must blush for shame.

MEPHIS.

Not in the presence of a crowned king!

MARTHA.

The garden, then, behind my house we'll name,

There we'll await you both this evening.

A Street.

Faust. Mephistopheles.

FAUST.

How is it now? How speeds it? Is't in train?

MEPHIS.

Bravo! I find you all aflame!

Gretchen full soon your own you'll name.

This eve, at neighbor Martha's, her you'll meet again;

The woman seems expressly made

To drive the pimp and gypsy's trade.

FAUST.

Good!

MEPHIS.

But from us she something would request.

FAUST.

A favor claims return as this world goes.

MEPHIS.

We have on oath but duly to attest
That her dead husband's limbs, outstretch'd, repose
In holy ground at Padua.

FAUST.

Sage indeed!
So I suppose we straight must journey there!

MEPHIS.

Sancta simplicitas! For that no need!
Without much knowledge we have but to swear.

FAUST.

If you have nothing better to suggest,
Against your plan I must at once protest.

MEPHIS.

Oh, holy man! methinks I have you there!
In all your life say, have you ne'er
False witness borne, until this hour?
Have you of God, the world, and all it doth contain,
Of man, and that which worketh in his heart and brain,
Not definitions given, in words of weight and power,
With front unblushing, and a dauntless breast?
Yet, if into the depth of things you go,
Touching these matters, it must be confess'd,
As much as of Herr Schwerdtlein's death you know!

FAUST.

Thou art and dost remain liar and sophist too.

MEPHIS.

Ay, if one did not take a somewhat deeper view!

To-morrow, in all honor, thou

Poor Gretchen wilt befool, and vow

Thy soul's deep love, in lover's fashion.

FAUST.

And from my heart.

MEPHIS.

All good and fair!

Then deathless constancy thou'lt swear;

Speak of one all-o'ermastering passion,—

Will that too issue from the heart?

FAUST.

Forbear!

When passion sways me, and I seek to frame

Fit utterance for feeling, deep, intense,

And for my frenzy finding no fit name,

Sweep round the ample world with every sense,

Grasp at the loftiest words to speak my flame,

And call the glow, wherewith I burn,

Quenchless, eternal, yea, eterne—

Is that of sophistry a devilish play?

MEPHIS.

Yet am I right!

FAUST.

Mark this, my friend,

And spare my lungs: whoe'er to have the right is fain,

If he have but a tongue, wherewith his point to gain,

Will gain it in the end.

But come, of gossip I am weary quite;

Because I've no resource, thou'rt in the right.

Garden.

MargaretonFaust'sarm.MarthawithMephistopheleswalking up and down.

MARGARET.

I feel it, you but spare my ignorance,

To shame me, sir, you stoop thus low.

A traveller from complaisance,

Still makes the best of things; I know

Too well, my humble prattle never can

Have power to entertain so wise a man.

FAUST.

One glance, one word of thine doth charm me more,

Than the world's wisdom or the sage's lore.

[He kisses her hand.]

MARGARET.

Nay! trouble not yourself! A hand so coarse,

So rude as mine, now can you kiss!

What constant work at home must I not do perforce!

My mother too exacting is.

[They pass on.]

MARTHA.

Thus, sir, unceasing travel is your lot?

MEPHIS.

Traffic and duty urge us! With what pain
Are we compell'd to leave full many a spot,
Where yet we dare not once remain!

MARTHA.

In youth's wild years, with vigor crown'd,
'Tis not amiss thus through the world to sweep;
But ah, the evil days come round!
And to a lonely grave as bachelor to creep,
A pleasant thing has no one found.

MEPHIS.

The prospect fills me with dismay.

MARTHA.

Therefore in time, dear sir, reflect, I pray.

[They pass on.]

MARGARET.

Ay, out of sight is out of mind!
Politeness easy is to you;
Friends everywhere, and not a few,

Wiser than I am, you will find.

FAUST.

Trust me, my angel, what doth pass for sense

Full oft is self-conceit and blindness!

MARGARET.

How?

FAUST.

Simplicity and holy innocence,—

When will ye learn your hallow'd worth to know?

Ah, when will meekness and humility,

Kind and all-bounteous nature's loftiest dower—

MARGARET.

Only one little moment think of me!

To think of you I shall have many an hour.

FAUST.

You are perhaps much alone?

MARGARET.

Yes, small our household is, I own,

Yet must I see to it. No maid we keep,

And I must cook, sew, knit and sweep,

Still early on my feet and late;

My mother is in all things, great and small,

So accurate!

Not that for thrift there is such pressing need;

Than others we might make more show indeed;
My father left behind a small estate,
A house and garden near the city-wall.
Quiet enough my life has been of late;
My brother for a soldier's gone;
My little sister's dead; the babe to rear
Occasion'd me some care and fond annoy;
But I would go through all again with joy,
The darling was to me so dear.

FAUST.

An angel, sweet, if it resembled thee!

MARGARET.

I rear'd it up, and it grew fond of me.
After my father's death it saw the day;
We gave my mother up for lost, she lay
In such a wretched plight, and then at length
So very slowly she regain'd her strength.
Weak as she was, 'twas vain for her to try
Herself to suckle the poor babe, so I
Reared it on milk and water all alone;
And thus the child became as 'twere my own;
Within my arms it stretch'd itself and grew,
And smiling, nestled in my bosom too.

FAUST.

Doubtless the purest happiness was thine.

MARGARET.

But many weary hours, in sooth, were also mine.
At night its little cradle stood
Close to my bed; so was I wide awake
If it but stirr'd;
One while I was oblig'd to give it food,
Or to my arms the darling take;
From bed full oft must rise, whene'er its cry I heard,
And, dancing it, must pace the chamber to and fro;
Stand at the wash-tub early; forthwith go
To market, and then mind the cooking too—
To-morrow like to-day, the whole year through.
Ah, sir, thus living, it must be confess'd
One's spirits are not always of the best;
Yet it a relish gives to food and rest.

[They pass on.]

MARTHA.

Poor women! we are badly off, I own;
A bachelor's conversion's hard, indeed!

MEPHIS.

Madam, with one like you it rests alone
To tutor me a better course to lead.

MARTHA.

Speak frankly, sir, none is there you have met?
Has your heart ne'er attach'd itself as yet?

MEPHIS.

One's own fireside and a good wife are gold
And pearls of price, so says the proverb old.

MARTHA.

I mean, has passion never stirr'd your breast?

MEPHIS.

I've everywhere been well receiv'd, I own.

MARTHA.

Yet hath your heart no earnest preference known?

MEPHIS.

With ladies one should ne'er presume to jest.

MARTHA.

Ah! you mistake!

MEPHIS.

I'm sorry I'm so blind!

But this I know—that you are very kind.

[They pass on.]

FAUST.

Me, little angel, didst thou recognize,

When in the garden first I came?

MARGARET.

Did you not see it? I cast down my eyes.

FAUST.

Thou dost forgive my boldness, dost not blame

The liberty I took that day,
When thou from church didst lately wend thy way?

MARGARET.

I was confus'd. So had it never been;
No one of me could any evil say.
Alas, thought I, he doubtless in thy mien
Something unmaidenly or bold hath seen?
It seem'd as if it struck him suddenly,
Here's just a girl with whom one may make free!
Yet I must own that then I scarcely knew
What in your favor here began at once to plead;
Yet I was angry with myself indeed,
That I more angry could not feel with you.

FAUST.

Sweet love!

MARGARET.

Just wait awhile!

[She gathers a star-flower and plucks off the leaves one after another.]

FAUST.

A nosegay may that be?

MARGARET.

No! It is but a game.

FAUST.

How?

MARGARET.

Go, you'll laugh at me!

[She plucks off the leaves and murmurs to herself.]

FAUST.

What murmurest thou?

MARGARET.

(Half aloud.) He loves me,—loves me not.

FAUST.

Sweet angel, with thy face of heavenly bliss!

MARGARET.

(Continues.) He loves me—not—he loves me—not—

[Plucking off the last leaf with fond joy.]

He loves me!

FAUST.

Yes!

And this flower-language, darling, let it be,

A heavenly oracle! He loveth thee!

Know'st thou the meaning of, He loveth thee?

[He seizes both her hands.]

MARGARET.

I tremble so!

FAUST.

Nay! do not tremble, love!

Let this hand-pressure, let this glance reveal

Feelings, all power of speech above;

To give one's self up wholly and to feel

A joy that must eternal prove!

Eternal!—Yes, its end would be despair.

No end!—It cannot end!

[Margaret presses his hand, extricates herself, and runs away. He stands a moment in thought, and then follows her.]

MARTHA.

(Approaching.) Night's closing.

MEPHIS.

Yes, we'll presently away.

MARTHA.

I would entreat you longer yet to stay;

But 'tis a wicked place, just here about;

It is as if the folk had nothing else to do,

Nothing to think of too,

But gaping watch their neighbors, who goes in and out;

And scandal's busy still, do whatso'er one may.

And our young couple?

MEPHIS.

They have flown up there.

The wanton butterflies!

MARTHA.

He seems to take to her.

MEPHIS.

And she to him. 'Tis of the world the way!

A Summer-House.

Margaretruns in, hides behind the door, holds the tip of her finger to her lip, and peeps through the crevice.

MARGARET.

He comes!

FAUST.

Ah, little rogue, so thou

Think'st to provoke me! I have caught thee now!

[He kisses her.

MARGARET.

(Embracing him and returning the kiss.) Dearest of men! I love thee from my heart!

[Mephistophelesknocks.

FAUST.

(Stamping.) Who's there?



artist: franz simm

FAUST. FIRST PART.

faust and margaret in the garden



MEPHIS.

A friend!

FAUST.

A brute!

MEPHIS.

'Tis time to part.

MARTHA.

(*Comes.*) Ay, it is late, good sir.

FAUST.

Mayn't I attend you, then?

MARGARET.

Oh no—my mother would—adieu, adieu!

FAUST.

And must I really then take leave of you?

Farewell!

MARTHA.

Good-bye!

MARGARET.

Ere long to meet again!

[*Exeunt Faust and Mephistopheles.*]

MARGARET.

Good heavens! how all things far and near

Must fill his mind,—a man like this!

Abash'd before him I appear,

And say to all things only yes.

Poor simple child, I cannot see

What 'tis that he can find in me.

[*Exit.*

Forest and Cavern.

FAUST.

(*Alone.*) Spirit sublime! Thou gav'st me, gav'st me all

For which I pray'd! Not vainly hast thou turn'd

To me thy countenance in flaming fire:

Gav'st me glorious nature for my realm,

And also power to feel her and enjoy;

Not merely with a cold and wond'ring glance,

Thou dost permit me in her depths profound,

As in the bosom of a friend, to gaze.

Before me thou dost lead her living tribes,

And dost in silent grove, in air and stream

Teach me to know my kindred. And when roars

The howling storm-blast through the groaning wood,

Wrenching the giant pine, which in its fall

Crashing sweeps down its neighbor trunks and boughs,

While with the hollow noise the hill resounds,

Then thou dost lead me to some shelter'd cave,

Dost there reveal me to myself, and show

Of my own bosom the mysterious depths.

And when, with soothing beam, the moon's pale orb

Full in my view climbs up the pathless sky,
From crag and dewy grove the silvery forms
Of bygone ages hover, and assuage
The joy austere of contemplative thought.
Oh, that naught perfect is assign'd to man,
I feel, alas! With this exalted joy,
Which lifts me near and nearer to the gods,
Thou gav'st me this companion, unto whom
I needs must cling, though cold and insolent;
He still degrades me to myself, and turns
Thy glorious gifts to nothing with a breath.
He in my bosom with malicious zeal
For that fair image fans a raging fire;
From craving to enjoyment thus I reel,
And in enjoyment languish for desire.

[Mephistopheles enters.]

MEPHIS.

Of this lone life have you not had your fill?
How for so long can it have charms for you?
'Tis well enough to try it if you will;
But then away again to something new!

FAUST.

Would you could better occupy your leisure
Than in disturbing thus my hours of joy.

MEPHIS.

Well! well! I'll leave you to yourself with pleasure,

A serious tone you hardly dare employ.

To part from one so crazy, harsh and cross

I should not find a grievous loss.

The livelong day, for you I toil and fret;

Ne'er from his worship's face a hint I get,

What pleases him, or what to let alone.

FAUST.

Ay truly! that is just the proper tone!

He wearies me, and would with thanks be paid!

MEPHIS.

Poor Son of Earth, without my aid,

How would thy weary days have flown?

Thee of thy foolish whims I've cur'd,

Thy vain imaginations banish'd,

And but for me, be well assur'd,

Thou from this sphere must soon have vanish'd.

In rocky hollows and in caverns drear,

Why like an owl sit moping here?

Wherefore from dripping stones and moss with ooze imbued,

Dost suck, like any toad, thy food?

A rare, sweet pastime. Verily!

The doctor cleaveth still to thee.

FAUST.

Dost comprehend what bliss without alloy
From this wild wand'ring in the desert springs?—
Couldst thou but guess the new life-power it brings,
Thou wouldst be fiend enough to envy me my joy.

MEPHIS.

What super-earthly ecstasy! at night,
To lie in darkness on the dewy height,
Embracing heaven and earth in rapture high,
The soul dilating to a deity;
With prescient yearnings pierce the core of earth,
Feel in your laboring breast the six-days' birth,
Enjoy, in proud delight what no one knows,
While your love-rapture o'er creation flows,—
The earthly lost in beatific vision,
And then the lofty intuition—

[With a gesture.

I need not tell you how—to close!

FAUST.

Fie on you!

MEPHIS.

This displeases you? “For shame!”
You are forsooth entitled to exclaim;
We to chaste ears it seems must not pronounce
What, nathless, the chaste heart cannot renounce.

Well, to be brief, the joy as fit occasions rise,
I grudge you not, of specious lies.
But soon the self-deluding vein
Is past, once more thou'rt whirl'd away,
And should it last, thou'lt be the prey
Of frenzy or remorse and pain.
Enough of this! Thy true love dwells apart,
And all to her seems flat and tame;
Alone thine image fills her heart,
She loves thee with an all-devouring flame.
First came thy passion with o'erpowering rush,
Like mountain torrent, swollen by the melted snow;
Full in her heart didst pour the sudden gush,
Now has thy brooklet ceas'd to flow.
Instead of sitting thron'd midst forests wild,
It would become so great a lord
To comfort the enamour'd child,
And the young monkey for her love reward.
To her the hours seem miserably long;
She from the window sees the clouds float by
As o'er the lofty city-walls they fly.
"If I a birdie were!" so runs her song,
Half through the night and all day long;
Cheerful sometimes, more oft at heart full sore;
Fairly outwept seem now her tears,

Anon she tranquil is, or so appears,
And lovesick evermore.

FAUST.

Snake! Serpent vile!

MEPHIS.

(Aside.) Good! If I catch thee with my guile!

FAUST.

Vile reprobate! go get thee hence;
Forbear the lovely girl to name!
Nor in my half-distracted sense,
Kindle anew the smouldering flame!

MEPHIS.

What wouldst thou! She thinks you've taken flight;
It seems she's partly in the right.

FAUST.

I'm near her still—and should I distant rove,
Her I can ne'er forget, ne'er lose her love;
And all things touch'd by those sweet lips of hers,
Even the very Host my envy stirs.

MEPHIS.

'Tis well! I oft have envi'd you indeed,
The twin-pair that among the roses feed.

FAUST.

Pander, avaunt!

MEPHIS.

Go to! I laugh, the while you rail.

The power which fashion'd youth and maid,

Well understood the noble trade;

So neither shall occasion fail.

But hence!—In truth a case for gloom!

Bethink thee, to thy mistress' room

And not to death shouldst go!

FAUST.

What is to me heaven's joy within her arms?

What though my life her bosom warms!—

Do I not ever feel her woe?

The outcast am I not, who knows no rest,

In human monster, aimless and unblest,

Who, like the greedy surge, from rock to rock,

Sweeps down the dread abyss with desperate shock?

While she, within her lowly cot, which grac'd



The Alpine slope, beside the waters wild,

Her homely cares in that small world embrac'd,

Secluded liv'd, a simple artless child.

Was't not enough, in thy delirious whirl,
To blast the steadfast rocks?
Her, and her peace as well,
Must I, God-hated one, to ruin hurl!
Dost claim this holocaust, remorseless Hell!
Fiend, help me to cut short the hours of dread!
Let what must happen, happen speedily!
Her direful doom fall crushing on my head,
And into ruin let her plunge with me!

MEPHIS.

Why how again it seethes and glows!
Away, thou fool! Her torment ease!
When such a head no issue sees,
It pictures straight the final close.
Long life to him who boldly dares!
A devil's pluck thou'rt wont to show;
As for a devil who despairs,
There's naught so mawkish here below.

Margaret's Room.

MARGARET.

(Alone at her spinning-wheel.)

My peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
I find it never,
And nevermore!
Where him I have not,
Is the grave to me;
And bitter as gall

The whole world to me.
My wilder'd brain
Is overwrought;
My feeble senses
Are distraught.
My peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
I find it never,
And nevermore!
For him from the window
I gaze, at home;
For him and him only
Abroad I roam.
His lofty step,
His bearing high,
The smile of his lip,
The power of his eye,
His witching words,
Their tones of bliss,
His hand's fond pressure,
And ah—his kiss!
My peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
I find it never,
And nevermore.
My bosom aches
To feel him near;
Ah, could I clasp
And fold him here!
Kiss him and kiss him
Again would I,
And on his kisses
I fain would die!

Martha's Garden.

Margaret and Faust.

MARGARET.

Promise me, Henry—

FAUST.

What I can!

MARGARET.

How is it with religion in thy mind?

Thou art a dear kind-hearted man,

But I'm afraid not piously inclin'd.

FAUST.

Forbear! Thou feel'st I love thee alone;

For those I love, my life I would lay down,

And none would of their faith or church bereave.

MARGARET.

That's not enough, we must ourselves believe!

FAUST.

Must we?

MARGARET.

Ah, could I but thy soul inspire!

Thou honorest not the sacraments, alas!

FAUST.

I honor them.

MARGARET.

But yet without desire;

'Tis long since thou hast been either to shrift or mass.

Dost thou believe in God?

FAUST.

My darling, who dares say,

Yes, I in God believe?

Question or priest or sage, and they

Seem, in the answer you receive,

To mock the questioner.

MARGARET.

Then thou dost not believe?

FAUST.

Sweet one! my meaning do not misconceive!

Him who dare name

And who proclaim,

Him I believe?

Who that can feel,

His heart can steel,

To say: I believe him not?

The All-embracer,

All sustainer,

Holds and sustains he not

Thee, me, himself?

Lifts not the Heaven its dome above?

Doth not the firm-set earth beneath us lie?

And beaming tenderly with looks of love,

Climb not the everlasting stars on high?

Do I not gaze into thine eyes?

Nature's impenetrable agencies,

Are they not thronging on thy heart and brain,

Viewless, or visible to mortal ken,

Around thee weaving their mysterious chain?

Fill thence thy heart, how large soe'er it be;

And in the feeling when thou utterly art blest,

Then call it, what thou wilt,—

Call it Bliss! Heart! Love! God!

I have no name for it!

'Tis feeling all;

Name is but sound and smoke

Shrouding the glow of heaven.

MARGARET.

All this is doubtless good and fair;

Almost the same the parson says,

Only in slightly different phrase.

FAUST.

Beneath heaven's sunshine, everywhere,

This is the utterance of the human heart;

Each in his language doth the like impart;

Then why not I in mine?

MARGARET.

What thus I hear

Sounds plausible, yet I'm not reconcil'd;

There's something wrong about it; much I fear

That thou art not a Christian.

FAUST.

My sweet child!

MARGARET.

Alas! it long hath sorely troubled me,

To see thee in such odious company.

FAUST.

How so?

MARGARET.

The man who comes with thee, I hate,

Yea, in my spirit's inmost depths abhor;

As his loath'd visage, in my life before,

Naught to my heart e'er gave a pang so great.

FAUST.

Fear not, sweet love!

MARGARET.

His presence chills my blood.

Towards all beside I have a kindly mood;

Yet, though I yearn to gaze on thee, I feel

At sight of him strange horror o'er me steal;

That he's a villain my conviction's strong.

May Heaven forgive me, if I do him wrong!

FAUST.

Yet such strange fellows in the world must be!

MARGARET.

I would not live with such an one as he.

If for a moment he but enter here,

He looks around him with a mocking sneer,
And malice ill-conceal'd;
That he, with naught on earth can sympathize is clear;
Upon his brow 'tis legibly reveal'd,
That to his heart no living soul is dear.
So blest I feel, within thine arms,
So warm and happy—free from all alarms;
And still my heart doth close when he comes near.

FAUST.

Foreboding angel! check thy fear!

MARGARET.

It so o'ermasters me, that when
Or wheresoe'er his step I hear,
I almost think, no more I love thee then.
Besides, when he is near, I ne'er could pray,
This eats into my heart; with thee
The same, my Henry, it must be.

FAUST.

This is antipathy!

MARGARET.

I must away.

FAUST.

For one brief hour then may I never rest,
And heart to heart, and soul to soul be press'd?

MARGARET.

Ah, if I slept alone, to-night
The bolt I fain would leave undrawn for thee;
But then my mother's sleep is light,
Were we surpris'd by her, ah me!
Upon the spot I should be dead.

FAUST.

Dear angel! there's no cause for dread.
Here is a little phial,—if she take
Mix'd in her drink three drops, 'twill steep
Her nature in a deep and soothing sleep.

MARGARET.

What do I not for thy dear sake!
To her it will not harmful prove?

FAUST.

Should I advise else, sweet love?

MARGARET.

I know not, dearest, when thy face I see,
What doth my spirit to thy will constrain;
Already I have done so much for thee,
That scarcely more to do doth now remain.

[*Exit.*

[*Mephistopheles enters.*

MEPHIS.

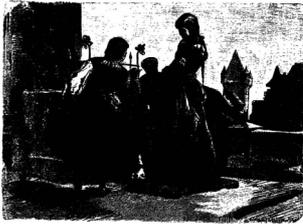
The monkey! Is she gone?

FAUST.

Again hast play'd the spy?

MEPHIS.

Of all that pass'd I'm well appris'd,



I heard the doctor catechis'd,

And trust he'll profit much thereby!

Fain would the girls inquire indeed

Touching their lover's faith, if he

Believe according to the ancient creed;

They think: if pliant there, to us he'll yielding be.

FAUST.

Thou monster, dost not see that this

Pure soul, possess'd by ardent love,

Full of the living faith,

To her of bliss

The only pledge, must holy anguish prove,

Holding the man she loves, fore-doom'd to endless death!

MEPHIS.

Most sensual, supersensualist! The while

A damsel leads thee by the nose!

FAUST.

Of filth and fire abortion vile!

MEPHIS.

In physiognomy strange skill she shows;
She in my presence feels she knows not how;
My mask it seems a hidden sense reveals;
That I'm a genius she must needs allow,
That I'm the very devil perhaps she feels.
So then to-night—

FAUST.

What's that to you?

MEPHIS.

I've my amusement in it too!

At the Well.

Margaret and Bessy with pitchers.

BESSY.

Of Barbara hast nothing heard?

MARGARET.

I rarely go from home,—no, not a word.

BESSY.

'Tis true: Sybilla told me so to-day!

That comes of being proud, methinks;

She play'd the fool at last.

MARGARET.

How so?

BESSY.

They say

That two she feedeth when she eats and drinks.

MARGARET.

Alas!

BESSY.

She's rightly serv'd, in sooth.

How long she hung upon the youth!

What promenades, what jaunts there were,

To dancing booth and village fair!

The first she everywhere must shine,

He always treating her to pastry and to wine.

Of her good looks she was so vain,

So shameless, too, that she did not disdain

Even his presents to retain;

Sweet words and kisses came anon—

And then the virgin flower was gone!

MARGARET.

Poor thing!

BESSY.

Forsooth dost pity her?

At night, when at our wheels we sat,

Abroad our mothers ne'er would let us stir.

Then with her lover she must chat,



artist: franz bimm.

FAUST. FIRST PART.

margaret at the shrine.

Or on the bench, or in the dusky walk,

Thinking the hours too brief for their sweet talk;

Her proud head she will have to bow,

And in white sheet do penance now!

MARGARET.

But he will surely marry her?

BESSY.

Not he!

He won't be such a fool! a gallant lad

Like him can roam o'er land and sea;

Besides, he's off.

MARGARET.

That is not fair!

BESSY.

If she should get him, 'twere almost as bad!

Her myrtle wreath the boys would tear;

And then we girls would plague her too,

For we chopp'd straw before her door would strew!

[*Exit.*

MARGARET.

(*Walking towards home.*)

How stoutly once I could inveigh,

If a poor maiden went astray!

Not words enough my tongue could find

'Gainst others' sin to speak my mind;

Black as it seem'd, I blacken'd it still more,

And strove to make it blacker than before,

And did myself securely bless—

Now my own trespass doth appear!

Yet ah!—what urg'd me to transgress,

Sweet heaven, it was so good! so dear!

Zwinger.

Enclosure between the City-wall and the Gate.

[*In the niche of the wall a devotional image of the Mater Dolorosa, with flower-pots before it.*

MARGARET.

(*Putting fresh flowers in the pots.*)

Ah, rich in sorrow, thou,
Stoop thy maternal brow,
And mark with pitying eye my misery!
The sword in thy pierc'd heart,
Thou dost with bitter smart,
Gaze upwards on thy Son's death agony.
To the dear God on high,
Ascends thy piteous sigh,
Pleading for his and thy sore misery.
Ah, who can know

The torturing woe,
The pangs that rack me to the bone?
How my poor heart, without relief,
Trembles and throbs, its yearning grief
Thou knowest, thou alone!
Ah, wheresoe'er I go,
With woe, with woe, with woe,
My anguish'd breast is aching!
When all alone I creep,
I weep, I weep, I weep,
Alas! my heart is breaking!
The flower-pots at my window
Were wet with tears of mine,
The while I pluck'd these blossoms,
At dawn to deck thy shrine!
When early in my chamber
Shone bright the rising morn,
I sat there on my pallet,
My heart with anguish torn.
Help! from disgrace and death deliver me!
Ah! rich in sorrow, thou,
Stoop thy maternal brow,
And mark with pitying eye my misery!

Night.

Street before Margaret's door.

VALENTINE.

(A soldier, Margaret's brother.)

When seated 'mong the jovial crowd
Where merry comrades boasting loud,
Each nam'd with pride his favorite lass,
And in her honor drain'd his glass;
Upon my elbows I would lean,
With easy quiet view the scene,
Nor give my tongue the rein, until
Each swaggering blade had talk'd his fill.
Then smiling I my beard would stroke,
The while, with brimming glass, I spoke;
"Each to his taste!—but to my mind,
Where in the country will you find,
A maid, as my dear Gretchen fair,
Who with my sister can compare?"
Cling! clang! so rang the jovial sound!
Shouts of assent went circling round;

Pride of her sex is she!—cried some;
Then were the noisy boasters dumb.
And now!—I could tear out my hair,
Or dash my brains out in despair!—
Me every scurvy knave may twit,
With stinging jest and taunting sneer!
Like skulking debtor I must sit,
And sweat each casual word to hear!
And though I smash'd them one and all,—
Yet them I could not liars call.
Who comes this way? who's sneaking here?
If I mistake not, two draw near.
If he be one, have at him;—well I wot
Alive he shall not leave this spot!



Faust. Mephistopheles.

FAUST.

How from yon sacristy, athwart the night,
Its beams the ever-burning taper throws,
While ever waning, fades the glimmering light,
As gathering darkness doth around it close!
So night-like gloom doth in my bosom reign.

MEPHIS.

I'm like a tom-cat in a thievish vein,
That up fire-ladders tall and steep,
And round the walls doth slyly creep;
Virtuous withal, I feel, with, I confess,
A touch of thievish joy and wantonness.
Thus through my limbs already there doth bound
The glorious Walpurgis night!
After to-morrow it again comes round,

What one doth wake for, then one knows aright!

FAUST.

Meanwhile, the flame which I see glimmering there,

Is it the treasure rising in the air?

MEPHIS.

Ere long, I make no doubt, but you

To raise the chest will feel inclin'd;

Erewhile I peep'd within it too;

With lion-dollars 'tis well lin'd.

FAUST.

And not a trinket? not a ring?

Wherewith my lovely girl to deck?

MEPHIS.

I saw among them some such thing,

A string of pearls to grace her neck.

FAUST.

'Tis well! I'm always loath to go,

Without some gift my love to show.

MEPHIS.

Some pleasures gratis to enjoy,

Should surely cause you no annoy.

While bright with stars the heavens appear,

I'll sing a masterpiece of art:

A moral song shall charm her ear,

More surely to beguile her heart.

(Sings to the guitar.)

Kathrina, say,
Why lingering stay
At dawn of day
Before your lover's door?
Maiden, beware,
Nor enter there,
Lest forth you fare,
A maiden never more.
Maiden, take heed!
Reck well my rede!
Is't done, the deed?
Good-night, you poor, poor thing!
The spoiler's lies,
His arts despise,
Nor yield your prize,
Without the marriage ring!

VALENTINE.

(Steps forward.) Whom are you luring here? I'll give it you!

Accursed rat-catchers, your strains I'll end!



artist: franz bimm.

FAUST. FIRST PART.

the death of valentine.

First, to the devil the guitar I'll send!

Then to the devil with the singer too!

MEPHIS.

The poor guitar! 'tis done for now.

VALENTINE.

Your skull shall follow next, I trow!

MEPHIS.

(*To Faust.*) Doctor, stand fast! your strength collect!

Be prompt, and do as I direct.

Out with your whisk! keep close, I pray,

I'll parry! do you thrust away!

VALENTINE.

Then parry that!

MEPHIS.

Why not?

VALENTINE.

That too!

MEPHIS.

With ease!

VALENTINE.

The devil fights for you!

Why how is this? my hand's already lamed!

MEPHIS.

(*To Faust.*) Thrust home!

VALENTINE.

(Falls.)

Alas!

MEPHIS.

There! Now the lubber's tamed!

But quick, away! We must at once take wing;

A cry of murder strikes upon the ear;

With the police I know my course to steer,

But with the blood-ban 'tis another thing.

MARTHA.

(At the window.) Without! without!

MARGARET.

(At the window.) Quick, bring a light!

MARTHA.

(As above.) They rail and scuffle, scream and fight!

PEOPLE.

One lieth here already dead!

MARTHA.

(Coming out.) Where are the murderers? Are they fled?

MARGARET.

(Coming out.) Who lieth here?

PEOPLE.

Thy mother's son.

MARGARET.

Almighty God! I am undone!

VALENTINE.

I'm dying—'tis a soon-told tale,

And sooner done the deed.

Why, women, do ye howl and wail?

To my last words give heed!

[All gather round him.

Gretchen, thou'rt still of tender age,

And, well I wot, not over sage,

Thou dost thy matters ill;

Let this in confidence be said:

Since thou the path of shame dost tread,

Tread it with right good will!

MARGARET.

My brother! God! what can this mean?

VALENTINE.

Abstain,

Nor dare God's holy name profane!

What's done, alas, is done and past!

Matters will take their course at last;

By stealth thou dost begin with one,

Others will follow him anon;

And when a dozen thee have known,

Thou'lt common be to all the town.

When infamy is newly born,
In secret she is brought to light,
And the mysterious veil of night
O'er head and ears is drawn;
The loathsome birth men fain would slay;
But soon, full grown, she waxes bold,
And though not fairer to behold,
With brazen front insults the day:
The more abhorrent to the sight,
The more she courts the day's pure light.
The time already I discern,
When thee all honest folk will spurn,
And shun thy hated form to meet,
As when a corpse infects the street.
Thy heart will sink in blank despair,
When they shall look thee in the face!
A golden chain no more thou'lt wear—
Nor near the altar take in church thy place—
In fair lace collar simply dight
Thou'lt dance no more with spirits light—
In darksome corners thou wilt bide,
Where beggars vile and cripples hide—
And e'en though God thy crime forgive,
On earth, a thing accurs'd, thou'lt live!

MARTHA.

Your parting soul to God commend;
Your dying breath in slander will you spend?

VALENTINE.

Could I but reach thy wither'd frame,
Thou wretched beldame, void of shame!
Full measure I might hope to win
Of pardon then for every sin.

MARGARET.

Brother! what agonizing pain!

VALENTINE.

I tell thee! from vain tears abstain!
'Twas thy dishonor pierc'd my heart,
Thy fall the fatal death-stab gave.
Through the death-sleep I now depart
To God, a soldier true and brave.

[Dies.

Cathedral.

Service, Organ and Anthem.

Margaretamongst a number of people.

Evil-SpiritbehindMargaret.

EVIL-SPIRIT.

How different, Gretchen, was it once with thee,
When thou, still full of innocence,
Here to the altar camest,

And from the small and well-conn'd book
Didst lisp thy prayer,
Half childish sport,
Half God in thy young heart!
Gretchen!
What thoughts are thine?
What deed of shame
Lurks in thy sinful heart?
Is thy prayer utter'd for thy mother's soul,
Who into long, long torment slept through thee?
Whose blood is on thy threshold?
—And stirs there not already 'neath thy heart
Another quick'ning pulse, that even now
Tortures itself and thee
With its foreboding presence?

MARGARET.

Woe! woe!
Oh, could I free me from the thoughts
That hither, thither, crowd upon my brain,
Against my will!

CHORUS.

*Dies iræ, dies illa,
Solvat sæclum in favilla.*

[*The organ sounds.*]

EVIL-SPIRIT.

Grim horror seizes thee!
The trumpet sounds!
The graves are shaken!
And thy heart
From ashy rest
For torturing flames
Anew created,
Trembles into life!



MARGARET.

Would I were hence!
It is as if the organ
Chok'd my breath,
As if the choir
Melted my inmost heart!

CHORUS.

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

MARGARET.

I feel oppress'd!
The pillars on the wall
Imprison me!
The vaulted roof
Weighs down upon me!—air!

EVIL-SPIRIT.

Wouldst hide thee? sin and shame
Remain not hidden!

Air! light!

Woe's thee!

CHORUS.

*Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
Quem patronum regaturus!
Cum vix justus sit securus.*

EVIL-SPIRIT.

The glorified their faces turn

Away from thee!

Shudder the pure to reach

Their hands to thee!

Woe!

CHORUS.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus.—

MARGARET.

Neighbor! your smelling bottle!

[She swoons away.]

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WALPURGIS-NIGHT.



The Hartz Mountains.

District of Schierke and Elend.

Faust and Mephistopheles.

MEPHIS.

A broomstick dost thou not at least desire?
The roughest he-goat fain would I bestride,
By this road from our goal we're still far wide.

FAUST.

While fresh upon my legs, so long I naught require,
Except this knotty staff. Beside,
What boots it to abridge a pleasant way?
Along the labyrinth of these vales to creep,
Then scale these rocks, whence, in eternal spray,
Adown the cliffs the silvery fountains leap:
Such is the joy that seasons paths like these!
Spring weaves already in the birchen trees;
E'en the late pine-grove feels her quickening powers;
Should she not work within these limbs of ours?

MEPHIS.

Naught of this genial influence do I know!

Within me all is wintry. Frost and snow

I should prefer my dismal path to bound.

How sadly, yonder, with belated glow

Rises the ruddy moon's imperfect round,

Shedding so faint a light at every tread

One's sure to stumble 'gainst a rock or tree!

An Ignis Fatuus I must call instead.

Yonder one burning merrily, I see.

Holla! my friend, may I request your light?

Why should you flare away so uselessly?

Be kind enough to show us up the height!

IGNIS FATUUS.

Through reverence, I hope I may subdue

The lightness of my nature; true,

Our course is but a zigzag one.

MEPHIS.

Ho! ho!

So man, forsooth, he thinks to imitate!

Now, in the devil's name, for once go straight,

Or out at once your flickering life I'll blow!

IGNIS FATUUS.

That you are master here is obvious quite;

To do your will, I'll cordially essay;

Only reflect! The hill is magic-mad to-night;
And if to show the path you choose a meteor's light,
You must not wonder should we go astray.

Faust, Mephistopheles, Ignis Fatuus.

[In alternate song.]

Through this dream and magic-sphere,
Lead us on, thou flickering guide.
Pilot well our bold career!
That we may with onward stride
Gain yon vast and desert waste!
See how tree on tree with haste
Rush amain, the granite blocks
Make obeisance as they go!
Hark! the grim, long-snouted rocks,
How they snort, and how they blow!
Brook and brooklet hurrying flow
Through the turf and stones along;
Hark, the rustling! Hark, the song!
Hearken to love's plaintive lays;
Voices of those heavenly days—
What we hope, and what we love!
Like the song of olden time,
Echo's voice repeats the chime.

To-whit! To-who! It sounds more near;

Pewit, owl, and jay appear,

All awake, around, above!

Paunchy salamanders too

Crawl, long-limbed, the bushes through!

And, like snakes, the roots of trees

Coil themselves from rock and sand,

Stretching many a wondrous band,

Us to frighten, us to seize;

From rude knots with life embued,

Polyp-fangs abroad they spread,
To snare the wanderer! 'Neath our tread,
Mice, in myriads, thousand-hued,
Through the heath and through the moss!
And the fire-flies' glittering throng,
Wildering escort, whirls along,
Here and there, our path across.
Tell me, stand we motionless,
Or still forward do we press?
All things round us whirl and fly,
Rocks and trees make strange grimaces,
Dazzling meteors change their places,
How they puff and multiply!

MEPHIS.

Now grasp my doublet—we at last
Have reached a central precipice,
Whence we a wondering glance may cast,
How Mammon lights the dark abyss.

FAUST.

How through the chasms strangely gleams,
A lurid light, like dawn's red glow,
Pervading with its quivering beams,
The gorges of the gulf below!
There vapors rise, there clouds float by,
And here through mist the splendor shines;

Now, like a fount, it bursts on high,
Now glideth on in slender lines;
Far-reaching, with a hundred veins,
Through the far valley see it glide,
Here, where the gorge the flood restrains,
At once it scatters far and wide;
Anear, like showers of golden sand
Strewn broadcast, sputter sparks of light:
And mark yon rocky walls that stand
Ablaze, in all their towering height!

MEPHIS.

Sir Mammon for this festival,
Grandly illumes his palace hall!
To see it was a lucky chance;
E'en now the boist'rous guests advance.

FAUST.

How the fierce tempest sweeps around!
Upon my neck it strikes with sudden shock!

MEPHIS.

Cling to these ancient ribs of granite rock,
Else it will hurl you down to yon abyss profound.
A murky vapor thickens night.
Hark! Through the woods the tempests roar!
The owlets flit in wild affright.
Split are the columns that upbore

The leafy palace, green for aye:
The shiver'd branches whirr and sigh,
Yawn the huge trunks with mighty groan,
The roots, upriven, creak and moan!
In fearful and entangled fall,
One crashing ruin whelms them all,
While through the desolate abyss,
Sweeping the wreck-strown precipice,
The raging storm-blasts howl and hiss!
Hear'st thou voices sounding clear,
Distant now and now more near?
Hark! the mountain ridge along,
Streameth a raving magic-song!

WITCHES.

(In chorus.) Now to the Brocken the witches hie,
The stubble is yellow, the corn is green;
Thither the gathering legions fly,
And sitting aloft is Sir Urian seen:
O'er stick and o'er stone they go whirling along,
Witches and he-goats, a motley throng.

VOICES.

Alone old Baubo's coming now;
She rides upon a farrow sow.

CHORUS.

Honor to her, to whom honor is due!

Forward, Dame Baubo! Honor to you!

A goodly sow and mother thereon,

The whole witch chorus follows anon.

VOICE.

Which way didst come?

VOICE.

O'er Ilsenstein!

There I peep'd in an owlet's nest.

With her broad eye she gazed in mine!

VOICE.

Drive to the devil, thou hellish pest!

Why ride so hard?

VOICE.

She has graz'd my side;

Look at the wounds, how deep and how wide!

WITCHES.

(In chorus.) The way is broad, the way is long;

What mad pursuit! What tumult wild!

Scratches the besom and sticks the prong;

Crush'd is the mother, and stifled the child.

WIZARDS.

(Half chorus.) Like house-encumber'd snail we creep;

While far ahead the women keep,

For when to the devil's house we speed,

By a thousand steps they take the lead.

THE OTHER HALF.

Not so, precisely do we view it;—

They with a thousand steps may do it;

But let them hasten as they can,

With one long bound 'tis clear'd by man.

VOICES.

(Above.) Come with us, come with us from Felsensee.

VOICES.

(From below.) Aloft to you we would mount with glee!

We wash, and free from all stain are we,

Yet barren evermore must be!

BOTH CHORUSES.

The wind is hush'd, the stars grow pale,

The pensive moon her light doth veil;

And whirling on, the magic choir,

Sputter forth sparks of drizzling fire.

VOICE.

(From below.) Stay! stay!

VOICE.

(From above.) What voice of woe

Calls from the cavern'd depths below?

VOICE.

(From below.) Take me with you! Oh take me too!

Three centuries I climb in vain,
And yet can ne'er the summit gain!
To be with my kindred I am fain.

BOTH CHORUSES.

Broom and pitchfork, goat and prong,
Mounted on these we whirl along;
Who vainly strives to climb to-night,
Is evermore a luckless wight!

DEMI-WITCH.

(Below.) I hobble after, many a day;
Already the others are far away!
No rest at home can I obtain—
Here too my efforts are in vain!

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

Salve gives the witches strength to rise;
A rag for a sail does well enough;
A goodly ship is every trough;
To-night who flies not, never flies.

BOTH CHORUSES.

And when the topmost peak we round,
Then alight ye on the ground;
The heath's wide regions cover ye
With your mad swarms of witchery!
[They let themselves down.]

MEPHIS.

They crowd and jostle, whirl and flutter!

They whisper, babble, twirl and splutter!

They glimmer, sparkle, stink and flare—

A true witch-element! Beware!

Stick close! else we shall sever'd be.

Where art thou?

FAUST.

(In the distance.) Here!

MEPHIS.

Already whirl'd so far away!

The master then indeed I needs must play.

Give ground! Squire Voland comes! Sweet folk, give ground!

Here, doctor, grasp me! With a single bound

Let us escape this ceaseless jar;

Even for me too mad these people are.

Hard by there shineth something with peculiar glare,

Yon brake allureth me; it is not far;

Come, come along with me! we'll slip in there.

FAUST.

Spirit of contradiction! Lead! I'll follow straight!

'Twas wisely done, however, to repair

On May-night to the Brocken, and when there,

By our own choice ourselves to isolate!

MEPHIS.

Mark, of those flames the motley glare!

A merry club assembles there.

In a small circle one is not alone.

FAUST.

I'd rather be above, though, I must own!

Already fire and eddying smoke I view;

The impetuous millions to the devil ride;

Full many a riddle will be there untied.

MEPHIS.

Ay! and full many a one be tied anew.

But let the great world rave and riot!

Here will we house ourselves in quiet.

A custom 'tis of ancient date,

Our lesser worlds within the great world to create!

Young witches there I see, naked and bare,

And old ones, veil'd more prudently.

For my sake only courteous be!

The trouble's small, the sport is rare.

Of instruments I hear the cursed din—

One must get used to it. Come in! come in!

There's now no help for it. I'll step before,

And introducing you as my good friend,

Confer on you one obligation more.

How say you now? 'Tis no such paltry room;

Why only look, you scarce can see the end.

A hundred fires in rows disperse the gloom;

They dance, they talk, they cook, make love and drink:

Where could we find aught better, do you think?

FAUST.

To introduce us, do you purpose here

As devil or as wizard to appear?

MEPHIS.

Though I am wont indeed to strict incognito,

Yet upon gala-days one must one's orders show.

No garter have I to distinguish me,

Nathless the cloven foot doth here give dignity.

Seest thou yonder snail? Crawling this way she hies;

With searching feelers, she, no doubt,

Hath me already scented out;

Here, even if I would, for me there's no disguise.

From fire to fire, we'll saunter at our leisure,

The gallant you, I'll cater for your pleasure.

(To a party seated round some expiring embers.)

Old gentlemen, apart, why sit ye moping here?

Ye in the midst should be of all this jovial cheer,

Girt round with noise and youthful riot;

At home one surely has enough of quiet.

GENERAL.

In nations put his trust who may,

Whate'er for them one may have done;

The people are like women, they

Honor your rising stars alone!

MINISTER.

Too far from truth and right they wander now;

I must extol the good old ways,

For truly when all spoke our praise,

Then was the golden age, I trow.

PARVENU.

Ne'er were we 'mong your dullards found,

And what we ought not, that we did of old;

Yet now are all things turning round,

Just when we most desired them fast to hold.

AUTHOR.

Who, as a rule, a treatise now would care

To read, of even moderate sense?

As for the rising generation, ne'er

Has youth displayed such arrogant pretence.

MEPHIS.

(Suddenly appearing very old.)

Since for the last time I the Brocken scale,

That folk are ripe for doomsday, now one sees;

And just because my cask begins to fail,

So the whole world is also on the lees.

HUCKSTER-WITCH.

Stop, gentlemen, nor pass me by,

Of wares I have a choice collection:

Pray honor them with your inspection.

Lose not this opportunity!

No fellow to my booth you'll find

On earth, for 'mong my store there's naught,

Which to the world, and to mankind,

Hath not some direful mischief wrought.

No dagger here which hath not flow'd with blood,

No bowl which hath not pour'd into some healthy frame

Hot poison's life-consuming flood,

No trinket, but hath wrought some woman's shame,



artist franz simm

FAUST. FIRST PART.

walpurgis night

No weapon but hath cut some sacred tie,

Or from behind hath stabb'd an enemy.

MEPHIS.

Gossip! For wares like these the time's gone by.

What's done is past! what's past is done!

With novelties your booth supply;

Now novelties attract alone.

FAUST.

May this wild scene my senses spare!

This, may in truth be call'd a fair!

MEPHIS.

Upward the eddying concourse throng;

Thinking to push, thyself art push'd along.

FAUST.

Who's that, pray?

MEPHIS.

Mark her well! That's Lilith.

FAUST.

Who?

MEPHIS.

Adam's first wife. Of her rich locks beware!

That charm in which she's parallel'd by few;

When in its toils a youth she doth ensnare,

He will not soon escape, I promise you.

FAUST.

There sit a pair, the old one with the young;
Already they have bravely danced and sprung!

MEPHIS.

Here there is no repose to-day.
Another dance begins; we'll join it, come away!

FAUST.

(Dancing with the young one.)

Once a fair vision came to me;
Therein I saw an apple tree,
Two beauteous apples charm'd mine eyes;
I climb'd forthwith to reach the prize.

THE FAIR ONE.

Apples still fondly ye desire,
From paradise it hath been so.
Feelings of joy my breast inspire
That such too in my garden grow.

MEPHIS.

(With the old one.) Once a weird vision came to me;
Therein I saw a rifted tree.
It had a ;
But as it was it pleas'd me too.

THE OLD ONE.

I beg most humbly to salute

The gallant with the cloven foot!

Let him a . . . have ready here,

If he a . . . does not fear.

PROCTOPHANTASMIST.

Accursed mob! How dare ye thus to meet?

Have I not shown and demonstrated too,

That ghosts stand not on ordinary feet?

Yet here ye dance, as other mortals do!

THE FAIR ONE.

(Dancing.) Then at our ball, what doth he here?

FAUST.

(Dancing.) Oh! He must everywhere appear.

He must adjudge, when others dance;

If on each step his say's not said,

So is that step as good as never made.

He's most annoy'd, so soon as we advance;

If ye would circle in one narrow round,

As he in his old mill, then doubtless he

Your dancing would approve,—especially

If ye forthwith salute him with respect profound!

PROCTOPHANTASMIST.

Still here! what arrogance! unheard of quite!

Vanish; we now have fill'd the world with light!

Laws are unheeded by the devil's host;

Wise as we are, yet Tegel hath its ghost!

How long at this conceit I've swept with all my might,

Lost is the labor: 'tis unheard of quite!

THE FAIR ONE.

Cease here to teaze us any more, I pray.

PROCTOPHANTASMIST.

Spirits, I plainly to your face declare:

No spiritual control myself will bear,

Since my own spirit can exert no sway.

[The dancing continues.]

To-night, I see, I shall in naught succeed;

But I'm prepar'd my travels to pursue,

And hope, before my final step indeed,

To triumph over bards and devils too.

MEPHIS.

Now in some puddle will he take his station,

Such is his mode of seeking consolation;

Where leeches, feasting on his blood, will drain

Spirit and spirits from his haunted brain.

(To Faust, who has left the dance.)

But why the charming damsel leave, I pray,

Who to you in the dance so sweetly sang?

FAUST.

Ah! in the very middle of her lay,

Out of her mouth a small red mouse there sprang.

MEPHIS.

Suppose there did! One must not be too nice:

'Twas well it was not gray, let that suffice.

Who 'mid his pleasures for a trifle cares?

FAUST.

Then saw I—

MEPHIS.

What?

FAUST.

Mephisto, seest thou there

Standing far off, a lone child, pale and fair?

Slow from the spot her drooping form she tears,

And seems with shackled feet to move along;

I own, within me the delusion's strong,

That she the likeness of my Gretchen wears.

MEPHIS.

Gaze not upon her! 'Tis not good! Forbear!

'Tis lifeless, magical, a shape of air,

An idol. Such to meet with, bodes no good;

That rigid look of hers doth freeze man's blood,

And well-nigh petrifies his heart to stone:—

The story of Medusa thou hast known.

FAUST.

Ay, verily! a corpse's eyes are those,

Which there was no fond loving hand to close.

That is the bosom I so fondly press'd,

That my sweet Gretchen's form, so oft caress'd!

MEPHIS.

Deluded fool! 'Tis magic, I declare!

To each she doth his lov'd one's image wear.

FAUST.

What bliss! what torture! vainly I essay

To turn me from that piteous look away.

How strangely doth a single crimson line

Around that lovely neck its coil entwine,

It shows no broader than a knife's blunt edge!

MEPHIS.

Quite right. I see it also, and allege

That she beneath her arm her head can bear,

Since Perseus cut it off.—But you I swear

Are craving for illusion still!

Come then, ascend you little hill!

As on the Prater all is gay,

And if my senses are not gone,

I see a theatre,—what's going on?

SERVIBILIS.

They are about to recommence;—the play

Will be the last of seven, and spick-span new—

'Tis usual here that number to present—

A dilettante did the piece invent,

And dilettanti will enact it too.

Excuse me, gentlemen; to me's assign'd

As dilettante to uplift the curtain.

MEPHIS.

You on the Blocksberg I'm rejoic'd to find,

That 'tis your most appropriate sphere is certain.

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WALPURGIS-NIGHT'S DREAM; OR, OBERON AND TITANIA'S Golden Wedding Feast.

INTERMEZZO.

Theatre.

MANAGER.

Vales, where mists still shift and play,
To ancient hill succeeding,—
These our scenes;—so we, to-day,
May rest, brave sons of Mieding.

HERALD.

That the marriage golden be,
Must fifty years be ended;
More dear this feast of gold to me,
Contention now suspended.

OBERON.

Spirits, are ye hovering near,
Show yourselves around us!
King and queen behold ye here,
Love hath newly bound us.

PUCK.

Puck draws near and wheels about,
In mazy circles dancing!
Hundreds swell his joyous shout,
Behind him still advancing.

ARIEL.

Ariel wakes his dainty air,
His lyre celestial stringing;
Fools he lureth, and the fair,
With his celestial singing.

OBERON.

Wedded ones, would ye agree,
We court your imitation:
Would ye fondly love as we,
We counsel separation.

TITANIA.

If husband scold and wife retort,
Then bear them far asunder;
Her to the burning South transport,
And him the North Pole under.

THE WHOLE ORCHESTRA.

(Fortissimo.)

Flies and midges all unite
With frog and chirping cricket,
Our orchestra throughout the night,
Resounding in the thicket!

(Solo.)

Yonder doth the bagpipe come!
Its sack an airy bubble.
Schnick, schnick, schnack, with nasal hum,
Its notes it doth redouble.

EMBRYO SPIRIT.

Spider's foot and midge's wing,
A toad in form and feature;
Together verses it can string,
Though scarce a living creature.

A LITTLE PAIR.

Tiny step and lofty bound,
Through dew and exhalation;
Ye trip it deftly on the ground,
But gain no elevation.

INQUISITIVE TRAVELLER.

Can I indeed believe my eyes?
Is't not mere masquerading?

What! Oberon in beauteous guise,
Among the groups parading!

ORTHODOX.

No claws, no tail to whisk about,
To fright us at our revel;—
Yet like the gods of Greece, no doubt,
He too's a genuine devil.

NORTHERN ARTIST.

These that I'm hitting off to-day
Are sketches unpretending;
Towards Italy without delay,
My steps I think of bending.

PURIST.

Alas! ill-fortune leads me here,
Where riot still grows louder;
And 'mong the witches gather'd here,
But two alone wear powder!

YOUNG WITCH.

Your powder and your petticoat
Suit hags, there's no gainsaying;
Hence I sit fearless on my goat,
My naked charms displaying.

MATRON.

We're too well-bred to squabble here,
Or insult back to render;
But may you wither soon, my dear,
Although so young and tender.

LEADER OF THE BAND.

Nose of fly and gnat's proboscis,
Throng not the naked beauty!
Frogs and crickets in the mosses,
Keep time and do your duty!

WEATHERCOCK.

(Towards one side.)

What charming company I view
Together here collected!
Gay bachelors, a hopeful crew,
And brides so unaffected!

WEATHERCOCK.

(Towards the other side.)

Unless indeed the yawning ground
Should open to receive them,
From this vile crew, with sudden bound,
To hell I'd jump and leave them.

XENIEN.

With small sharp shears, in insect guise,
Behold us at your revel!
That we may tender, filial-wise,
Our homage to the devil.

HENNINGS.

Look now at yonder eager crew,
How naïvely they're jesting!
That they have tender hearts and true,
They stoutly keep protesting!

MUSAGET.

One's self amid this witchery
How pleasantly one loses;
For witches easier are to me
To govern than the Muses!

CI-DEVANT GENIUS OF THE AGE.

With proper folks when we appear,
No one can then surpass us!
Keep close, wide is the Blocksberg here
As Germany's Parnassus.

INQUISITIVE TRAVELLER.

How name ye that stiff formal man,
Who strides with lofty paces?
He tracks the game where'er he can,
"He scents the Jesuits' traces."

CRANE.

Where waters troubled are or clear,
To fish I am delighted;
Thus pious gentlemen appear
With devils here united.

WORLDLING.

By pious people, it is true,
No medium is rejected;
Conventicles, and not a few,
On Blocksberg are erected.

DANCER.

Another choir is drawing nigh,
Far off the drums are beating.
Be still! 'tis but the bittern's cry,
Its changeless note repeating.

DANCING MASTER.

Each twirls about and never stops,
And as he can advances.
The crooked leaps, the clumsy hops,
Nor careth how he dances.

FIDDLER.

To take each other's life, I trow,
Would cordially delight them!
As Orpheus' lyre the beasts, so now
The bagpipe doth unite them.

DOGMATIST.

My views, in spite of doubt and sneer,
I hold with stout persistence,
Inferring from the devils here,

The evil one's existence.

IDEALIST.

My every sense rules Phantasy
With sway quite too potential;
Sure I'm demented if the *I*
Alone is the essential.

REALIST.

This entity's a dreadful bore,
And cannot choose but vex me;
The ground beneath me ne'er before
Thus totter'd to perplex me.

SUPERNATURALIST.

Well pleas'd assembled here I view
Of spirits this profusion;
From devils, touching angels too,
I gather some conclusion.

SCEPTIC.

The ignis fatuus they track out,
And think they're near the treasure.
Devil alliterates with doubt,
Here I abide with pleasure.

LEADER OF THE BAND.

Frog and cricket in the mosses,—
Confound your gasconading!
Nose of fly and gnat's proboscis;—
Most tuneful serenading!

THE KNOWING ONES.

Sans-souci, so this host we greet,
Their jovial humor showing;
There's now no walking on our feet,
So on our heads we're going.

THE AWKWARD ONES.

In seasons past we snatch'd, 'tis true,

Some titbits by our cunning;
Our shoes, alas, are now danc'd through,
On our bare soles we're running.

WILL-O'-THE-WISPS.

From marshy bogs we sprang to light,
Yet here behold us dancing;
The gayest gallants of the night,
In glitt'ring rows advancing.

SHOOTING STAR.

With rapid motion from on high,
I shot in starry splendor;
Now prostrate on the grass I lie;—
Who aid will kindly render?

THE MASSIVE ONES.

Room! wheel round! They're coming! lo!
Down sink the bending grasses.
Though spirits, yet their limbs, we know,
Are huge substantial masses.

PUCK.

Don't stamp so heavily, I pray;
Like elephants you're treading!
And 'mong the elves be Puck to-day,
The stoutest at the wedding!

ARIEL.

If nature boon, or subtle sprite,
Endow your soul with pinions;—
Then follow to yon rosy height,
Through ether's calm dominions.

ORCHESTRA.

(Pianissimo.)

Drifting cloud and misty wreathes
Are fill'd with light elysian;
O'er reed and leaf the zephyr breathes—
So fades the fairy vision!



A Gloomy Day.

A Plain.

Faust and Mephistopheles.

FAUST.

IN misery! despairing! long wandering pitifully on the face of the earth and now imprisoned! This gentle hapless creature, immured in the dungeon as a malefactor and reserved for horrid tortures! That it should come to this! To this!—Perfidious, worthless spirit, and this thou hast concealed from me!—Stand! ay, stand! roll in malicious rage thy fiendish eyes! Stand and brave me with thine insupportable presence! Imprisoned! In hopeless misery! Delivered over to the power of evil spirits and the judgment of un pitying humanity!—And me, the while, thou wert lulling with tasteless dissipations, concealing from me her growing anguish, and leaving her to perish without help!

MEPHIS.

She is not the first.

FAUST.

Hound! Execrable monster!—Back with him, oh thou infinite spirit! back with the reptile into his dog's shape, in which it was his wont to scamper before me at eventide, to roll before the feet of the harmless wanderer, and to fasten on his shoulders when he fell! Change him again into his favorite shape, that he may crouch on his belly before me in the dust, whilst I spurn him with my foot, the reprobate!—Not the first!—Woe! woe! By no human soul is it conceivable, that more than one human creature has ever sunk into a depth of wretchedness like this, or that the first in her writhing death-agony should not have atoned in the sight of all-pardoning Heaven for the guilt of all the rest! The misery of this one pierces me to the very marrow, and harrows up my soul; thou art grinning calmly over the doom of thousands!

MEPHIS.

Now we are once again at our wit's end, just where the reason of you mortals snaps! Why dost thou seek our fellowship, if thou canst not go through with it? Wilt fly, and art not proof against dizziness? Did we force ourselves on thee, or thou on us?

FAUST.

Cease thus to gnash thy ravenous fangs at me! I loathe thee!—Great and glorious spirit, thou who didst vouchsafe to reveal thyself unto me, thou who dost know my very heart and soul, why hast thou linked me with this base associate, who feeds on mischief and revels in destruction?

MEPHIS.

Hast done?

FAUST.

Save her!—or woe to thee! The direst of curses on thee for thousands of years!

MEPHIS.

I cannot loose the bands of the avenger, nor withdraw his bolts.—Save her!—Who was it plunged her into perdition? I or thou?

[Faust looks wildly around.]

MEPHIS.

Wouldst grasp the thunder? Well for you, poor mortals, that 'tis not yours to wield! To smite to atoms the being, however innocent, who obstructs his path, such is the tyrant's fashion of relieving himself in difficulties!

FAUST.

Convey me thither! She shall be free!

MEPHIS.

And the danger to which thou dost expose thyself! Know, the guilt of blood, shed by thy hand, lies yet upon the town. Over the place where fell the murdered one, avenging spirits hover and watch for the returning murderer.

FAUST.

This too from thee? The death and downfall of a world be on thee, monster! Conduct me thither, I say, and set her free!

MEPHIS.

I will conduct thee. And what I can do,—hear! Have I all power in heaven and upon earth? I'll cloud the senses of the warder,—do thou possess thyself of the keys and lead her forth with human hand! I will keep watch! The magic steeds are waiting, I bear thee off. Thus much is in my power.

FAUST.

Up and away!

Night. *Open country.*

Faust. Mephistopheles.

(Rushing along on black horses.)

FAUST.

What weave they yonder round the Ravenstone?

MEPHIS.

I know not what they shape and brew.

FAUST.

They're soaring, swooping, bending, stooping.

MEPHIS.

A witches' pack.

FAUST.

They charm, they strew.

MEPHIS.

On! on!

Dungeon.

FAUST.

(With a bunch of keys and a lamp before a small iron door.) A fear unwonted o'er my spirit falls;

Man's concentrated woe o'erwhelms me here!

She dwells immur'd within these dripping walls;

Her only trespass a delusion dear!

Thou lingerest at the fatal door?

Thou dread'st to see her face once more?

On! While thou dalliest, draws her death-hour near.

[He seizes the lock. Margaretsinging within.]

My mother, the harlot,
She took me and slew!
My father, the scoundrel,
Hath eaten me too!
My sweet little sister
Hath all my bones laid,
Where soft breezes whisper
All in the cool shade!

Then became I a wood-bird, and sang on the spray,

Fly away! little bird, fly away! fly away!

FAUST.

(Opening the lock.) Ah! she forebodes not that her lover's near,

The clanking chains, the rustling straw, to hear.

[He enters.]

MARGARET.

(Hiding her face in the bed of straw.) Woe! woe! they come! oh bitter 'tis to die!



FAUST.

(Softly.) Hush! hush! be still! I come to set thee free!

MARGARET.

(Throwing herself at his feet.)

If thou art human, feel my misery!

FAUST.

Thou wilt awake the jailor with thy cry!

[He grasps the chains to unlock them.]

MARGARET.

(On her knees.) Who, headsman, unto thee this power

O'er me could give?

Thou com'st for me at midnight-hour.

Be merciful, and let me live!

Is morrow's dawn not time enough?

[She stands up.]

I'm still so young, so young—

And must so early die!

Fair was I too, and that was my undoing.

My love is now afar, he then was nigh;

Torn lies the garland, the fair blossoms strew'd.

Nay, seize me not with hand so rude!

Spare me! What harm have I e'er done to thee?

Oh, let me not in vain implore!

I ne'er have seen thee in my life before!

FAUST.

Can I endure this bitter agony?

MARGARET.

I now am at thy mercy quite.

Let me my babe but suckle once again!

I fondled it the livelong night;

They took it from me but to give me pain,

And now they say that I my child have slain.

Gladness I ne'er again shall know.

Then they sing songs about me,—'tis wicked of the throng—

An ancient ballad endeth so;

Who bade them thus apply the song?

FAUST.

(Throwing himself on the ground.)

A lover at thy feet bends low,

To loose the bonds of wretchedness and woe.

MARGARET.

(Throws herself beside him.)

Oh, let us kneel and move the saints by prayer!

Look! look! yon stairs below,

Under the threshold there,

Hell's flames are all aglow!

Beneath the floor,

With hideous noise,

The devils roar!

FAUST.

(Aloud.) Gretchen! Gretchen!

MARGARET.

(Listening.) That was my lov'd one's voice!

[She springs up, the chains fall off.]

Where is he? I heard him calling me.

Free am I! There's none shall hinder me.

To his neck will I fly,

On his bosom will lie!

Gretchen, he called!—On yon threshold he stood;

Amidst all the howling of hell's fiery flood,

The scoff and the scorn of its devilish crew,

The tones of his voice, sweet and loving, I knew.

FAUST.

'Tis I.

MARGARET.

'Tis thou! O say so once again!

[Embracing him.]

'Tis he! 'tis he! where's now the torturing pain?

Where are the fetters? where the dungeon's gloom?

'Tis thou! To save me thou art come!

And I am sav'd!—

Already now the street I see

Where the first time I caught a glimpse of thee.

There too the pleasant garden shade,

Where I and Martha for thy coming stay'd.

FAUST.

(Endeavoring to lead her away.)

Come! come away!

MARGARET.

Oh, do not haste!

I love to linger where thou stayest.

[Caressing him.]

FAUST.

Ah haste! For if thou still delayest,

Our lingering we shall both deplore.

MARGARET.

How, dearest? canst thou kiss no more!

So short a time away from me, and yet,

To kiss thou couldst so soon forget!

Why on thy neck so anxious do I feel—

When formerly a perfect heaven of bliss

From thy dear looks and words would o'er me steal?

As thou wouldst stifle me thou then didst kiss!—

Kiss me!

Or I'll kiss thee!

[She embraces him.]

Woe! woe! Thy lips are cold,—

Are dumb!

Thy love where hast thou left?

Who hath me of thy love bereft?

[She turns away from him.]

FAUST.

Come! Follow me, my dearest love, be bold!

I'll cherish thee with ardor thousand-fold;

I but entreat thee now to follow me!

MARGARET.

(Turning towards him.) And art thou he? and art thou really he?

FAUST.

'Tis I! Oh, come!

MARGARET.

Thou wilt strike off my chain,

And thou wilt take me to thine arms again.

How comes it that thou dost not shrink from me?—

And dost thou know, love, whom thou wouldst set free?

FAUST.

Come! come! already night begins to wane.



artist: franz simm

FAUST. FIRST PART.

margaret in prison

MARGARET.

I sent my mother to her grave,

I drown'd my child beneath the wave.
Was it not given to thee and me—thee too?
'Tis thou thyself! I scarce believe it yet.
Give me thy hand! It is no dream! 'Tis true!
Thine own dear hand!—But how is this? 'Tis wet!
Quick, wipe it off! Meseems that yet
There's blood thereon.
Ah God! what hast thou done?
Put up thy sword,
I beg of thee!

FAUST.

Oh, dearest, let the past forgotten be!
Death is in every word.

MARGARET.

No, thou must linger here in sorrow!
The graves I will describe to thee,
And thou to them must see
To-morrow:
The best place give to my mother,
Close at her side my brother,
Me at some distance lay—
But not too far away!
And the little one place on my right breast.
Nobody else will near me lie!
To nestle beside thee so lovingly,

That was a rapture, gracious and sweet!
A rapture I never again shall prove;
Methinks I would force myself on thee, love,
And thou dost spurn me, and back retreat—
Yet 'tis thyself, thy fond kind looks I see.

FAUST.

If thou dost feel 'tis I, then come with me!

MARGARET.

What, there? without?

FAUST.

Yes, forth in the free air.

MARGARET.

Ay, if the grave's without,—If death lurk there!
Hence to the everlasting resting-place,
And not one step beyond!—Thou'rt leaving me?
Oh, Henry! would that I could go with thee!

FAUST.

Thou canst! But will it! Open stands the door.

MARGARET.

I dare not go! I've naught to hope for more.
What boots it to escape? They lurk for me!
'Tis wretched to beg, as I must do,
And with an evil conscience thereto!
'Tis wretched, in foreign lands to stray;

And me they will catch, do what I may!

FAUST.

With thee will I abide.

MARGARET.

Quick! quick!
Save thy poor child!
Keep to the path
The brook along,
Over the bridge
To the wood beyond,
To the left, where the plank is,
In the pond.
Seize it at once!
It fain would rise,
It struggles still!
Save it. Oh, save!

FAUST.

Dear Gretchen, more collected be!

One little step and thou art free!

MARGARET.

Were we but only past the hill!

There sits my mother upon a stone—

My brain, alas, is cold with dread!—

There sits my mother upon a stone,

And to and fro she shakes her head;

She winks not, she nods not, her head it droops sore;

She slept so long, she wak'd no more;

She slept, that we might taste of bliss:

Ah! those were happy times, I wis!

FAUST.

Since here avails nor argument nor prayer,

Thee hence by force I needs must bear.

MARGARET.

Loose me! I will not suffer violence!

With murderous hand hold not so fast!

I have done all to please thee in the past!

FAUST.

Day dawns! My love! my love!

MARGARET.

Yes! day draws near.

The day of judgment too will soon appear!

It should have been my bridal! No one tell

That thy poor Gretchen thou hast known too well.

Woe to my garland!

Its bloom is o'er!

Though not at the dance—

We shall meet once more.

The crowd doth gather, in silence it rolls;

The squares, the streets,

Scarce hold the throng.

The staff is broken,—the death-bell tolls,—

They bind and seize me! I'm hurried along,

To the seat of blood already I'm bound!

Quivers each neck as the naked steel

Quivers on mine the blow to deal—

The silence of the grave now broods around!

FAUST.

Would I had ne'er been born!

MEPHIS.

(Appears without.) Up! or you're lost.

Vain hesitation! Babbling, quaking!

My steeds are shivering,

Morn is breaking.

MARGARET.

What from the floor ascendeth like a ghost?

'Tis he! 'Tis he! Him from my presence chase!

What would he in this holy place?

It is for me he cometh!

FAUST.

Thou shalt live!

MARGARET.

Judgment of God! To thee my soul I give!

MEPHIS.

(To Faust.) Come! come! I'll leave thee else to share her doom!

MARGARET.

Father, I'm thine! Save me! To thee I come!

Ye angels! Ye angelic hosts! descend,

Encamp around to guard me and defend!—

Henry! I shudder now to look on thee!

MEPHIS.

She now is judged!

VOICES.

(From above.) Is saved!

MEPHIS.

(To Faust.) Come thou with me!

[Vanishes with Faust.]

VOICE.

(From within, dying away.) Henry! Henry!

END OF PART I.



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Faust.

Second Part

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Faust.

Mephistopheles(*in various disguises*).

also in

ACT I.

Ariel.

Emperor.

Fool(*Mephistopheles*).

Chancellor.

Commander-in-Chief.

Treasurer.

Marshal.

Astrologer.

Various Ladies, Gentlemen and Pages of the court. Also numerous male and female masks.

Scene—*Chiefly in the different apartments and Pleasure Garden of the Imperial Palace.*

ACT II.

Famulus.

Baccalaureus.

Wagner.

Homunculus.

Numerous mythical personages and monsters appearing in the Classical Walpurgis-Night.

Scene—Faust's Study; afterwards the Pharsalian Plains.

ACT III.

Helen.

Phorkyad (*Mephistopheles*).

Lynceus, *the Watchman*.

Euphorion, Helen's Son.

Panthalis and Chorus of Trojan women.

Scene—At first the supposed Palace of Menelaus in Sparta; afterwards the Courtyard of a mediæval castle, and finally a rocky dell.

ACT IV.

The three mighty men: Bully, Havequick, and Holdfast.

Speedquick.

The Emperor, and other officers of his Court, as in Act I.

Scene—A high mountainous country and the adjacent neighborhood.

ACT V.

Baucis.

Philemon.

A Wanderer.

Lynceus.

The four gray women: Want, Guilt, Care and Need.

Lemures.

A Penitent, *formerly* Margaret.

Dr. Marianus.

Chorus of Angels and Penitents and various Heavenly characters.

Scene—*The neighborhood of Faust's Palace, afterwards rocky heights and the higher regions of the sky.*



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ACT I.



A Pleasing Landscape.

Faust reclining upon flowery turf, restless, seeking sleep.

Twilight.

Circle of spirits, hovering, flit around.—Graceful, tiny forms.

ARIEL.

(Song, accompanied by Æolian harps.)

When, in vernal showers descending,
Blossoms gently veil the earth,
When the fields' green wealth, up-tending,
Gleams on all of mortal birth:
Tiny elves, where help availeth,
Large of heart, there fly apace;
Pity they whom grief assaileth,
Be he holy, be he base.

Ye round this head on airy wing careering,
Attend, in noble Elfin guise appearing;
Assuage the cruel strife that rends his heart,
The burning shaft remove of keen remorse,
From rankling horror cleanse his inmost part:
Four are the pauses of the nightly course;
Them, without rest, fill up with kindly art.
And first his head upon cool pillow lay,
Then bathe ye him in dew from Lethe's stream;

His limbs, cramp-stiffen'd, will more freely play,
If sleep-refreshed he wait morn's wak'ning beam.

Perform the noblest Elfin rite,
Restore ye him to the holy light!

CHORUS.

(Singly, two or more, alternately and together.) Softly when warm gales are stealing

O'er the green-environ'd ground,
Twilight sheddeth all-concealing
Mists and balmy odors round:
Whispers low sweet peace to mortals,
Rocks the heart to childlike rest,
And of daylight shuts the portals
To these eyes, with care oppress'd.
Night hath now descended darkling,
Holy star is link'd to star;
Sovereign fires, or faintly sparkling,
Glitter near and shine afar;
Glitter here lake-mirror'd, yonder
Shine adown the clear night sky;
Sealing bliss of perfect slumber,
Reigns the moon's full majesty.
Now the hours are cancell'd; sorrow,
Happiness, have pass'd away:
Whole thou shalt be on the morrow!
Feel it! Trust the new-born day!

Swell the hills, green grow the valleys,

In the dusk ere breaks the morn;

And in silvery wavelets dallies,

With the wind, the ripening corn.

Cherish hope, let naught appall thee!

Mark the East, with splendor dyed!

Slight the fetters that enthrall thee;

Fling the shell of sleep aside!

Gird thee for the high endeavor;

Shun the crowd's ignoble ease!

Fails the noble spirit never,

Wise to think, and prompt to seize.

[A tremendous tumult announces the uprising of the sun.]

ARIEL.

Hark! the horal tempest nears!

Sounding but for spirit ears,

Lo! the new-born day appears;

Clang the rocky portals, climb

Phœbus' wheels with thund'rous chime:

Breaks with tuneful noise the light!

Blare of trumpet, clarion sounding,

Eyesight dazing, ear astounding!

Hear not the unheard; take flight!

Into petal'd blossoms glide

Deeper, deeper, still to bide,

In the clefts, 'neath thickets! ye,

If it strike you, deaf will be.

FAUST.

Life's pulses reawaken'd freshly bound,

The mild ethereal twilight fain to greet.

Thou, Earth, this night wast also constant found,

And, newly-quicken'd, breathing at my feet,

Beginnest now to gird me with delight:

A strong resolve dost rouse, with noble heat

Aye to press on to being's sovereign height.

The world in glimmering dawn still folded lies;

With thousand-voiced life the woods resound;

Mist-wreaths the valley shroud; yet from the skies

Sinks heaven's clear radiance to the depths profound;

And bough and branch from dewy chasms rise,

Where they had droop'd erewhile in slumber furl'd;

Earth is enamell'd with unnumber'd dyes,

Leaflet and flower with dewdrops are impearl'd;

Around me everywhere is paradise.

Gaze now aloft! Each mountain's giant height

The solemn hour announces, herald-wise;

They early may enjoy the eternal light,

To us below which later finds its way.

Now are the Alpine slopes and valleys dight

With the clear radiance of the new-born day,

Which, downward, step by step, steals on apace.—

It blazes forth,—and, blinded by the ray,

With aching eyes, alas! I veil my face.

So when a hope, the heart hath long held fast,

Trustful, still striving towards its highest goal,

Fulfilment's portals open finds at last;—

Sudden from those eternal depths doth roll

An overpowering flame;—we stand aghast!

The torch of life to kindle we were fain;—

A fire-sea,—what a fire!—doth round us close;

Love is it? Is it hate? with joy and pain,

In alternation vast, that round us glows?

So that to earth we turn our wistful gaze,

In childhood's veil to shroud us once again!

So let the sun behind me pour its rays!

The cataract, through rocky cleft that roars,

I view, with growing rapture and amaze.

From fall to fall, with eddying shock, it pours,

In thousand torrents to the depths below,

Aloft in air up-tossing showers of spray.

But see, in splendor bursting from the storm,

Arches itself the many-colored bow,

An ever-changeful, yet continuous form,

Now drawn distinctly, melting now away,

Diffusing dewy coolness all around!

Man's efforts there are glass'd, his toil and strife;

Reflect, more true the emblem will be found:

This bright reflected glory pictures life!

Imperial Palace. Throne-Room.

Council of State, in expectation of the Emperor.

Trumpets.

Enter courtiers of every grade, splendidly attir'd. The Emperor ascends the throne; to the right the Astrologer.

EMPEROR.

I greet you, trusty friends and dear,

Assembled thus from far and wide!—

I see the wise man at my side,

But wherefore is the fool not here?

PAGE.

Entangled in thy mantle's flow,

He tripped upon the stair below;

The mass of fat they bare away,

If dead or drunken—who can say?

SECOND PAGE.

Forthwith another comes apace,

With wondrous speed to take his place;

Costly, yet so grotesque his gear,

All start amaz'd as he draws near.

Crosswise the guards before his face,

Entrance to bar, their halberds hold—

Yet there he is, the fool so bold.

MEPHIS.

(Kneeling before the throne.)

What is accurs'd and gladly hail'd?

What is desir'd and chas'd away?



What is upbraid'd and assail'd?

What wins protection every day?

Whom darest thou not summon here?

Whose name doth plaudits still command?

What to thy throne now draweth near?

What from this place itself hath bann'd?

EMPEROR.

For this time thou thy words mayst spare!

This is no place for riddles, friend;

They are these gentlemen's affair.—

Solve them! an ear I'll gladly lend.

My old fool's gone, far, far away, I fear;

Take thou his place, come, stand beside me here!

[Mephistopheles ascends and places himself at the Emperor's left.]

(Murmur of the Crowd.)

Here's a new fool—for plague anew!

Whence cometh he?—How pass'd he through?

The old one fell—he squander'd hath.—

He was a tub—now 'tis a lath.—

EMPEROR.

So now, my friends, belov'd and leal,
Be welcome all, from near and far!
Ye meet 'neath an auspicious star;
For us above are written joy and weal.
But tell me wherefore, on this day,
When we all care would cast away,
And don the masker's quaint array,
And naught desire but to enjoy,
Should we with state affairs ourselves annoy?
But if ye think it so must be indeed,
Why, well and good, let us forthwith proceed!

CHANCELLOR.

The highest virtue circles halo-wise
Our Cæsar's brow; virtue, which from the throne,
He validly can exercise alone:
Justice!—What all men love and prize,
What all demand, desire, and sorely want,
It lies with him, this to the folk to grant.
But ah! what help can intellect command,
Goodness of heart, or willingness of hand,
When fever saps the state with deadly power,
And mischief breedeth mischief, hour by hour?
To him who downward from this height supreme

Views the wide realm, 'tis like a troubled dream,
Where the deform'd deformity o'ersways,
Where lawlessness, through law, the tyrant plays,
And error's ample world itself displays.
One steals a woman, one a steer,
Lights from the altar, chalice, cross,
Boasts of his deed full many a year,
Unscath'd in body, without harm or loss.
Now to the hall accusers throng;
On cushion'd throne the judge presides;
Surging meanwhile in eddying tides,
Confusion waxes fierce and strong.
He may exult in crime and shame,
Who on accomplices depends;
Guilty! the verdict they proclaim,
When Innocence her cause defends.
So will the world succumb to ill,
And what is worthy perish quite;
How then may grow the sense which still
Instructs us to discern the right?
E'en the right-minded man, in time,
To briber and to flatterer yields;
The judge, who cannot punish crime,
Joins with the culprit whom he shields.—
I've painted black, yet fain had been

A veil to draw before the scene.

[*Pause.*

Measures must needs be taken; when

All injure or are injur'd, then

E'en Majesty becomes a prey.

FIELD-MARSHAL.

In these wild days what tumults reign!

Each smitten is and smites again;

Deaf to command, will none obey.

The burgher, safe behind his wall,

Within his rocky nest, the knight,

Against us have conspir'd, and all

Firmly to hold their own unite.

Impatient is the hireling now,

With vehemence he claims his due;

And did we owe him naught, I trow,

Off he would run, nor bid adieu.

Who thwarts what fondly all expect,

He hath disturb'd a hornet's nest;

The empire which they should protect,

It lieth plunder'd and oppress'd.

Their furious rage may none restrain;

Already half the world's undone;

Abroad there still are kings who reign—

None thinks 'tis his concern, not one.

TREASURER.

Who will depend upon allies!
For us their promis'd subsidies
Like conduit-water, will not flow.
Say, Sire, through your dominions vast
To whom hath now possession pass'd!
Some upstart, wheresoe'er we go,
Keeps house, and independent reigns;
We must look on, he holds his own;
So many rights away we've thrown,
That for ourselves no right remains.
On so-called parties in the state
There's no reliance, now-a-days;
They may deal out or blame or praise,
Indifferent are love and hate.
The Ghibelline as well as Guelph
Retire, that they may live at ease!
Who helps his neighbor now? Himself
Each hath enough to do to please.
Barr'd are the golden gates; while each
Scrapes, snatches, gathers all within his reach—
Empty, meanwhile, our chest remains.

STEWARD.

What worry must I, also, bear!
Our aim each day is still to spare—

And more each day we need; my pains,
Daily renew'd, are never o'er.
The cooks lack nothing;—deer, wild-boar,
Stags, hares, fowls, turkeys, ducks and geese,—
Tribute in kind, sure payment, these
Come fairly in, and none complains.
But now at last wine fails; and if of yore
Up-piled upon the cellar-floor,
Cask rose on cask, a goodly store,
From the best slopes and vintage; now
The swilling of our lords, I trow,
Unceasing, drains the very lees.
E'en the Town-council must give out
Its liquor;—bowls and cups they seize,
And 'neath the table lies the drunken rout.
Now must I pay, whate'er betides;
Me the Jew spares not; he provides
Anticipation-bonds which feed
Each year on that which must succeed;
The swine are never fatten'd now;
Pawn'd is the pillow or the bed,
And to the table comes fore-eaten bread.

EMPEROR.

(After some reflection to Mephistopheles.) Say, fool, another grievance knowest thou?

MEPHIS.

I, nowise. On this circling pomp to gaze,
On thee and thine! There can reliance fail
Where majesty resistless sways,
And ready power makes foemen quail?
Where loyal will, through reason strong,
And prowess, manifold, unite,
What could together join for wrong,
For darkness, where such stars give light?

(Murmur of the Crowd.)

He is a knave—he comprehends—
He lies—while lying serves his ends—
Full well I know—what lurks behind—
What next?—Some scheme is in the wind!—

MEPHIS.

Where is not something wanting here on earth?
Here this,—there that: of gold is here the dearth.
It cannot from the floor be scrap'd, 'tis true;
But what lies deepest wisdom brings to view.
In mountain-veins, walls underground,
Is gold, both coin'd and uncoin'd, to be found.
And if ye ask me,—bring it forth who can?
Spirit and nature-power of gifted man.

CHANCELLOR.

Nature and spirit—Christians ne'er should hear

Such words, with peril fraught and fear.
These words doom atheists to the fire.
Nature is sin, spirit is devil; they,
Between them, doubt beget, their progeny,
Hermaphrodite, mis-shapen, dire.
Not so with us! Within our Cæsar's land
Two orders have arisen, two alone,
Who worthily support his ancient throne:
Clergy and knights, who fearless stand,
Bulwarks 'gainst every storm, and they
Take church and state, as their appropriate pay.
Through lawless men, the vulgar herd
To opposition have of late been stirr'd;
The heretics these are, the wizards, who
The city ruin and the country too.
With thy bold jests, to this high sphere,
Such miscreants wilt smuggle in;
Hearts reprobate to you are dear;
They to the fool are near of kin.

MEPHIS.

Herein your learned men I recognize!
What you touch not, miles distant from you lies;
What you grasp not, is naught in sooth to you;
What you count not, cannot you deem be true;
What you weigh not, that hath for you no weight;

What you coin not, you're sure is counterfeit.

EMPEROR.

Therewith our needs are not one whit the less.

What meanest thou with this thy Lent address?

I'm tired of this eternal If and How.

'Tis gold we lack; so good, procure it thou!

MEPHIS.

I'll furnish more, ay, more than all you ask.

Though light it seem, not easy is the task.

There lies the gold, but to procure it thence,

That is the art: who knoweth to commence?

Only consider, in those days of terror,

When human floods swamp'd land and folk together,

How every one, how great soe'er his fear,

All that he treasur'd most, hid there or here;

So was it 'neath the mighty Roman's sway,

So on till yesterday, ay, till to-day:

That all beneath the soil still buried lies—

The soil is Cæsar's, his shall be the prize.

TREASURER.

Now for a fool he speaketh not amiss;

Our Cæsar's ancient right, in sooth, was this.

CHANCELLOR.

Satan for you spreads golden snares; 'tis clear,

Something not right or pious worketh here.

STEWARD.

To us at court if welcome gifts he bring,

A little wrong is no such serious thing.

FIELD-MARSHAL.

Shrewd is the fool, he bids what all desire;

The soldier, whence it comes, will not inquire.

MEPHIS.

You think yourselves, perchance, deceiv'd by me;

Ask the Astrologer! This man is he!

Circle round circle, hour and house, he knows.—

Then tell us how the heavenly aspect shows.

(Murmur of the Crowd.)

Two rascals—each to other known—

Phantast and fool—so near the throne—

The old old song,—now trite with age—

The fool still prompts—while speaks the sage.

ASTROLOGER.

(Speaks, Mephistopheles prompts.) The sun himself is purest gold; for pay

And favor serves the herald, Mercury;

Dame Venus hath bewitch'd you from above,

Early and late, she looks on you with love;

Chaste Luna's humor varies hour by hour;

Mars, though he strike not, threats you with his power;

And Jupiter is still the fairest star;

Saturn is great, small to the eye and far;

As metal him we slightly venerate,
Little in worth, though ponderous in weight.
Now when with Sol fair Luna doth unite,
Silver with gold, cheerful the world and bright!
Then easy 'tis to gain whate'er one seeks;
Parks, gardens, palaces, and rosy cheeks;
These things procures this highly learned man.
He can accomplish what none other can.

EMPEROR.

Double, methinks, his accents ring,
And yet they no conviction bring.

(Murmur.)

Of what avail!—a worn-out tale—
Calendery—and chemistry—
I the false word—full oft have heard—
And as of yore—we're hoax'd once more.

MEPHIS.

The grand discovery they misprize,
As, in amaze, they stand around;
One prates of gnomes and sorceries,
Another of the sable hound.
What matters it, though wtlings rail,
Though one his suit 'gainst witchcraft press,
If his sole tingle none the less,
If his sure footing also fail?

Ye of all swaying Nature feel
The secret working, never-ending,
And, from her lowest depths up-tending,
E'en now her living trace doth steal.
If sudden cramps your limbs surprise,
If all uncanny seem the spot—
There dig and delve, but dally not!
There lies the fiddler, there the treasure lies!

(Murmur.)

Like lead it lies my foot about—
Cramp'd is my arm—'tis only gout—
Twitchings I have in my great toe—
Down all my back strange pains I know—
Such indications make it clear
That sumless treasuries are here.

EMPEROR.

To work—the time for flight is past.—
Put to the test your frothy lies!
These treasures bring before our eyes!
Sceptre and sword aside I'll cast,
And with these royal hands, indeed,
If thou lie not, to work proceed.
Thee, if thou lie, I'll send to hell!

MEPHIS.

Thither to find the way I know full well!—

Yet can I not enough declare,
What wealth unown'd lies waiting everywhere:
The countryman, who ploughs the land,
Gold-crocks upturneth with the mould;
Nitre he seeks in lime-walls old,
And findeth, in his meagre hand,
Scar'd, yet rejoic'd, rouleaus of gold.
How many a vault upblown must be,
Into what clefts, what shafts, must he,
Who doth of hidden treasure know,
Descend, to reach the world below!
In cellars vast, impervious made,
Goblets of gold he sees display'd,
Dishes and plates, row after row;
There beakers, rich with rubies, stand;
And would he use them, close at hand
Well stor'd the ancient moisture lies;
Yet—would ye him who knoweth, trust?—
The staves long since have turned to dust,
A tartar cask their place supplies!
Not gold alone and jewels rare,
Essence of noblest wines are there,
In night and horror veiled. The wise
Unwearied here pursues his quest.
To search by day, that were a jest;

'Tis darkness that doth harbor mysteries.

EMPEROR.

What can the dark avail? Look thou to that!

If aught have worth, it cometh to the light.

Who can detect the rogue at dead of night?

Black are the cows, and gray is every cat.

These pots of heavy gold, if they be there—

Come, drive thy plough, upturn them with thy share!

MEPHIS.

Take spade and hoe thyself;—dig on—

Great shalt thou be through peasant toil—

A herd of golden calves anon

Themselves shall tear from out the soil;

Then straight, with rapture newly born,

Thyself thou canst, thy sweetheart wilt adorn.

A sparkling gem, lustrous, of varied dye,

Beauty exalts as well as majesty.

EMPEROR.

To work, to work! How long wilt linger?

MEPHIS.

Sire,

Relax, I pray, such vehement desire!

First let us see the motley, joyous, show!

A mind distraught conducts not to the goal.

First must we calmness win through self-control,

Through things above deserve what lies below.

Who seeks for goodness must himself be good;

Who seeks for joy must moderate his blood;



Who wine desires, the luscious grape must press;

Who craveth miracles, more faith possess.

EMPEROR.

So be the interval in gladness spent!

Ash-Wednesday cometh, to our hearts' content.

Meanwhile we'll solemnize, whate'er befall,

More merrily the joyous Carnival.

[Trumpets. Exeunt.]

MEPHIS.

That merit and success are link'd together,

This to your fools occurreth never;

Could they appropriate the wise man's stone,

That, not the wise man, they would prize alone.

[A spacious Hall, with adjoining apartments, arranged and decorated for a masquerade.]

HERALD.

Think not we hold in Germany our revels;

Where dances reign of death, of fools and devils;

You doth a cheerful festival invite.
Our Cæsar, Romeward turning his campaign,
Hath—for his profit, and for your delight—
Cross'd the high Alps, and won a fair domain.
Before the sacred feet bow'd down,
His right to reign he first hath sought,
And when he went to fetch his crown,
For us the fool's cap hath he brought.
Now all of us are born anew;
And every world-experienc'd man
Draws it in comfort over head and ears;
A fool beneath it, he appears,
And plays the sage as best he can.
I see them, how they form in groups,
Now they pair off, now wavering sever;
Choir now with choir together troops,
Within, without, unwearied ever!
The world remaineth as of yore,
With fooleries, ten thousand score,
The one great fool, for ever more!

GARDEN-GIRLS.

(Song, accompanied by mandolins.) That to us ye praise may render,
Deck'd are we in festive sort;
Girls of Florence, we the splendor
Follow of the German court.

Many a flower, we, Flora's vassals,
In our dark brown tresses wear;
Silken threads and silken tassels,
Play their part and grace our hair.
For we hold ourselves deserving
All your praises, full and clear;
Since our flowers, their bloom preserving,
Blossom through the livelong year.
Cuttings divers-hued were taken,
And arrang'd with symmetry;
Piece by piece they mirth awaken,
Yet the whole attracts the eye.
Garden-girls and fair to look on,
Fittingly we play our part;
For the natural in woman,
Closely is allied to art.

HERALD.

Now from baskets richly laden,
Which, upon her head and arm,
Beareth every lovely maiden,
Let each choose what each doth charm!
Hasten ye, till bower and alley
Aspect of a garden bears!
Worthy are the crowds to dally
Round the sellers and their wares.

GARDEN-GIRLS.

In this mart, your flowers unscreening,
Cheapen not, as them you show!
With brief words, but full of meaning,
What he hath, let each one know.

OLIVE-BRANCH.

(With fruit.) I of blossoms envy none,
Quarrels studiously I shun;
They against my nature are:
Marrow of the land, in sooth
Pledge I am of peace and ruth,
To all regions near and far.
Be it my good fortune now
To adorn the loveliest brow.

WHEAT-WREATH.

(Golden.) Ceres' gifts, sweet peace expressing,
Would enhance thy charms; be wise!
What is useful, rich in blessing,
As thy best adornment prize!

FANCY-GARLAND.

Colored flowers, from moss out-peering,
Mallow-like, a wondrous show—
Not in nature's guise appearing,
Fashion 'tis that makes them blow.

FANCY-NOSEGAY.

Theophrastus would not venture
Names to give to flowers like these.
Yet, though some perchance may censure,
Many still I hope to please.
Who to wreath her locks permits me
Straight shall win a heighten'd grace,
Or who near her heart admits me,
Finding on her breast a place.

CHALLENGE.

Be your motley fancies moulded,
For the fashion of the day.
Nature never yet unfolded
Wonders half so strange as they:
Golden bells, green stalks, forth glancing
From rich locks, their charm enhancing.
But we—

ROSEBUDS.

Hide from mortal eyes.
Happy he who finds the prize!
When draws nigh once more the summer,
Rosebuds greet the bright new-comer.—
Who such happiness would miss?
Promise, then fulfilment,—this
Is the law in Flora's reign,

Swayeth too sense, heart, and brain.

[The flower-girls tastefully arrange their wares under green, leafy arcades.

GARDENERS.

(Song, accompanied by Theorbos.)

Mark the blossoms calmly sprouting,
Charmingly to wreath your brow;
Fruits will not deceive, I trow;
Taste, enjoy them, nothing doubting.
Magnum bonums, cherries, peaches,
Faces offer sun-embrown'd:
Buy, poor judge the eye is found;—
Heed what tongue, what palate teaches.
Luscious fruits to taste invite them
Who behold these rich supplies.
We o'er roses poetize;—
As for apples, we must bite them.
Let us now, with your good pleasure,
Join your youthful choir, in pairs;
And beside your flowery wares,
Thus adorn our riper treasure.
Under leaf-adorned bowers,
'Mid the merry windings haste;
Each will find what suits his taste;
Buds or leafage, fruit or flowers.

[Amid alternate songs, accompanied by guitars and Theorbos, the two choruses proceed to arrange their wares, terrace-wise, and to offer them for sale.

Mother and Daughter.

MOTHER.

Maiden, when thou cam'st to light,
Full thy tender form of grace;
In its tiny hood bedight,
Lovely was thy infant face.
Then I thought of thee with pride
Of some wealthy youth the bride,
Taking as his wife thy place.
Ah! full many a year in vain,
All unus'd away have pass'd;
Of the suitors' motley train
Quickly hath gone by the last!
Thou with one didst gaily dance,

One didst seek with quiet glance,
Or sly elbow-touch, to gain.
All the fêtes that we might plan,
Vainly did we celebrate;
Games of forfeit, or third man,
Fruitless were, they brought no mate;
Many a fool's abroad to-day,
Dear one, now thy charms display,
One thou mayst attach, though late.



[Girlish playfellows, young and beautiful, enter and join the groups; loud confidential chatting is heard. Fishers and bird-catchers with nets, fishing-rods, limed twigs, and other gear, enter and mingle with the maidens. Reciprocal attempts to win, to catch, to escape, and hold fast, give occasion to most agreeable dialogues.]

WOOD-CUTTERS.

(Enter, boisterous and uncouth.)

Place! Give place!
We must have space!
Trees we level,
Down they fall,
Crashing to the ground;
As we bear them forth,
Blows we deal around.
To our praise, be sure;—
This proclaim aloud;—
Labor'd not the boor,
Where were then the proud!
How in idless revel
Could they at their ease!
Never then forget,—
If we did not sweat,
That ye all would freeze.

PUNCHINELLOES.

(Awkward and foolish.)

Fools are ye, poor hacks!
Born with curved backs.
Prudent ones are we,
From all burdens free;
For our greasy caps,

Our jerkins and our traps
We bear right easily.
Forthwith at our leisure,
We with slipper'd feet,
Saunter at our pleasure,
On through mart and street,
Standing still or going,
At each other crowing;
When the folk around
Gather at the sound,
Slipping then aside,
Frolicking together,
Eel-like on we glide.
And we care not whether
Ye applaud or blame;
To us 'tis all the same.

[EDITOR: ILLEGIBLE WORD]

(Flattering—lustful.)

Porters brave, and you,
Charcoal-burners true,
Kinsmen, ye indeed
Are the men we need.
Bowings low,
Assenting smiles,
Long-drawn phrases,
Crooked wiles,
Double-breath,
That as you please,
Blows hot or cold;
What profit these?—
Down from heaven
Must fire be given,
Vast, enormous,
If, to warm us,
We no coal had got,
Nor of logs a heap,
Warm our hearth to keep,
Our furnace to make hot.
There is roasting,
There is brewing,
There is toasting,
There is stewing;
Your true taster
Licks the dish;
Sniffs the roast,

Forebodes the fish;
These for great deeds make him able,
Seated at his patron's table.

DRUNKEN MAN.

(Hardly conscious.)

Naught to-day shall mar my pleasure!

Frank I feel myself and free;

Cheerful songs and jovial leisure,

Both I hither bring with me;

Therefore drink I! Drink ye, drink!

Strike your glasses! Clink ye, clink!

You behind there, join the fun!

Strike your glasses; so, 'tis done!

Let my wife, shrill-tongued, assail me,

Sneering at my colored vest,

And, despite my vaunting, hail me

Fool, like masquerader dress'd;

Still I'll drink! Come drink ye, drink!

Strike your glasses! Clink ye, clink!

Fools in motley, join the fun!

Strike your glasses; so, 'tis done!

Here I'm bless'd, whoever chooses

Me, as erring, to upbraid:

If to score mine host refuses,

Scores the hostess, scores the maid;

Always drink I! drink ye, drink!

Up my comrades! clink ye, clink!

Each to other! Join the fun!

To my thinking now 'tis done!

From this place there's now no flying,

Here where pleasures are at hand:

Let me lie, where I am lying,

For I can no longer stand.

CHORUS.

Brothers all, come drink ye, drink!

One more toast, now clink ye, clink!

Firmly sit on bench and board!

'Neath the table lie who's floor'd!

[The Herald announces various poets, the Poet of Nature, Court-singers, and Ritter-singers, tender as well as enthusiastic. In the throng of competitors of every kind none will allow the others to be heard. One sneaks past with a few words.]

SATIRIST.

Know ye what would me to-day,

The poet, most rejoice and cheer?

If I dar'd to sing and say,

That which none would like to hear.

[Poets of Night and of the Sepulchre send apologies, inasmuch as they are engaged in a most interesting conversation with a newly-arisen Vampire, wherefrom a new kind of poetry may perhaps be developed; the Herald must admit the excuse, and meanwhile summons the Greek Mythology, which, though in modern masks, loses neither character nor charm.]



artist: franz simm

FAUST. SECOND PART.

victory, fear, hope and prudence

The Graces.

AGLAIA.

Charm we bring to life, and grace;

In your gifts let both have place!

HEGEMONY.

In receiving let the twain,

Preside! 'Tis sweet our wish to gain.

EUPHROSYNE.

And when benefits you own

Chiefly be these graces shown!

The Fates.

ATROPOS.

I, the Eldest, am from yonder

Realm invited, here to spin.

Much to think of, much to ponder,

Lieth life's frail thread within.

That it pliant be and tender,

Finest flax to choose be mine;

That it even be and slender,

Must the cunning finger twine.

If of festive dance and pleasure

Ye too wantonly partake,

Think upon this thread's just measure;

O be cautious! It may break!

CLOTHO.

Know ye, to my guidance lately

They the fateful shears confide.

By our elder's doings greatly

None, in sooth, were edified.

Spinnings, to no issue tending,

Forth she drew to air and light;

Threads of noblest promise rending,

Down she sent to realms of night.

While a novice still in reigning,

I too err'd, in bygone years;

But to-day, myself restraining,

In the sheath I plunge my shears.

Fain I am to wear the bridle,

Kindly I this place survey;

In these seasons, gay and idle,

Give your revelry full play!

LACHESIS.

Reason's laws alone obeying,

Order was to me decreed.

Mine the will that, ever-swaying,

Never errs though over-speed.

Threads are coming; threads are going;

Each one in its course I guide,
None permit I overflowing,
From its skein to swerve aside.
Were I only once to slumber!—
For the world my spirit quakes;
Years we measure, hours we number,
And the hank the weaver takes.

HERALD.

How vers'd so e'er in lore of ancient fame,
Those who are coming now ye would not know;
Gazing upon these workers of much woe,
Them, as your welcome guests, ye would proclaim.
The Furies these,—none will believe us;—kind,
Graceful in figure, pretty, young and fair;
If their acquaintance ye would make, beware;
How serpent-like such doves can wound, ye'll find.
Cunning they are, yet now, when every clown
Boastful, his failings shuns not to proclaim,
They too, desiring not angelic fame,
Own themselves plagues of country and of town.

ALECTO.

What help for you? Since young we are and fair,
Ye in such flattering kittens will confide!
Has any here a sweetheart to his side,
Stealing, we gain his ear, until we dare

To tell him, face to face, *she* may be caught
Winking at this or that one; that 'tis plain,
She halts, is crooked-back'd, and dull of brain,
And, if to him betroth'd, is good for naught.
To vex the bride doth also tax our skill:
We tell what slighting things, some weeks ago,
Her lover said of her, to such an one.—
They're reconcil'd, yet something rankles still.

MEGARA.

That's a mere jest! Let them be mated, then
I go to work, and e'en the fairest joy,
In every case, can through caprice destroy.
The hours are changeful, changeful too are men.
What was desir'd, once grasp'd, its charm hath lost;
Who firmly holds the madly longed-for prize,
Straight for some other blessing fondly sighs;
The sun he flieth, and would warm the frost.
How to arrange, I know, in such affairs;
And here Asmodi lead, my comrade true,
At the right time mischief abroad to strew;
And so destroy the human race in pairs.

TISIPHONE.

Poison, steel, I mix and whet,
Words abjuring,—for the traitor;—
Lov'st thou others, sooner, later,
Ruin shall o'erwhelm thee yet.
All transform'd to gall and foam

Is the moment's sweetest feeling!
Here no higgling, here no dealing!
Sinn'd he hath, his sin comes home.
Let none say: "Forgiveness cherish!"
To the rocks my cause I bring;
Hark! Revenge, the echoes ring!
Who betrayeth, he must perish!

HERALD.

Now may it please you, to retire behind;
For what now cometh is not of your kind.—
Ye see a mountain press the crowd among,
Its flanks with brilliant carpet proudly hung;
With lengthen'd tusks, and serpent-trunk below,
A mystery, but I the key will show.
Thron'd on his neck a gentle lady rides,
With a fine wand his onward course she guides.
Aloft the other stands, of stately height,
Girt with a splendor that o'erpowers the sight;
Beside him, chain'd, two noble dames draw near;
Sad is the one, the other blithe of cheer;
The one for freedom yearns, the other feels she's free.
Let them declare in turn who they may be!

FEAR.

Torches, lamps, with lurid sheen,
Through the turmoil gleam around;
These deceitful forms between,
Fetters hold me firmly bound.
Hence, vain laughter-loving brood!

I mistrust your senseless grin!
All my foes, with clamor rude,
Strive to-night to hem me in.
Friend like foeman would betray me,
But his mask I recognize;
There is one who fain would slay me,
Now, unmask'd, away he hies.
Ah, how gladly would I wander
Hence, and leave this lower sphere;
But destruction, threatening yonder,
Holds me 'twixt despair and fear.

HOPE.

Hail! Beloved sisters, hail!
If to-day and yesterday
Ye have lov'd this masking play,
Yet to-morrow, trite the tale,
Will your masks aside be thrown;
And if, 'neath the torches' glare,
We no special joy have known,
Yet will we, in daylight fair,
Just according to our pleasure,
Now with others, now alone,
Wander forth o'er lawn and mead;
Work at will, or take our leisure,
Careless live, exempt from need;

And at last, we'll aye succeed.
Everywhere, as welcome guest,
Step we in, with easy mind;
Confident that we the best
Somewhere, certainly, may find.

PRUDENCE.

Fear and hope, in chains thus guiding,
Two of man's chief foes, I bar
From the thronging crowds;—dividing,
Clear the way;—now sav'd ye are!
I this live colosse am leading,
Which, tower-laden, as ye gaze,
Unfatigued is onward speeding,
Step by step, up steepest ways.
But, with broad and rapid pinion,
From the battlement on high,
Gazing on her wide dominion,
Turneth that divinity.
Fame, around her, bright and glorious,
Shining on all sides one sees:
Victory her name,—victorious
Queen of all activities.

ZOILO-THERSITES.

Bah! bah! The very time I've hit!
You all are wrong, no doubt of it!

Yet what I make my special aim
Is victory, yon stately dame.
She, with her snowy wings, esteems
Herself an eagle, and still deems
That wheresoe'er she bends her sight,
Peoples and land are hers, by right!
But, where a glorious deed is done,
My harness straight I buckle on;
Where high is low, and low is high,
The crooked straight, the straight awry—
Then only am I wholly sound:
So be it on this earthly round.

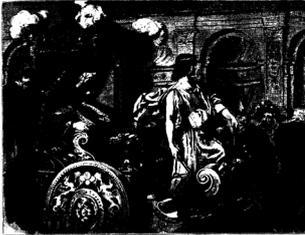
HERALD.

So take thou then, thou ragged hound,
From my good staff, a master-blow!
There crouch and wriggle, bending low!
The double dwarfish form, behold,
Itself to a vile ball hath roll'd!
The ball becomes an egg!—strange wonder!
It now dilates and bursts asunder:
Thence falleth a twin-pair to earth,
Adder and bat;—a hideous birth;
Forth in the dust one creeps, his brother
Doth darkling to the ceiling flee;
Outside they haste to join each other—

The third I am not fain to be!

(Murmur.)

Come on! Behind they're dancing—No,
Not I, from hence I fain would go—
Dost thou not feel the spectral rout
Is flitting everywhere about?
It whistl'd right above my hair—
Close to my feet,—I felt it there—
No one is hurt—'tis not denied,—
But we have all been terrified—
Wholly the frolic now is ended—
'Tis what the brutish pair intended.



HERALD.

Since on me, at festive masque,
Laid hath been the Herald's task,
At the doors I watch with care,
Lest aught harmful, unaware,
Creep into this joyous space;
I nor waver, nor give place.
Yet I fear the spectral brood
Through the window may intrude;
And from trick and sorcery,
I know not how to keep you free.
First the dwarf awaken'd doubt,
Now streams in the spectral rout.
I would show you herald-wise,

What each figure signifies.

But what none can comprehend

I should strive to teach in vain.

All must help me to explain!—

Through the crowd behold ye it wend;

A splendid car is borne along

By a team of four; the throng

Is not parted, nor doth reign

Tumult round the stately wain;

Bright it glitters from afar;

Shineth many a motley star,

As from magic-lantern cast;

On it snorts with stormful blast.—

I needs must shudder! Clear the way!

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

Stay your wings, ye coursers, stay!

Own the bridle's wonted sway!

Rein yourselves, as you I rein;

When I prompt you, rush amain!—

Honor we this festal ground.

See how press the folk around,

Ring in ring, with wondering eyes.—

Herald, as thy wont is, rise;

From you ere we flee afar,

Tell our name, our meaning show!

Since we allegories are,
'Tis thy duty us to know.

HERALD.

I cannot guess how I should name thee;
I to describe thee should prefer.

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

So, try it then!

HERALD.

We must proclaim thee,
Firstly to be both young and fair;
A half-grown boy;—yet women own
They fain would see thee fully grown;
A future wooer seemest thou to me,
A gay deceiver out and out to be.

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

Not badly spoken! Pray proceed!
The riddle's cheerful meaning strive to read.

HERALD.

Thine eyes swart flash, thy jewell'd bandlet glowing
Starlike, amid thy night-like hair;
And what a graceful robe dost wear,
Down from thy shoulder to thy buskin flowing,
With purple hem and fringes rare!
Thee as a girl one might misprize;

Yet thou, for weal or woe, wouldst be,
E'en now, of worth in maidens' eyes;
Thee they would teach the A B C.

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

And he whose stately figure gleams
Enthron'd upon his chariot wain?

HERALD.

A monarch, rich and mild, he seems;
Happy who may his grace obtain,
Henceforth they've naught for which to strive!
His glance discerns if aught's amiss;
Greater his pleasure is to give,
Than to possess or wealth or bliss.

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

Suspend not here thy words, I pray,
Him thou more fully must portray.

HERALD.

The noble none can paint. Yet there
Glow the round visage, hale and fair,
Full mouth, and blooming cheeks, descried
Beneath the turban's jewell'd pride;
What ease his mantle folds display!
What of his bearing can I say?
As ruler seems he known to me.

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

Plutus, the god of wealth is he.

Hither he comes in royal state;

Of him the emperor's need is great.

HERALD.

Tell of thyself the what and how to me!

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

I am profusion, I am Poesie;

The bard am I, who to perfection tends

When freely he his inner wealth expends.

I too have riches beyond measure,

And match with Plutus' wealth my treasure;

For him adorn and quicken dance and show,

And what he lacketh, that do I bestow.

HERALD.

Boasting to thee new charm imparts.

Now show us something of thine arts!

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

See me but snap my fingers, lo!

Around the car what splendors glow!

A string of pearls forth leapeth here;

[Continually snapping.]

Take golden clasps for neck and ear;

Combs too, and other precious things,

Crowns without flaw, and jewell'd rings!

Flamelets I scatter too, in play,
Awaiting where they kindle may.

HERALD.

How the good people snatch and seize!
Almost the donor's self they squeeze.
As in a dream he gems doth rain,
In the wide space they snatch amain.
But—here new juggling meets mine eye:
What one doth grasp so eagerly,
Doth prove, in sooth, a sorry prize;
Away from him the treasure flies;
The pearls are loosen'd from their band;
Now beetles crawl within his hand;
He shakes them off, poor fool, instead,
Swarming, they buzz around his head;
Others, in place of solid things,
Catch butterflies, with lightsome wings.

Though vast his promises, the knave
To them but golden glitter gave!

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

Masks, I remark, thou canst announce full well;
Only to reach the essence 'neath the shell,
Is not the Herald's courtly task;
A sharper vision that dost ask.
But I from every quarrel would be free.—

Master, I speech and question turn to thee.

[*Turning to Plutus.*

The storm-blast didst thou not confide

To me, of this four-yoked car?

Lead I not well, as thou dost guide?

Where thou dost point, thence am I far?

Have I not known, on daring wing

For thee the victor's palm to wring?

Full often as for thee I've fought,

Still have I conquer'd; and if now

The laurel decorates thy brow,

Have not my hand and skill the chaplet wrought?

PLUTUS.

If need there be, that I should witness bear,—

Soul of my soul, thee gladly I declare:

According to my will thou actest ever;

Art richer than myself denied.

To give thy service its due meed,

Before all crowns the laurel wreath I treasure.

This truthful word let all men hear:

My son art thou, thee doth my soul hold dear.

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

(*To the crowd.*)

Now of my hand the choicest dower,

I've scatter'd in this festive hour;

There glows on this or that one's head
A flame, which I abroad have shed;
From one to other now it hies,
To this one cleaves, from that one flies,
Seldom aloft its flames aspire;
Sudden they gleam, with transient fire;
With many, ere they know the prize,
It mournfully burns out and dies.

(Clamor of Women.)

He yonder, on the chariot-van,
Is, without doubt, a charlatan.
Behind him, crouching, is the clown,
By thirst and hunger so worn down,
The like was never seen till now;
If pinch'd, he would not feel, I trow.

THE STARVELING.

Avaunt, ye loathed women-kind!
With you I ne'er a welcome find.—
When rul'd the hearth your thrifty dame,
Then Avaritia was my name;
Then throve our household well throughout;
For much came in, and naught went out!
Great was my zeal for chest and bin—
And that, forsooth, you call a sin!
But in these later years, no more
The wife is thrifty as of yore;
She, like each tardy payer, owns

Far more desires than golden crowns;
This for her spouse much care begets;
Where'er he turneth, there are debts;
What she by spinning earns, she spends
On gay attire, and wanton friends;
Better she feasts, and drinketh too
More wine, with her vile suitor crew:
That rais'd for me of gold the price.
Now, male of sex, I'm Avarice!

LEADER OF THE WOMEN.

Dragon may still with dragon spare;
It's cheat and lies at last, no more!
He comes to rouse the men; beware!
Full troublesome they were before.

WOMEN.

(All together.) The scarecrow! Box his ears! Make haste!

To threat us does the juggler dare?
Us shall his foolish prating scare?
The dragons are but wood and paste;
Press in upon him, do not spare!

HERALD.

Now, by my staff! Keep quiet there!
Yet scarcely needed is my aid.
See, in the quickly opened space,
How the grim monsters move apace!

Their pinions' double pair display'd!
The dragons shake themselves in ire,
Scale-proof, their jaws exhaling fire—
The crowd recedes; clear is the place.
[Plutus descends from the chariot.

HERALD.

He steps below, a king confess'd!
He nods, the dragons move; the chest
They from the chariot, in a trice,
Have lower'd, with gold and avarice;
Before his feet it standeth now:
How done a marvel is, I trow.

PLUTUS.

(*To the Charioteer.*) Now from the burden that oppress'd thee here
Thou'rt frank and free; away to thine own sphere!
Here is it not; distorted, wild, grotesque,
Surrounds us here a motley arabesque.
There fly, where on thy genius thou canst wait,
Lord of thyself; where charm the good, the fair;
Where clear thy vision in the clear calm air;
To solitude—there thine own world create!

BOY-CHARIOTEER.

Myself as trusty envoy I approve;
Thee as my nearest relative I love.
Where thou dost dwell, is fulness; where I reign,

Within himself each feeleth glorious gain;
And 'mid life's contradictions wavers he:
Shall he resign himself to thee, to me?
Thy votaries may idly rest, 'tis true;
Who follows me, hath always work to do.
My deeds are not accomplish'd in the shade,
I only breathe, and forthwith am betray'd.
Farewell! My bliss thou grudgest not to me;
But whisper low, and straight I'm back with thee.

[Exit as he came.]

PLUTUS.

Now is the time the treasure to set free!
The locks I strike, thus with the Herald's rod;
'Tis open'd now! In blazing caldrons, see,
It bubbles up, and shows like golden blood;
Next crowns, and chains, and rings, a precious dower:
It swells and fusing threats the jewels to devour.

(Alternate cry of the Crowd.)

Look here! look there! How flows the treasure,
To the chest's brim in ample measure!—
Vessels of gold are melting, near
Up-surg'ing, coin'd rouleaux appear,
And ducats leap as if impress'd—
O how the vision stirs my breast!—
My heart's desire now meets mine eye!

They're rolling on the floor, hard by.—

To you 'tis proffer'd; do not wait,

Stoop only, you are wealthy straight!—

While, quick as lightning, we anon,

The chest itself will seize upon.

HERALD.

Ye fools, what ails you? What your quest?

'Tis but a masquerading jest.

To-night no more desire ye may;

Think you that gold we give away,

And things of worth? For such as you,

And at such foolish masking too,

E'en counters were too much to pay.

Blockheads! a pleasing show, forsooth,

Ye take at once for solid truth.

What's truth to you? Delusion vain

At every turn ye clutch amain.—

Thou, Plutus, hero of the masque,

This folk to chase, be now thy task!

PLUTUS.

Ready at hand thy staff I see;

For a brief moment lend it me!—

Quickly in fire and seething glare

I'll dip it.—Now, ye masks, beware!

It sputters, crackles, flares outright;

Bravely the torch is now alight;
And pressing round, who comes too nigh,
Is forthwith scorch'd, relentlessly!—
Now then my circuit is begun.

(Cries and Tumult.)

O misery! We are undone.—
Escape, let each escape who can!
Back! further back! thou hindmost man!—
Hot in my face it sputter'd straight—
Of the red staff I felt the weight—
We all, alas! we all are lost!—
Back, back, thou masquerading host!—
Back, back, unthinking crowd!—Ah me,
Had I but wings, I hence would flee!—

PLUTUS.

Back is the circle driven now;
And no one has been sing'd, I trow.
The crowds give way,
Scared, with dismay.—
Yet, pledge of order and of law,
A ring invisible I draw.

HERALD.

Achiev'd thou hast a noble deed;
For thy sage might be thanks thy need!

PLUTUS.

Yet needs there patience, noble friend;

Still many a tumult doth impend.

AVARICE.

If it so please us, pleasantly,

We on this living ring may gaze around.

For women ever foremost will be found,

If aught allure the palate or the eye.

Not yet am I grown rusty quite!

A pretty face must always please;

And since it nothing costs to-night,

We'll go a-wooing at our ease.

Yet as in this o'ercrowded sphere,

Words are not audible to every ear,

Deftly I'll try,—and can but hope success—

In pantomime my meaning to express.

Hand, foot and gesture will not here suffice,

Hence I must strive to fashion some device:

Like moisten'd clay forthwith I'll knead the gold;

This metal into all things we can mould.

HERALD.

The meagre fool, what doeth he?

Hath such a starveling humor? See,

He kneadeth all the gold to dough,

Beneath his hand 'tis pliant too;

Yet howsoe'er he squeeze and strain,

Misshapen it must still remain.

He to the women turns, but they

All scream, and fain would flee away,

With gestures of aversion. Still

Ready the rascal seems for ill;

Happy, I fear, himself he rates,

When decency he violates.

Silence were wrong in such a case;

Give me my staff, him forth to chase!

PLUTUS.

What threats us from without, he bodeth not.

Let him play out his pranks a little longer!

Room for his jest will fail him soon, I wot;

Strong as is law, necessity is stronger.

[Enter Fauns, Satyrs, Gnomes, Nymphs, etc., attendants on Pan, and announcing his approach.]

(Tumult and Song.)

From forest-vale and mountain height,
Advancing with resistless might,
The savage host, it cometh straight:
Their mighty Pan they celebrate.
They know, what none beside can guess;
Into the vacant ring they press.

PLUTUS.

You and your mighty Pan I recognize!

Conjoin'd you've enter'd on a bold emprise.

Full well I know, what is not known to all,

And ope this narrow space, at duty's call.—

O may a happy Fate attend!

Wonders most strange may happen now;

They know not where unto they tend;

Forward they have not look'd, I trow.

(Wild Song.)

Bedizen'd people, glittering brood!

They're coming rough, they're coming rude;

With hasty run, with lofty bound,

Stalwart and strong they press around.

FAUNS.

Fauns advance,

Their crisp locks bound

With oak-leaves round,—

In merry dance!



artist franz simm.

FAUST. SECOND PART.

pan and his attendants

A fine and sharply pointed ear,

Forth from their clustering locks doth peer;

A stumpy nose, with breadth of face—

These forfeit not a lady's grace:

If but his paw the Faun advance,

Not lightly will the fairest shun the dance.

SATYR.

The Satyr now comes hopping in,
With foot of goat, and withered shin;
These sinewy must be and thin.
In chamois-guise, on mountain height,
Around to gaze is his delight;
In freedom's air, with freshness rife,
Child he despiseth, man and wife,
Who, 'mid the valley's smoke and steam,
That they too live, contented dream;
On those pure heights, sequester'd, lone,
The upper world is his alone!

GNOMES.

Tripping, here comes a tiny crew.
They like not keeping two and two;
In mossy dress, with lamplet clear,
Commingling swiftly, they career,
Where for himself his task each plies,
Swarming they glitter, emmet-wise;
And ever busy, move about,
With ceaseless bustle in and out.
We the "Good Folk" as kindred own,
As rock-chirurgists well we're known;
Cupping the lofty hills, we drain,

With cunning, from each well-fill'd vein,
The metals, which aloft we pile,
Shouting, Good luck! Good luck! the while:
Kindness at bottom we intend;
Good men we evermore befriend.
Yet to the light we gold unseal,
That men therewith may pimp and steal;
Nor to the proud, who murder plann'd
Wholesale, shall fail the iron brand;
These three commands who hath transgress'd,
Will take small reckoning of the rest;
Nathless for that we're not to blame:
Patient we are, be ye the same!

GIANTS.

The wild men, such in sooth our name,
Upon the Hartzberg known to fame,
Naked, in ancient vigor strong,
Pell-mell we come, a giant throng;
With pine-stem grasp'd in dexter hand,
And round the loins a padded band,
Apron of leaf and bough, uncouth,—
Such guards the pope owns not, in sooth.

CHORUS OF NYMPHS.

(They surround the great Pan.) He draweth near!

In mighty Pan

The All we scan
Of this world-sphere.
All ye of gayest mood advance,
And him surround, in sportive dance!
For since he earnest is and kind,
Joy everywhere he fain would find;
E'en 'neath the blue o'erarching sky,
He watcheth still, with wakeful eye;
Purling to him the brooklet flows,
And zephyrs lull him to repose;
And when he slumbers at mid-day,
Stirs not a leaf upon the spray;
Health-breathing plants, with balsams rare,
Pervade the still and silent air;
The nymph no more gay vigil keeps,
And where she standeth, there she sleeps.
But if, at unexpected hour,
His voice resounds with mighty power,
Like thunder, or the roaring sea,
Then knoweth none, where he may flee;
Panic the valiant host assails,
The hero in the tumult quails.
Then honor to whom honor's due!
And hail to him, who leads us unto you!

DEPUTATION OF GNOMES.

(To the great Pan.)

When a treasure, richly shining,
Winds through clefts its thread-like way,
Sole the cunning rod, divining,
Can its labyrinth display.
Troglodytes, in caves abiding,
We our sunless homes vault o'er;
Thou, 'mid day's pure airs presiding,
Graciously thy gifts dost pour.
Close at hand, a fount of treasure
We have found, a wondrous vein;—
Promising in fullest measure,
What we scarce might hope to gain.
Perfect thou alone canst make it;
Every treasure in thy hand,
Is a world-wide blessing; take it,
Thine it is, Sire, to command!

PLUTUS.

(To the Herald.) Our self-possession now must be display'd,

And come what may, we must be undismayed;

Still hast thou shown a strong, courageous soul.

A dreadful incident will soon betide;

'Twill be by world and after-world denied;

Inscribe it truly in thy protocol!

HERALD.

(Grasping the staff which Plutus holds in his hand.) The dwarfs conduct the mighty Pan

Softly the source of fire to scan;

It surges from the gulf profound,

Then downward plunges 'neath the ground;

While dark the mouth stands, gaping wide,

Once more uprolls the fiery tide.

The mighty Pan stands well-content,
Rejoicing in the wondrous sight,
While pearl-foam drizzles left and right.
How may he trust such element!
Bending, he stoops to look within.—
But now his beard hath fallen in!—
Who may he be, with shaven chin?
His hand conceals it from our eyes.—
Now doth a dire mishap arise;
His beard takes fire and backward flies;
Wreath, head and breast are all ablaze;
Joy is transformed to dire amaze.—
To quench the fire his followers run;
Free from the flames remaineth none;
Still as they strike from side to side,
New flames are kindled far and wide;
Envelop'd in the fiery shroud,
Burns now the masquerading crowd.
But what's the tale that's rumor'd here,
From mouth to mouth, from ear to ear!
O night, for aye with sorrow fraught,
To us what mischief hast thou brought!
The coming morn will tidings voice,
At which, in sooth, will none rejoice.
From every side they cry amain,

“The Emperor suffers grievous pain!”

O were some other tidings true!—

The Emperor burns, his escort too.

Accurs'd be they, for evermore,

Who him seduc'd, with noisy roar,

Abroad, begirt with pitchy bough,

To roam, for general overthrow!

O youth, O youth, and wilt thou never

To joy assign its fitting bound?

O Majesty, with reason never

Will thy omnipotence be crown'd?

The mimic forest hath caught fire;

Tongue-like the flame mounts high and higher;

Now on the wood-bound roof it plays,

And threatens one universal blaze!

O'erflows our cup of suffering;

I know not, who may rescue bring;

Imperial pomp, so rich o'er night,

An ash-heap lies in morning's light.

PLUTUS.

Long enough hath terror sway'd;

Hither now be help convey'd.

Strike, thou hallow'd staff, the ground,

Till earth tremble and resound!

Cooling vapors everywhere

Fill the wide and spacious air!
Moisture-teeming mist and cloud
Draw anear, and us o'ershroud;
Veil the fiery tumult, veil!
Curling, drizzling, breathing low,
Gracious cloudlets hither sail,
Shedding down the gentle rain!
To extinguish, to allay,
Ye, the assuagers, strive amain;
Into summer-lightning's glow
Change our empty fiery play!—
Threaten spirits us to hurt,
Magic must its power assert.



Pleasure-Garden.

Morning sun.

[*The Emperor, his court, men and women, Faust, Mephistopheles dressed becomingly, in the usual fashion; both kneel.*

FAUST.

The flaming juggler's play dost pardon, Sire?

EMPEROR.

I of such sports full many should desire.—

I saw myself within a glowing sphere;
Almost it seem'd as if I Pluto were;
A rock abyss there lay, with fire aglow,
Gloomy as night; from many a gulf below,
Seething, a thousand savage flames ascend,
And in a fiery vault together blend;
Up to the highest dome their tongues were toss'd,
Which ever was, and evermore was lost.
In the far space, through spiral shafts of flame,
Peoples I saw, in lengthen'd lines who came;
In the wide circle forward press'd the crowd,
And as their wont hath been, in homage bow'd;
I seem'd, surrounded by my courtly train,
O'er thousand Salamanders king to reign.

MEPHIS.

Such art thou, Sire! For thee each element
To own as absolute is well content.
Obedient thou hast proven fire to be.
Where it is wildest, leap into the sea—
And scarce thy foot the pearl-strewn floor shall tread,
A glorious, billowy dome o'ervaults thy head;
Wavelets of tender green thou seest swelling,
With purple edge, to form thy beauteous dwelling,
Round thee, the central point; where thou dost wend,
At every step, thy palace homes attend;

The very walls, in life rejoicing, flow
With arrowy swiftness, surging to and fro;
Sea-marvels to the new and gentle light repair;
They dart along, to enter none may dare;
There sports, with scales of gold, the bright-hued snake,
Gapes the fell shark, his jaws thy laughter wake:
Howe'er thy court may round thee now delight,
Such throng as this, before ne'er met thy sight.
Nor long shalt sever'd be from the most fair;
The curious Nereids, to thy dwelling rare,
'Mid the eternal freshness, shall draw nigh;
The youngest, greedy like the fish, and shy;
The elder prudent. Thetis hears the news,
Nor to the second Peleus will refuse
Or hand or lip.—Olympos' wide domain—

EMPEROR.

I leave to thee, thou o'er the air mayst reign;
Full early every one must mount that throne.

MEPHIS.

Earth, noblest Sire! already thou dost own.

EMPEROR.

Hither what happy Fate, with kindness fraught,
Thee from the thousand nights and one hath brought!
If thou, like Scheherazade, prolific art,
To thee my highest favor I'll impart;

Be ever near when, as is oft the case,
Most irksome is our world of commonplace!

MARSHAL.

(Entering in haste.)

Your Highness, never thought I in my life
Tidings to give, with such good fortune rife
As these which, in thy presence, cheer
My raptur'd heart, absolv'd from fear;
All reckonings paid, from debt we're eased:—
The usurer's clutches are appeas'd—
From such hell-torment I am free!
In Heaven can none more cheerful be.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

(Follows hastily.)

Paid in advance the soldiers' due,
Now the whole army's pledged anew.
Blood dances in the trooper's veins;
Vintner and damsel reap their gains.

EMPEROR.

How freely now your breast doth heave!
The marks of care your visage leave!
How hastily you enter!

TREASURER.

(Entering.) Sire, proceed

These men to question who have done the deed.

FAUST.

(To the Chancellor.) To you it doth belong the case to state.

CHANCELLOR.

(Who advances slowly.)

In my old days I am with joy elate!

So hear and see this fortune-weighted scroll,

Which hath to happiness transform'd our dole:

(He reads.)

“To all whom it concerneth, be it known:

Who owns this note a thousand crowns doth own.

To him assur'd, as certain pledge, there lies,

Beneath the Emperor's land, a boundless prize;

It is decreed, this wealth without delay

To raise, therewith the promis'd sum to pay.”

EMPEROR.

Crime I suspect, some huge deceit!

The Emperor's name who here doth counterfeit?

Unpunish'd still remains such breach of right?

TREASURER.

Remember, Sire! Thyself but yesternight

Didst sign the note.—Thou stoodst as mighty Pan;

Then spake the Chancellor, whose words thus ran:

“This festive pleasure for thyself obtain,

Thy people's weal, with a few pen-strokes gain!”

These mad'st thou clearly; thousand-fold last night

Have artists multiplied what thou didst write;
And that to each alike might fall the aid,
To stamp the series, we have not delay'd,
Ten, thirty, fifty, hundreds at a stroke.
You cannot guess, how it rejoic'd the folk:
Behold your town, mouldering half dead that lay,
How full of life and bounding joy to-day!
Long as thy name hath bless'd the world, till now
So gladly was it ne'er beheld, I trow.
The Alphabet is now redundant grown;
Each in this sign finds happiness alone.

EMPEROR.

My people take it for true gold, you say?
In camp, at court, it passes for full pay?
Much as I wonder, it I must allow.

MARSHAL.

To stay the flying leaves were hopeless now;
With speed of lightning all abroad they float:
The changers' banks stand open; every note
Is honored there with silver and with gold;
Discount deducted, if the truth were told.
To butcher, baker, vintner, thence they fare;
With half the world is feasting their sole care;
The other half, new-vestur'd, bravely shows;
The mercer cuts away, the tailor sews.

In cellars still "The Emperor!" they toast,
While, amid clattering plates, they boil and roast.

MEPHIS.

Alone who treads the terraced promenade,
Sees there the fair one, splendidly array'd;
One eye the peacock's fan conceals; the while
This note in view, she lures us with her smile,
And swifter than through eloquence or wit,
Love's richest favor may be won by it.
One's self with purse and scrip one need not tease.
Hid in the breast, a note is borne with ease,
And with the billet-doux is coupled there;
The priest conveys it in his book of prayer;
The soldier, that his limbs may be more free,
Quickly his girdle lightens. Pardon me,
Your Majesty, if the high work I seem,
Dwelling on these details, to disesteem.

FAUST.

This superfluity of wealth, that deep
Imprison'd in its soil thy land doth keep,
Lies all unus'd; wide-reaching thought profound
Is of such treasure but a sorry bound;
In loftiest flight, fancy still strives amain
To reach its limit, but still strives in vain—
Yet minds who dare behind the veil to press,

In the unbounded, boundless faith possess.

MEPHIS.

Such paper, in the place of pearls and gold,
Convenient is, we know how much we hold;
No need for change or barter, each at will
Of love and wine may henceforth drink his fill.
If coin is needed, stands the changer nigh,
If there it faileth, straight the shovel ply;
Goblet and chain at auction fetch their price;
The paper, forthwith cancell'd, in a trice
The sceptic shames, who us did erst deride;
The people, used to it, wish naught beside:
So henceforth, through the realm, there's goodly store,
Of jewels, gold, and paper, evermore.

EMPEROR.

You this high aid have render'd to our state;
Great is the service, be the meed as great!
Our realm's subsoil confide we to your care;
Best guardians of the treasure buried there.
Full well ye know the vast, well-guarded hoard,
And when men dig, so be it at your word!

ToFaust and the Treasurer.

Ally yourselves, ye masters of our treasure,
The honors of your place fulfil with pleasure,
There where together join'd in blest content,

The upper with the under world is blent!

TREASURER.

Not the most distant strife shall us divide;

As colleague be the conjuror at my side.

[*Exit with*Faust.

EMPEROR.

If I at court each man with gifts endow,

Whereto he'll use them, let each tell me now.

PAGE.

(*Receiving.*) Merry I'll be, and taste life's pleasant things.

ANOTHER.

(*The same.*) I for my sweetheart will buy chain and rings.

CHAMBERLAIN.

(*Accepting.*) Wine twice as good from this time forth I'll drink.

ANOTHER.

(*The same.*) The dice already in my pocket clink.

BANNERET.

(*Thoughtfully.*) My field and castle I from debt will free.

ANOTHER.

(*The same.*) I'll lay my treasure in my treasury.

EMPEROR.

Courage I hoped, and joy, for new emprise—

But whoso knows you, straight will recognize;

I mark it well, though wealth be multiplied,

Just what ye were, the same will ye abide!

FOOL.

(Approaching.) Favors you scatter; grant me some, I pray!

EMPEROR.

What, living yet? Thou'lt drink them soon away.

FOOL.

These magic leaves! I comprehend not quite—

EMPEROR.

That I believe: them thou'lt not spend aright.

FOOL.

There, others drop—I know not what to do—

EMPEROR.

Take them! They've fallen to thy share. Adieu!

[Exit.

FOOL.

Five thousand crowns in hand! can it be true?



MEPHIS.

Thou two-legg'd paunch, art thou then risen anew?

FOOL.

As oft before, ne'er happily as now.

MEPHIS.

So great thy joy, it makes thee sweat, I trow.

FOOL.

Is this indeed worth money? art thou sure?

MEPHIS.

What throat and paunch desire it will procure.

FOOL.

Can I then field, and house, and cattle buy?

MEPHIS.

Of course! Bid only, thee it will not fail.

FOOL.

Castle with forest, chase, and fishpond?

MEPHIS.

Ay!

Thee as your worship I should like to hail!

FOOL.

As land-owner I'll rock myself ere eve!

[Exit.

MEPHIS.

In our fool's wit who will not now believe?

Dark Gallery.

Faust. Mephistopheles.

MEPHIS.

Why drag me these dark corridors along?

Within hast not enough of sport?

Occasion 'mid the motley throng

For jest and lie, hast not at court?

FAUST.

Speak not of that; in days of old hast thou

Outworn it to the very soles. But now,

Thy shuffling is a mere pretext

How to evade my questions. Sore perplex'd,

I know not how to act, or what to do;

The marshal urges me, the steward too,

The Emperor wills it—hence it straight must be—

Wills Helena and Paris here to see;

Of man and womankind the true ideal,

He fain would view, in forms distinct and real.

Quick to the work! My word I may not break.

MEPHIS.

Such promise it was weak, nay, mad to make.

FAUST.

Comrade, thou hast not thought, I trow,

Whither these arts of thine must lead:

First we have made him rich, and now

Him to amuse we must proceed.

MEPHIS.

Thou think'st no sooner said than done;

Here before steeper steps we stand,

A foreign realm must here be won,
New debts wilt add to those of old.
With the same ease dost think I can command
Helen, as phantom-notes evoke for gold!
With wizard, witchery, or ghostly ghost,
Or goiter'd dwarf, I'm ready at my post,
But Devil's darlings, though we mayn't abuse them,
Yet cannot we as heroines produce them.

FAUST.

Still harping on the ancient lyre!
The father thou of hindrances;—with thee
We needs must fall into uncertainty;
For each expedient thou dost claim new hire!
With little muttering, I know, 'tis done;
Ere one looks round, thou'lt bring them to the spot.

MEPHIS.

The Heathen-folk I'm glad to let alone,
In their own hell is cast their lot;
Yet are there means—

FAUST.

Speak quickly, naught withhold!

MEPHIS.

Loth am I higher secrets to unfold.
In solitude, where reigns nor space nor time,
Are goddesses enthron'd from early prime;

'Tis hard to speak of beings so sublime—

The Mothers are they.

FAUST.

(Terrified.) Mothers!

MEPHIS.

Tremblest thou?

FAUST.

The Mothers! Mothers! strange it sounds, I trow!

MEPHIS.

And is so: Goddesses, to men unknown,

And by us nam'd unwillingly, I own.

Their home to reach, full deeply must thou mine.

That we have need of them, the fault is thine!

FAUST.

The way?

MEPHIS.

No way; to the untrodden none,

Not to be trodden, neither to be won

By prayer! Art ready for the great emprise?

No locks are there, no bolts thy way to bar;

By solitudes shalt thou be whirl'd afar:

Such void and solitude canst realize?

FAUST.

To spare such speeches, it were well!

They of the witches' kitchen smell,
And of a time long past and gone.
To know the world have I not sought?
The empty learn'd, the empty taught?—
Spake I out plainly, as in reason bound,
Then doubly loud the paradox would sound;
By Fortune's adverse buffets overborne,
To solitude I fled, to wilds forlorn,
And not in utter loneliness to live,
Myself at last did to the Devil give!

MEPHIS.

And hadst thou swum to ocean's utmost verge,



And there the shoreless infinite beheld,
There hadst thou seen surge rolling upon surge,
Though dread of coming doom thy soul had quell'd,
Thou hadst seen something;—dolphins thou hadst seen.
Cleaving the silent sea's pellucid green,
And flying cloud hadst seen, sun, moon and star;
Naught, in the everlasting void afar,
Wilt see, nor hear thy footfall's sound,
Nor for thy tread find solid ground!

FAUST.

Thou speakest as of mystagogues the first,
True neophytes who gulled—only revers'd:
I to vacuity by thee am sent,
That art as well as strength I may augment;
Thou wouldest, like the cat, make use of me,
The chestnuts from the fire to snatch for thee.
We'll fathom it! come on, nor look behind!
In this thy naught, the All I hope to find.

MEPHIS.

Before we part, thy bearing I commend;
I see, the Devil thou dost comprehend.
Here, take this key!

FAUST.

That little thing!

MEPHIS.

First hold it fast, not lightly valuing!

FAUST.

It waxes in my hand! It flashes, glows!

MEPHIS.

Soon shalt thou mark what virtue it bestows.
The key will scent the very place you need;
Follow, thee to the Mothers it will lead.

FAUST.

(Shuddering.) The Mothers! Like a blow it strikes mine ear!

What is this word, it troubles me to hear?

MEPHIS.

So narrow-minded, scar'd by each new word!

Wilt only hear, what hast already heard?

Inur'd to marvels, thee let naught astound;

Be not disturb'd, how strange soe'er the sound!

FAUST.

My weal I seek not in torpidity;

Humanity's best part in awe doth lie:

Howe'er the world the sentiment disown,

Once seiz'd—we deeply feel the vast, the unknown.

MEPHIS.

Sink then! Arise! This also I might say:—

'Tis all the same. Escaping from the real,

Seek thou the boundless realm of the ideal.

Delight thyself in forms long pass'd away!

The train, like cloud-procession, glides along;

Swing thou the key, hold off the shadowy throng!

FAUST.

(Inspired.) Good! firmly grasping it, new strength is mine,

My breast expands! Now for the great design!

MEPHIS.

A glowing tripod teaches thee thou hast
The deep attain'd, the lowest deep, at last:
There, by its light the Mothers thou wilt see;
Some sit, while others, as the case may be,
Or stand, or walk: formation, transformation,
Of mind etern, eternal recreation!
While forms of being round them hover; thee
Behold they not, phantoms alone they see.
Take courage, for the danger is not slight.
Straight to the tripod press thou on, be brave,
And touch it with the key—

[Faust, *with the key, assumes an attitude of determined authority.*

MEPHIS.

(Observing him.) So, that is right!
It cleaves to thee, it follows like a slave;
Calmly dost mount, fortune doth thee upbear,
Back art thou with it, ere they are aware.
And hither hast thou brought it: by its might,
Hero mayst call, and heroine from night;
The first to venture in such enterprise;
'Tis done—with thee the bold achievement lies;
And then by spells, to sorcery allow'd,
To gods shall be transform'd the incensecloud.

FAUST.

And now what next?

MEPHIS.

Downward thy being strain.

Stamping descend, stamping thou'lt rise again.

[*Faust stamps and sinks.*

In his behoof if worketh but the key!

Whether he will return, I'm fain to see.

Hall. (*Brilliantly lighted.*)

Emperor and Princes: The Court in movement.

CHAMBERLAIN.

(*To Mephistopheles.*)

You're still our debtors for the spirit-show;

To work! The Emperor doth impatient grow.

STEWARD.

His Highness even now hath question'd me;

Delay not, nor affront his Majesty!

MEPHIS.

My comrade's for that very purpose gone;

How to commence he knows; he labors on,

Secluded in his study, calm and still,

With mind intensely strung; for who the prize,

Ideal beauty, would evoke at will,

Needs highest art, the magic of the wise.

STEWARD.

To us it matters not what arts you need;
The Emperor wills that ye forthwith proceed.

A BLONDE.

(*To Mephistopheles.*)

One word, good sir! My visage now is clear—
It is not so when baleful summer's here:
Then sprout a hundred freckles, brown and red,
Which, to my grief, the white skin overspread.

A cure!

MEPHIS.

'Tis pity, face so fair to see,
In May like panther's cub should mottled be!
Take spawn of frog, and tongue of toad, the twain
Under the fullest moon distil with care;
Lay on the mixture, when the moon doth wane—
The spring arrives, no blemishes are there.

BRUNETTE.

To fawn upon you, how the crowds advance;
A remedy I ask! A frozen foot
Hinders me sorely when I walk or dance;
Awkward my movement e'en when I salute.

MEPHIS.

A single tread allow me with my foot!

BRUNETTE.

Well, betwixt lovers that might come to pass—

MEPHIS.

A deeper meaning, child, my footprint has:

Like unto like, in sickness is the rede;

Foot healeth foot; with every limb 'tis so.

Draw near! Give heed! My tread return not.

BRUNETTE.

(Screaming.) Woe!

Ah, woe! It burns! A hard tread that indeed,

Like horse's hoof!

MEPHIS.

Receive thy cure as meed.

Now mayst thou dance at pleasure; and salute,

Beneath the festal board, thy lover's foot.

LADY.

(Pressing forward.) Make way for me, too grievous is my smart,

Seething, it rankles in my deepest heart:

Bliss in my looks he sought till yesterday—

With her he talks, and turns from me away!

MEPHIS.

The case is grave, but this my lore receive:

Thou to his side must stealthily make way;

Take thou this coal, a mark upon his sleeve,

His cloak, or shoulder make, as happen may—

His heart repentant will be thine once more;

The coal thou straight must swallow; after it,

No water near thy lip, no wine, permit—

This very night he'll sigh before thy door.

LADY.

It is not poison?

MEPHIS.

(Offended.) Honor where 'tis due!

You for such coal much ground must wander o'er;

It cometh from a pyre, that we of yore

More fiercely stirr'd than now we do.

PAGE.

I love; as still unripe they scorn my youth!

MEPHIS.

(Aside.) I know not whom to listen to, in sooth.

(To thePage.)

Not on the youngest set your happiness;

Those more in years your merits will confess.

[Others press up to him.]

Others are coming! What a fearful rout!

Myself with truth I must at last help out—

The sorriest shift! Great is the need! Ah me!

O Mothers, Mothers! Only Faust set free.

[Looking round.]

The lights are burning dimly in the hall;
At once the court is moving, one and all;
Advancing in due order them I see,
Through long arcade and distant gallery;
Now in the old Baronial hall, the train
Assemble, them it scarcely can contain;
Its ample walls rare tapestries enrich,
While armor decks each corner, every niche;
Here magic-words, methinks, are needed not,
Ghosts, of their own accord, would haunt this spot.

Baronial Hall. (*Dimly illuminated.*)

Emperor and Court have entered.

HERALD.

Mine ancient usage, to announce the play,
The spirits' secret working mars; in vain
The surging tumult to ourselves, to-day,
Would we, on reasonable grounds, explain.
Seats are arrang'd, ready is every chair;
The Emperor sits before the wall, and there,
On tapestry in comfort may behold
The battles of the glorious days of old.
All now are seated; prince and court around;
While crowded benches fill the hinder ground;
Your lovers too, in these dark hours, will find,
Beside their sweethearts, places to their mind.

So now we're seated, ready for the play;
The phantoms may appear, without delay!

[Trumpets.

ASTROLOGER.

Now let the drama, 'tis the Sire's command,
Begin forthwith its course! ye walls expand!
Naught hinders; magic yields what we require.
The curtains vanish, as uproll'd by fire;
The wall splits open, backward it doth wend;
An ample theatre appears to rise;
A mystic lustre gleams before our eyes;
And I to the proscenium ascend.

MEPHIS.

(Emerging from the prompter's box.) I hope for general favor in your eyes,

The Devil's rhetoric in prompting lies!

(To the Astrologer.)

The time dost know, in which the stars proceed,
And, like a master, wilt my whispering read.

ASTROLOGER.

Through magic power, appears before our gaze,
Massive enough, a fane of ancient days;
Like Atlas, who of old the heavens upbare,
Columns, in goodly rows, are standing there;
They for their burden may suffice, when twain
A mighty edifice might well sustain.

ARCHITECT.

That the antique—I cannot think it right;
It as unwieldy we should designate;
The rude is noble styled, the clumsy great!
Slim shafts I love, aspiring, infinite;
The pointed zenith lifts the soul on high;
Such building us doth mostly edify.

ASTROLOGER.

Receive with reverence stargranted hours!
By magic word enthrall'd be reason's powers;
Here, on the other hand, let phantasy,
Noble and daring, roam more wildly free!
What boldly you desir'd, he with your eyes perceiv'd!
Impossible, and hence, by faith to be believ'd.
[Faustrises at the other side of the proscenium.]

ASTROLOGER.

In priestly vesture, crown'd, a wondrous man,
Who now achieves, what trustful he began;
A tripod with him from the gulf ascends;
With the surrounding air the incense blends;
He arms himself, the lofty work to bless:
Henceforth we naught can augur but success.

FAUST.

In your name, Mothers, ye who on your throne
Dwell in the Infinite, for aye alone,

Yet sociably! Around your heads are rife
Life's pictures, restless, yet devoid of life;
What was, there moveth, bright with lustrous sheen;
For deathless will abide what once hath been.
This ye dispense, beings of matchless might,
To day's pavilion, to the vault of night:
Life in its gentle course doth some arrest;
Of others the bold magian goes in quest:
In rich profusion, fearless, he displays
The marvels upon which each longs to gaze.

ASTROLOGER.

Scarcely the glowing key the censer nears,
When o'er the scene a misty shroud appears;
It creepeth in, cloudlike it onward glides,
Expands, upcurls, contracts, unites, divides.
Now recognize a spirit masterpiece:
The clouds make music; wonders never cease;
The airy tones, one knows not how, float by:
Where'er they move, there all is melody;
The pillar'd shaft, the very triglyph rings;
Yea, I believe that the whole temple sings!
The mist subsides; steps forth, in measur'd time,
From the light veil, a youth in beauty's prime.
Silent mine office here; his name I need not show;
Who doth the gentle Paris fail to know!

FIRST LADY.

O! In his youthful strength what lustrous grace!

SECOND LADY.

Fresh as a peach, and full of sap his face!

THIRD LADY.

The finely chisell'd, sweetly swelling lip!

FOURTH LADY.

At such a beaker fain wert thou to sip?

FIFTH LADY.

Though handsome, quite unpolish'd is his mien.

SIXTH LADY.

A little more refin'd he might have been.

KNIGHT.

The shepherd youth, methinks, in him I trace;

Naught of the prince or of the courtier's grace!

ANOTHER KNIGHT.

Half naked, fair the stripling seems to be;

But clad in armor him we first must see!

LADY.

Gently he seats himself, with easy grace.

KNIGHT.

For you his lap were pleasant resting-place?

ANOTHER.

Lightly his arm he bendeth o'er his head.

CHAMBERLAIN.

That is not here allow'd. 'Tis under-bred!

LADY.

You gentlemen are always hard to please.

CHAMBERLAIN.

Before the Emperor to loll at ease!

LADY.

He only acts! He thinks himself alone.

CHAMBERLAIN.

The drama should be courtly near the throne.

LADY.

Gently hath sleep o'ercome the gracious youth.

CHAMBERLAIN.

He snoreth now; 'tis nature, perfect truth.

YOUNG LADY.

(Enraptured.) What fragrance with the incense sweetly blends.

That to my inmost heart refreshment sends?

OLDER LADY.

A breath the soul pervades with gracious power!

From him it comes.

OLDEST LADY.

Of growth it is the flower;

It like ambrosia from the youth distils,

And the whole atmosphere around him fills.

[*Helenasteps forward.*

MEPHIS.

Such then she was! She will not break my rest!

Fair, doubtless; but she is not to my taste.

ASTROLOGER.

For me remains no further duty now,

As man of honor, this I must allow.

The fair one comes; and had I tongues of fire—

Beauty of old did many a song inspire—

Who sees her is enraptur'd; all too bless'd

Was he indeed by whom she was possess'd.

FAUST.

Have I still eyes? Is beauty's very spring,

Full gushing, to mine inmost sense reveal'd?

Most blessed gain doth my dread journey bring.

How blank to me the world, its depths unseal'd!

What is it since my priesthood's solemn hour!

Enduring, firmly-bas'd, a precious dower!

Vanish from me of life the breathing power,

If, e'en in thought, I e'er from thee decline!—

The gracious form that raptur'd once my sight,

That in the magic mirror wak'd delight,

Was a foam-image to such charms as thine!—

'Tis thou, to whom as tribute now I bring

My passion's depth, of every power the spring,

Love, adoration, madness, heart and soul!

MEPHIS.

(From the prompter's box.)

Collect yourself, and fall not from your rôle!

ELDERLY LADY.

Tall and well-shap'd! Only too small the head.

YOUNGER LADY.

Her foot! 'Tis clumsy if the truth were said.

DIPLOMATIST.

Princesses of this kind I've seen; and she

From head to foot seems beautiful to me.

COURTIER.

Softly she nears the sleeper, artful, shy.

LADY.

How hateful near that form of purity!

POET.

He is illumin'd by her beauty's sheen.

LADY.

Endymion! Luna!—'Tis the pictur'd scene!

POET.

Quite right! The goddess downward seems to sink;

O'er him she bends, his balmy breath to drink;

A kiss!—The measure's full!—O envied youth!

DUENNA.

Before the crowd—too bold that is, in sooth!

FAUST.

A fearful favor to the boy!—

MEPHIS.

Be still!

And let the phantom do whate'er it will.

COURTIER.

She steals away, light-footed;—he awakes.

LADY.

A backward glance, just as I thought, she takes!

COURTIER.

He starts! 'Tis marvellous! he's all amaze.



artist franz simm

FAUST. SECOND PART.

paris and helen

LADY.

To her no marvel is what meets her gaze.

COURTIER.

To him with coy reserve she turneth now.

LADY.

She takes him into tutelage, it seems;

All men in such a case are fools, I trow;
Himself to be the first, he fondly dreams!

KNIGHT.

Let me admire! Majestically fair—

LADY.

The courtezan! 'Tis vulgar, I declare!

PAGE.

Now in his place to be, full fain I were!

COURTIER.

Who in such net would not be gladly caught?

LADY.

From hand to hand the jewel hath been pass'd;

The very gilding is worn off at last.

ANOTHER.

From her tenth year she hath been good for naught.

KNIGHT.

Each takes the best that Fate to him hath sent:

With this fair ruin I were well content.

LEARNED MAN.

Her I behold, yet to confess am free,

Doubts may arise, if she the right one be.

What's present doth into extremes betray;

Cling closely to the letter, that's my way;

I to what's written turn, and there I read:

How she all Troya's graybeards charm'd indeed.

How perfectly this tallies here, I see—

I am not young, and yet she pleases me.

ASTROLOGER.

A boy no more! A man, heroic, brave,

He claspeth her, who scarce herself can save;

With stalwart arm aloft he raises her.

Thinks he to bear her off?

FAUST.

Rash fool! Beware!

Thou darest! Hearest not! Forbear I say!

MEPHIS.

Why thou thyself dost make the phantom-play!

ASTROLOGER.

Only one word! From what did her befall,

“The rape of Helena,” the piece I call.

FAUST.

The rape! Count I for nothing here? This key,

Do I not hold it still within my hand?

Through dreary wastes, through waves, it guided me,

Through solitudes, here to this solid land;

Here is firm footing, here the actual, where

Spirit with spirits to contend may dare,

And for itself a vast, twin-realm prepare.

Far as she was, how can she be more near?
Sav'd, she is doubly mine! I'll dare it! Hear,
Ye Mothers, Mothers, hear, and grant my quest!
Who once hath known, without her cannot rest!

ASTROLOGER.

What dost thou? Faustus! Faustus!—Her with might,
He seizes; fades the phantom from the sight;
Towards the youth he turneth now the key,
He touches him!—Presto! alas! Woe's me!

[Explosion, Faust lies upon the ground.]

[The phantoms vanish in the air.]

MEPHIS.

(Taking Faust upon his shoulders.) You have it now! With fools one's self to burden,
May to the devil prove a sorry guerdon.

(Darkness. Tumult.)

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ACT II.



High-vaulted, Narrow Gothic Chamber.

(Formerly Faust's, unaltered.)

MEPHIS.

(Stepping from behind a curtain. While he raises it and looks back, Faust is seen, stretched upon an old-fashioned bed.)

Lie there, ill-starr'd one! In love's chain,

Full hard to loose, he captive lies!

Not soon his senses will regain

Whom Helena doth paralyze.

[Looking round.

Above, around, on every side

I gaze, uninjur'd all remains:

Dimmer, methinks, appear the color'd panes,

The spiders' webs are multiplied,

Yellow the paper, and the ink is dry;

Yet in its place each thing I find;

And here the very pen doth lie,

Wherewith himself Faust to the Devil sign'd,

Yea, quite dried up, and deeper in the bore,
The drop of blood, I lur'd from him of yore—
O'erjoy'd to own such specimen unique
Were he who objects rare is fain to seek;—
Here on its hook hangs still the old fur cloak,
Me it remindeth of that merry joke,
When to the boy I precepts gave, for truth,
Whereon, perchance, he's feeding now, as youth.
The wish comes over me, with thee allied,
Envelop'd in thy worn and rugged folds,
Once more to swell with the professor's pride!
How quite infallible himself he holds;
This feeling to obtain your savans know;
The devil parted with it long ago.

[He shakes the fur cloak which he has taken down; crickets, moths and chafers fly out.]

CHORUS OF INSECTS.

We welcome thy coming,

Our patron of yore!
We're dancing and humming,
And know thee once more.
Us singly, in silence,
Hast planted, and lo!
By thousands, O Father,
We dance to and fro.
The rogue hides discreetly
The bosom within;
We looseskins fly rather
Forth from the fur skin.

MEPHIS.

O'erjoy'd I am my progeny to know!

We're sure to reap in time, if we but sow.
I shake the old fur-mantle as before,
And here and there outflutters one or more.
Above, around, hasten, beloved elves,
In hundred thousand nooks to hide yourselves!
'Mid boxes there of bygone time,
Here in these age-embrowned scrolls,
In broken potsherds, foul with grime,
In yonder skulls' now eyeless holes!
Amid such rotten, mouldering life,
Must foolish whims for aye be rife.

[Slips into the fur-mantle.]

Come shroud my shoulders as of yore!
To-day I'm principal once more;
But useless 'tis, to bear the name:
Where are the folk to recognize my claim?

[He pulls the bell, which emits a shrill penetrating sound, at which the halls shake and the doors spring open.]

FAMULUS.

(Tottering up the long dark passage.) What a clamor! What a quaking!
Stairs are rocking, walls are shaking:
Through the windows' quivering sheen,
Are the stormful lightnings seen;
Springs the ceiling,—thence, below,
Lime and mortar rattling flow:

And, though bolted fast, the door

Is undone by magic power!

There, in Faust's old fleece bedight,

Stands a giant,—dreadful sight!

At his glance, his beck, at me!

I could sink upon my knee.

Shall I fly, or shall I stay?

What will be my fate to-day!

MEPHIS.

Come hither, friend!—Your name is Nicodemus?

FAMULUS.

Most honor'd Sir, such is my name.—Oremus!

MEPHIS.

That we'll omit.

FAMULUS.

O joy, me you do not forget.

MEPHIS.

I know it well: old, and a student yet;

My mossy friend, even a learned man

Still studies on, because naught else he can:

Thus a card-house each builds of medium height;

The greatest spirit fails to build it quite.

Your master, though, that title well may claim—

The noble Doctor Wagner, known to fame,

First in the learned world! 'Tis he, they say,
Who holds that world together; every day
Of wisdom he augments the store!
Who crave omniscience, evermore
In crowds upon his teaching wait;
He from the rostrum shines alone;
The keys doth like Saint Peter own,
And doth of Hell and Heaven ope the gate;
As before all he glows and sparkles,
No fame, no glory but grows dim,
Even the name of Faustus darkles!
Inventor there is none like him.

FAMULUS.

Pardon, most honor'd Sir, excuse me, pray—
If I presume your utterance to gainsay—
This bears not on the question any way;
A modest mind is his allotted share.
The disappearance, unexplain'd as yet,
Of the great man, his mind doth sorely fret;
Comfort from his return and health are still his prayer.
The chamber, as in Doctor Faustus' day,
Maintains, untouch'd, its former state,
And for its ancient lord doth wait.
Venture therein I scarcely may.
What now the aspect of the stars?—

Awe-struck the very walls appear;
The door-posts quiver'd, sprang the bars—
Else you yourself could not have enter'd here.

MEPHIS.

Where then bestow'd himself hath he?
Lead me to him! bring him to me!

FAMULUS.

Alas! Too strict his prohibition
Scarce dare I, without his permission.
Months, on his mighty work intent,
Hath he, in strict seclusion spent.
Most dainty 'mong your men of books,
Like charcoal-burner now he looks,
With face begrim'd from ear to nose;
His eyes are blear'd, while fire he blows;
Thus for the crisis still he longs;
His music is the clang of tongs.

MEPHIS.

Admittance unto me deny?
To hasten his success, the man am I.
[Exit Famulus. Mephistopheles seats himself with a solemn air.]
Scarce have I taken my post, when lo!
Stirs from behind a guest, whom well I know;
Of the most recent school, this time, is he,
And quite unbounded will his daring be.

BACCALAUREUS.

(Storming along the passage.) Open find I door and gate!

Hope at last springs up elate,
That the living shall no more
Corpse-like rot, as heretofore,
And, while breathing living breath,
Waste and moulder as in death.
Here partition, screen, and wall
Are sinking, bowing to their fall,
And, unless we soon retreat,
Wreck and ruin us will greet.
Me, though bold, nor soon afraid,
To advance shall none persuade.
What shall I experience next?
Years ago, when sore perplex'd,
Came I not a freshman here,
Full of anxious doubt and fear,
On these graybeards then relied,
By their talk was edified?
What from musty tomes they drew,
They lied to me; the things they knew
Believ'd they not; with falsehood rife,
Themselves and me they robb'd of life.
How?—Yonder in the murky glare,
There's one still sitting in the chair—
Drawing near I wonder more—
Just as him I left of yore,
There he sits, in furry gown,
Wrapp'd in shaggy fleece, the brown!
Then he clever seem'd, indeed,
Him as yet I could not read;
Naught will it avail to-day;
So have at him, straight-away.

If Lethe's murky flood not yet hath pass'd,
Old Sir, through your bald pate, that sideways bends,
The scholar recognize, who hither wends,
Outgrown your academic rods at last.
The same I find you, as of yore;
But I am now the same no more.

MEPHIS.

Glad am I that I've rung you here.
I priz'd you then not slightly;
In grub and chrysalis appear
The future brilliant butterfly.
A childish pleasure then you drew
From collar, lace, and curls.—A queue
You probably have never worn?—
Now to a crop I see you shorn.
All resolute and bold your air—
But from the *absolute* forbear!

BACCALAUREUS.

We're in the ancient place, mine ancient Sir,
But think upon time's onward flow,
And words of double-meaning spare!
Quite otherwise we hearken now.
You fool'd the simple, honest youth;
It cost but little art in sooth,
To do what none to-day will dare.

MEPHIS.

If to the young the naked truth one speaks,
It pleases in no wise the yellow beaks;
But afterwards, when in their turn
On their own skin the painful truth they learn,
They think, forsooth, from their own head it came;

“The master was a fool,” they straight proclaim.

BACCALAUREUS.

A rogue perchance!—For where's the teacher found

Who to our face, direct, will Truth expound?

Children to edify, each knows the way,

To add or to subtract, now grave, now gay.

MEPHIS.

For learning there's in very truth a time;

For teaching, I perceive, you now are prime.

While a few suns and many moons have wan'd,

A rich experience you have doubtless gain'd!

BACCALAUREUS.

Experience! Froth and scum alone,

Not with the mind of equal birth!

Confess! what men have always known,

As knowledge now is nothing worth.

MEPHIS.

(After a pause.) I long have thought myself a fool;

Now shallow to myself I seem, and dull.

BACCALAUREUS.

That pleases me! Like reason that doth sound;

The first old man of sense I yet have found!

MEPHIS.

I sought for hidden treasures, genuine gold—

And naught but hideous ashes forth I bore!

BACCALAUREUS.

Confess that pate of yours, though bare and old,
Than yonder hollow skull is worth no more!

MEPHIS.

(Good-naturedly.) Thou know'st not, friend, how rude is thy reply.

BACCALAUREUS.

In German to be courteous is to lie.



Fr. Pecht del.

published by George Barrie

[Editor: illegible word]

Wagner.



MEPHIS.

(Still moving his wheel-chair ever nearer to the proscenium, to the pit.)

Up here I am bereft of light and air;

I perhaps shall find a refuge with you there?

BACCALAUREUS.

When at their worst, that men would something be,
When they are naught, presumptuous seems to me.
Man's life is in the blood, and where, in sooth,
Pulses the blood so strongly as in youth?
That's living blood, which with fresh vigor rife,
The newer life createth out of life.
There all is movement, something there is done;
Falleth the weak, the able presses on!
While half the world we 'neath our sway have brought,
What have ye done? Slept, nodded, dream'd and thought,
Plan after plan reject'd;—nothing won.
Age is, in sooth, a fever cold,
With frost of whims and peevish need:
When more than thirty years are told,
As good as dead one is indeed:
You it were best, methinks, betimes to slay.

MEPHIS.

The devil here has nothing more to say.

BACCALAUREUS.

Save through my will, no devil dares to be.

MEPHIS.

(Aside.) The devil now prepares a fall for thee!

BACCALAUREUS.

The noblest mission this of youth's estate.

The world was not, till it I did create;
The radiant Sun I led from out the sea;
Her changeful course the Moon began with me;
The Day array'd herself my steps to meet,
The Earth grew green, and blossom'd me to greet;
At my command, upon you primal Night,
The starry hosts unveil'd their glorious light.
Who, beside me, the galling chains unbound,
Which cramping thought had cast your spirits round?
But I am free, as speaks my spirit-voice,
My inward light I follow, and rejoice;
Swift I advance, enraptur'd, void of fear,
Brightness before me, darkness in the rear.

[*Exit.*

MEPHIS.

Go, in thy pride, Original, thy way!—
True insight would, in truth, thy spirit grieve!
What wise or stupid thoughts can man conceive,
Unponder'd in the ages pass'd away?—
Yet we for him need no misgiving have;
Chang'd will he be, when a few years are past;
Howe'er absurdly may the must behave,
Nathless it yields a wine at last.—

(To the younger part of the audience, who do not applaud.)

Though to my words you're somewhat cold,

Good children, me you don't offend;

Reflect! The devil, he is old;

Grow old then, him to comprehend!

Laboratory.

After the fashion of the middle ages; cumbrous, useless apparatus, for fantastic purposes.

WAGNER.

(At the furnace.) Soundeth the bell, the fearful clang

Thrills through these sooty walls; no more

Upon fulfilment waits the pang

Of hope or fear;—suspense is o'er;

The darkneses begin to clear,

Within the inmost phial glows

Radiance, like living coal, that throws,

As from a splendid carbuncle, its rays;

Athwart the gloom its lightning plays,

A pure white lustre doth appear;

O may I never lose it more!—

My God! what rattles at the door?

MEPHIS.

(Entering.) Welcome! As friend I enter here.

WAGNER.

Hail to the star that rules the hour!

[Softly.

On breath and utterance let a ban be laid!

Soon will be consummate a work of power.

MEPHIS.

(In a whisper.) What is it, then?

WAGNER.

A man is being made.

MEPHIS.

A man? and pray what loving pair

Have in your smoke-hole their abode?

WAGNER.

Nay! Heaven forbid! As nonsense we declare

The ancient procreative mode;

The tender point, life's spring, the gentle strength

That took and gave, that from within hath press'd,

And seiz'd, intent itself to manifest

The nearest first, the more remote at length,—

This from its dignity is now dethron'd!

The brute indeed may take delight therein,

But man, by whom such mighty gifts are own'd,

Must have a purer, higher origin.

[He turns to the furnace.]

It flashes, see!—Now may we trustful hold,

That if, of substances a hundred-fold,

Through mixture,—for on mixture it depends—

The human substance duly we compose,

And then in a retort enclose,

And cohobate; in still repose

The work is perfect'd, our labor ends.

[Again turning to the furnace.]

It forms! More clear the substance shows!

Stronger, more strong, conviction grows!

What Nature's mystery we once did style,

That now to test, our reason tries,

And what she organiz'd erewhile,

We now are fain to crystallize.

MEPHIS.

Who lives, doth much experience glean;

By naught in this world will he be surpris'd;

Already in my travel-years I've seen,

Full many a race of mortals crystallized.

WAGNER.

(Still gazing intently on the phial.)

It mounts, it glows, and doth together run,

One moment, and the work is done!

As mad, a grand design at first is view'd;

But we henceforth may laugh at fate,

And so a brain, with thinking-power imbu'd,

Henceforth your living thinker will create.

[Surveying the phial with rapture.]

The glass resounds, with gracious power possess'd;

It dims, grows clear; living it needs must be!

And now in form of beauty dress'd,

A dainty mannikin I see.

What more can we desire, what more mankind?

Unveil'd is now what hidden was of late;

Give ear unto this sound, and you will find,

A voice it will become, articulate.

HOMUNCULUS.

(In the phial, to Wagner.)

Now, Fatherkin, how goes it? 'Twas no jest!

Come let me to thy heart be fondly press'd—

Lest the glass break, less tight be thine embrace!

This is the property of things: the All

Scarcely suffices for the natural;

The artificial needs a bounded space.

(To Mephistopheles.)

But thou, Sir Cousin, Rogue, art thou too here?

At the right moment! Thee I thank. 'Tis clear

To us a happy fortune leadeth thee;

While I exist, still must I active be,

And to the work forthwith myself would gird;

Thou'rt skill'd the way to shorten.

WAGNER.

Just one word!

I oft have been asham'd that knowledge fail'd,

When old and young with problems me assail'd.

For instance: no one yet could comprehend,
How soul and body so completely blend,
Together hold, as ne'er to part, while they
Torment each other through the livelong day.
So then—

MEPHIS.

Forbear! The problem solve for me,
Why man and wife so wretchedly agree?
Upon this point, my friend, thou'lt ne'er be clear;
The mannikin wants work, he'll find it here.

HOMUNCULUS.

What's to be done?

MEPHIS.

(Pointing to a side door.)

Yonder thy gifts display!

WAGNER.

(Still gazing into the phial.)

A very lovely boy, I needs must say!

[The side door opens; Faust is seen stretched upon a couch.]



HOMUNCULUS.

(Amazed.) Momentus!

[The phial slips from Wagner's hands, hovers over Faust, and sheds a light upon him.]

Girt with beauty!—Water clear

In the thick grove; fair women, who undress;

Most lovely creatures!—grows their loveliness:

But o'er the rest one shines without a peer,

As if from heroes, nay from gods she came;

In the transparent sheen her foot she laves;

The tender life-fire of her noble frame

She cools in yielding crystal of the waves.—

Of swiftly moving wings what sudden noise?

What splash, what plunge the liquid glass destroys?

The maidens fly, alarmed; alone, the queen,

With calm composure gazes on the scene:

With womanly and proud delight, she sees

The prince of swans press fondly to her knees,

Persistent, tame; familiar now he grows.—

But suddenly upfloats a misty shroud,

And with thick-woven veil doth overcloud

The loveliest of all lovely shows.

MEPHIS.

Why thou in sooth canst everything relate!

Small as thou art, as phantast thou art great.

I can see nothing—

HOMUNCULUS.

I believe it. Thou,
Bred in the north, in the dark ages, how,
In whirl of priesthood and knight-errantry,
Have for such sights, thy vision free!
In darkness only thou'rt at home.

[Looking round.]

Ye brown, repulsive blocks of stone,
Arch-pointed, low, with mould o'ergrown!
Should he awake, new care were bred,
He on the spot would straight be dead.
Wood-fountains, swans, fair nymphs undress'd,
Such was his dream, presageful, rare;
In place like this how could he rest,
Which I, of easy mood, scarce bear!
Away with him!

MEPHIS.

I like your plan, proceed!

HOMUNCULUS.

Command the warrior to the fight,
The maiden to the dancers lead!
They're satisfied, and all is right.
E'en now a thought occurs, most bright;
'Tis classical Walpurgis-night—
Most fortunate! It suits his bent,

So bring him straightway to his element!

MEPHIS.

Of such I ne'er have heard, I frankly own.

HOMUNCULUS.

Upon your ear indeed how should it fall?

Only romantic ghosts to you are known;

Your genuine ghost is also classical.

MEPHIS.

But whitherward to travel are we fain?

Your antique colleagues are against my grain.

HOMUNCULUS.

North-westward, Satan, lies thy pleasure-ground;

But, this time, we to the south-east are bound.—

An ample vale Peneios floweth through,

'Mid bush and tree its curving shores it laves;

The plain extendeth to the mountain caves,

Above it lies Pharsalus, old and new.

MEPHIS.

Alas! Forbear! Forever be eschew'd

Those wars of tyranny and servitude!

I'm bored with them: for they, as soon as done,

Straight recommence; and no one calls to mind

That he in sooth is only play'd upon

By Asmodeus, who still lurks behind.

They battle, so 'tis said, for freedom's rights—
More clearly seen, 'tis slave 'gainst slave who fights.

HOMUNCULUS.

Leave we to men their nature, quarrel-prone!
Each must defend himself, as best he can,
From boyhood up; so he becomes a man.
The question here is, how to cure this one?

[*Pointing to* Faust.

Hast thou a means, here let it tested be;
Canst thou do naught, then leave the task to me.

MEPHIS.

Full many a Brocken-piece I might essay,
But bolts of heathendom foreclose the way.
The Grecian folk were ne'er worth much, 'tis true,
Yet with the senses' play they dazzle you;
To cheerful sins the human heart they lure,
While ours are reckon'd gloomy and obscure.
And now what next?

HOMUNCULUS.

Of old thou wert not shy;
And if I name Thessalian witches,—why,
I something shall have said,—of that I'm sure.

MEPHIS.

(*Lustfully.*) Thessalian witches—well! the people they
Concerning whom I often have inquir'd.

Night after night, indeed, with them to stay,

That were an ordeal not to be desir'd;

But for a trial trip—

HOMUNCULUS.

The mantle there

Reach hither, wrap it round the knight!

As heretofore, the rag will bear

Both him and thee; the way I'll light.

WAGNER.

(Alarmed.) And I?

HOMUNCULUS.

At home thou wilt remain:

Thee most important work doth there detain;

The ancient scrolls unfolding, cull

Life's elements, as taught by rule;

And each with other then combine with care;

Upon the *What*, more on the *How*, reflect!

Meanwhile as through a piece of world I fare,

I may the dot upon the "I" detect.

Then will the mighty aim accomplish'd be;

Such high reward deserves such striving;—wealth,

Honor and glory, lengthen'd life, sound health,

Knowledge withal and virtue—possibly.

Farewell!

WAGNER.

Farewell! That grieves my heart full sore!

I fear indeed I ne'er shall see thee more.

MEPHIS.

Now to Peneios forth we wend!

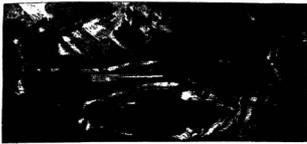
We must not slight our cousin's aid.

(To the spectators.)

At last, in sooth, we all depend

On creatures, we ourselves have made.

CLASSICAL WALPURGISNIGHT.



Pharsalian Fields.

Darkness.

ERICHTHO.*

To this night's ghastly fête, as oftentimes before,

I hither come, Erichtho, I, the gloomy one;

Not so atrocious, as the sorry poet-throng

Me in excess have slander'd. . . They no measure know

In censure and applause. . . O'erwhiten'd seems to me,

With waves of dusky tents, the valley, far and wide,

Night-phantom of that dire and most appalling night.

How often 'tis repeated! Will for evermore

Repeat itself for aye. . . empire none gladly yields

To others; none to him, by force who master'd it
And forceful reigns. For each, his inmost self to rule
How impotent soe'er, ruleth right joyously
His neighbor's will, as prompts his own imperious mind. . . .
Nathless a great example here was battled through;
Here force 'gainst force more potent takes its stand,
Freedom's fair chaplet breaks, with thousand blossoms rife,
The stubborn laurel bends around the victor's brow.
Of greatness' budding-day here Pompey dream'd; and there,
Watching the wavering balance, Cæsar wakeful lay!
Strength they shall measure. Knows the world who here prevail'd.
Brightly the watch-fires burn, diffusing ruddy flames;
Reflex of blood, once spill'd, does from the soil exhale,
And by the night's most rare and wondrous splendor lur'd,
Hither the legions throng of Hellas' mythic lore.
Round every fire dim shapes, phantoms of ancient days,
Flit wavering to and fro, or there recline at ease. . . .
The moon, not fully orb'd, of clearest light serene,
Uprising, lustre mild diffuses all around.
Vanish the spectral tents, the fires are burning blue.
But lo! above my head, what sudden meteor sails!
It shines, and doth illumine a ball corporeal.
I snuff the scent of life. Me it beseemeth not
The living to approach, to whom I noxious am;
That brings me ill-repute, and nothing profits me.

Already it sinks down. With caution I retire.

[*Withdraws.*

The Aerial Travellers above.

HOMUNCULUS.

O'er the horror weird and blazing,
Wing once more your circling flight;
Down on vale and hollow gazing,
All phantasmal is the sight.

MEPHIS.

Hideous ghosts, as through the casement
Old, 'mid northern waste and gloom,
I behold,—without amazement,—
Here as there I am at home!

HOMUNCULUS.

Swiftly, there, before us striding,
Mark yon tall, retreating shade!

MEPHIS.

Seeing us through ether gliding,
Troubled seems she, and afraid.

HOMUNCULUS.

Let her stride! Set down thy burden,—
Him, thy Knight;—the while I speak,
Life to him returns, the guerdon,
He in fable-land doth seek.

FAUST.

(*Touching the ground.*) Where is she?

HOMUNCULUS.

That I cannot say,

But here perchance inquire for her you may.

Till breaks the dawn, with speed, do thou,

From fire to fire, still seeking, wend;
He nothing more need fear, I trow,
Who, to the Mothers, ventur'd to descend.

MEPHIS.

My part to play, I also claim;
And for our weal naught better know,
Than that, forthwith, from flame to flame,
Seeking his own adventures each should go.
Then us once more to re-unite,
Show, little friend, thy sounding light!

HOMUNCULUS.

Thus shall it sound, thus glitter too!
[The glass rings, and emits a powerful light.]
And now away to marvels new!

FAUST.

(Alone.) Where is she?—Now no further question make! . . .
If this were not the sod, her form that bare,
This not the wave that brake to welcome her,
Yet 'tis the air, that once her language spake!
Here! through a wonder, here on Grecian land!
I felt at once the soil whereon I stand:
As me, the sleeper, a new spirit fired,
An Antæus in heart, I rise inspir'd.
Assembled here objects most strange I find.
Searching, through this flame-labyrinth I'll wind.

[*He retires.*

MEPHIS.

(*Prying around.*) As I these little fires still wander through,

I find myself a stranger everywhere;

Quite naked most, some shirted here and there:

The Sphinxes shameless, and the Griffins too,

And winged things, with tresses, hurrying past,

Before, behind, within mine eye are glass'd . . .

At heart indecent are we, truth to speak,

Yet all too life-like find I the Antique;

It by the modern mind must be controll'd,

And overgloss'd, in fashions manifold. . . .

A crew repulsive! Yet, a stranger guest,

In courteous phrase be my salute express'd. . . .

All hail! ye beauteous ladies, graybeards wise!

GRIFFIN.

(*Snarling.*) Not Graybeards—Griffins! It the temper tries

To hear one's self styled gray. In every word

Some echo of its origin is heard:

Grim, grievous, grizzl'd, grimy, graveyards, gray,

In etymology accord, and they

Still put us out of tune.

MEPHIS.

Yet all the same,

The "Gri" contents you in your honor'd name.

GRIFFIN.

(As above.) Of course! For the alliance prov'd may be,

Oft blam'd indeed, but prais'd more frequently.

Let each one gripe at beauty, empire, gold,

Fortune still aids the Griper if he's bold.

ANTS.

(Of the colossal kind.) Of gold ye speak. Thereof we much had stor'd,

And pil'd in rocks and caves our secret hoard;

The Arimaspians found it, bore it off—

So far away that now at us they scoff.

GRIFFIN.

We'll bring them straightway to confession.

ARIMASPIAN.

Not on this night of jubilee!

Ere morning, all will squander'd be;

For this time we retain possession.

MEPHIS.

(Who has seated himself between the Sphinxes.) How soon, well-pleas'd, I grow familiar here!

I understand them, man by man.

SPHINX.

Our spirit-tones into your ear

We breathe, embody them you can.

Until we know thee better, tell thy name.

MEPHIS.

Full many a title I 'mong men may claim.

Are Britons here? They travel far to trace

Renowned battlefields, and waterfalls,

Old musty classic sites, and ruin'd walls.

A worthy goal for them this very place;

Of me their ancient plays would testify;

I there was seen as Old Iniquity.

SPHINX.

How came they upon that?

MEPHIS.

I know not.

SPHINX.

That may be.

To read the starry volume hast thou power?

What sayest to the aspect of the hour?

MEPHIS.

(Looking up.) Star shooteth after star, bright the shorn moon doth shine,

And I'm content this cozy place within;

I warm myself against thy lion's skin.

Aloft to climb were hurtful, I opine.

Propose some riddles, some charades!—Begin!

SPHINX.

Thyself declare, a riddle that indeed.

Only essay thine inmost self to read:

“Needful to pious, as to bad men found;

Armor to those, ascetic fence to test,

Comrade to these, in every desperate quest.

And both alike to Zeus, a merry jest.”

FIRST GRIFFIN.

(Snarling.) I like him not!

SECOND GRIFFIN.

(Snarling more loudly.)

What wants he here?

BOTH.

The brute belongs not to this sphere!

MEPHIS.

(Brutally.) Thou thinkest, maybe, that the stranger's nail,

To scratch with, like thy talons, can't avail?

Let's try, forthwith!

SPHINX.

(Mildly.) Here thou mayst ever dwell;

But from our midst thyself wilt soon expel.

In thine own land art wont thyself to please.

If I mistake not, here thou'rt ill at ease.

MEPHIS.

Enticing art thou, when above descried;

But with the beast below, I'm horrified.

SPHINX.

Thou false one, thou shalt bitterly repent:

These paws are sound: but as for thee,

With thy shrunk hoof thou'rt not content,

It seems, in our society.

SIRENS.

(Preluding above.)

MEPHIS.

What birds are those, on poplar bough

Swinging, the river banks along?

SPHINX.

Beware! the noblest have ere now

Been master'd by the Sirens' song!

SIRENS.

Ah! Misguided one, why linger,
'Mid these hideous wonders dwelling!
Cometh each melodious singer;—
Hark! our choral notes are swelling,
As beseems the Siren-throng.

SPHINXES.

(Mocking them in the same melody.)

Force them downward, hither faring;
'Mid the boughs themselves concealing,
They to seize you are preparing:
Ugly falcon-claws revealing,
If ye hearken to their song.

SIRENS.

Envy, Hate, avaunt ye! Listen!
All the brightest joys that glisten,

'Neath the sky, assemble we!
Now with joy in every feature,
Hail we gladly every creature,
On the earth or in the sea!

MEPHIS.

Dainty novelties,—there ring
From the throat, and from the string
Tones that sweetly interweave.
Trills on me away are thrown;
Tickle they mine ear alone,
But untouch'd my heart they leave.

SPHINXES.

Speak not of hearts, for, I believe,
A leathern wallet in its place,
Shrivell'd, would better suit thy face.

FAUST.

(Entering.) The spectacle contents me;—wondrous creatures,
Ill-favor'd, yet with large and stalwart features.

E'en now, I augur an auspicious fate;
Whither doth me that earnest glance translate?

[Pointing to theSphinxes.

Once before such took Ædipus his stand;

[Pointing to theSirens.

Writhed before such Ulyss in hempen band?

[Pointing to theAnts.

By such the mightiest treasure was upstor'd.

[*Pointing to the* Griffins.

With true and faithful watch, these kept the hoard.

I feel new life my being penetrate;

Great are the forms, the memories are great!

MEPHIS.

Once thou such shapes had scouted, now

Thou seemest friendly to their kind;

E'en monsters welcome are, I trow,

To him who would the lov'd one find.

FAUST.

(*To the* Sphinxes.) Ye women shapes, straight must ye answer me:

Hath one of you chanc'd Helena to see?

SPHINX.

We reach not to her day; the last was slain

By Hercules; some tidings thou mayst gain

From Chiron, canst thou him detain.

Round on this ghostly night he doth career;

If he will answer thee, thy goal is near.

SIRENS.

Thou, for certain, shalt not fail! . . .

When Ulysses, with us whiling,
Sped not forward, unreviling,
He hath told us many a tale.
All to thee we would confide,
If 'midst Ocean's purple tide,
To our seats thou wouldst repair.

SPHINX.

Noble one, their guile beware!

As Ulysses to the mast,—

Thee let our good counsel bind.

Canst thou noble Chiron find,

Thy desire wilt gain at last.

[*Exit* Faust.

MEPHIS.

(*Peevishly.*) What croaks, on pinions rushing by?

So swiftly they elude the eye,

In single file they hurrying fly;

The hunter they would tire, I ween.

SPHINX.

Like storm of wintry tempest, these,

Scarce reach Alcides' arrows keen—

They are the swift Stymphalides;

Their croaking too is kindly meant,

With foot of goose and vulture beak;

To mingle in our sphere they seek,

Their cousinship to prove intent.

MEPHIS.

(*Scared.*) There whiz some other forms of ill—

SPHINX.

For fear of these you need not quake:

These are the heads of the Lernæan snake,

Shorn from the trunk, and think they're something still.

But say what meaneth this distress?

This troubled air, this restlessness?

Where would you go? Be off, I say!

The group, that yonder meets mine eye,

Leads you to turn your neck awry.

Be not constrain'd! Begone! Away!

And greet full many a visage fair!

The Lamiæ, wantons sly, are there,

With forehead bold, and winning smile,

As they the Satyr-race beguile:

With them the goat's foot all may dare.

MEPHIS.

You'll stay, that I may find you here again.

SPHINX.

Yea! mingle with the airy train!

From Egypt we the custom own,

That each a thousand years should keep her throne.

And to our place, if due respect ye pay,

We rule the lunar, rule the solar day.

We, the Pyramids before,
Sit for judgment of the nations,
War and peace and inundations—
Change our features never more.

Peneios.

Surrounded by waters and Nymphs.

PENEIOS.

Sedgy whispers, gently flow;
Sister reeds breathe faint and low;
Willows lightly rustle ye,
Lisp each trembling poplar-tree,
To my interrupted dream!
Wakens me a tempest drear;
From my rest a trembling fear
Scares me, 'neath my flowing stream.

FAUST.

(Approaching the stream.)

By mine ear I must believe,
Where these arbors interweave
Bush and bough, there breathes around,
As of human voice the sound;
Prattling seems each wave to play,
And the breeze keeps holiday.

NYMPHS.

(To Faust.)

Oh, best were it for thee,
Way-weary and sore,
In coolness reclining,
Thy limbs to restore;—
The rest thus enjoying
That from thee doth flee;
We rustle, we murmur,
We whisper to thee!

FAUST.

Yes, I'm awake! Let them have sway,
These peerless shapes, as in their play
Follows mine eye, in eager quest.
How strange the feeling! What are these?
Dreams are they? Are they memories?
Already once wert thou so bless'd.

Athwart thick-woven copse and bush
Still waters glide;—they do not rush,
Scarcely they rustle as they flow:
From every side their currents bright
A hundred crystal springs unite,
And form a sloping bath below.
Young nymphs, whose limbs of graceful mould,
The gazer's raptur'd eyes behold,
Are in the liquid mirror glass'd!
Bathing with joyance all-pervading,
Now boldly swimming, shyly wading,
With shout and water-fight at last.
Contented might I be with these,
Mine eye be charm'd with what it sees;
Yet to yon covert's leafy screen
My yearning glance doth forward press,
The verdant wealth of whose recess
Shrouds from my gaze the lofty queen.
Most wonderful! Swans now draw near;
Forth from the bays their course they steer,
Oaring with majestic grace;
Floating, tenderly allied,
But with self-complacent pride,
Head and beak they move apace!
But one seems before the rest,

Joyfully the wave to breast,



artist: franz simm.

FAUST. SECOND PART.

faust mounted on chiron.

Sailing swift, without a peer;
Swells his plumage, wave on wave,
That the answering flood doth lave;—
He the hallow'd spot doth near. . . .
Now the others swim together,
To and fro, with shining feather;
Soon in splendid strife, they scare
All the timid maids away;
That, from duty swerving, they
For themselves alone may care.

NYMPHS.

Sisters, hearken, lay your ear
To the water's grassy bound!
Ringeth, if I rightly hear,
As of horse's hoof the sound.
Would I knew, who on this night,

Message bears in rapid flight.

FAUST.

As it seems, the earth indeed

Echoes 'neath a hurrying steed.

Yonder turns my glance!
Can such blessed chance
Wait upon me here?
Marvel without peer!

Hither a rider swift doth scour—

Endow'd with spirit and with power—

Borne by a snow-white steed is he. . . .

I err not, him I seek is found—

Of Philyra the son renown'd!—

Halt! Chiron! Halt! I'd speak with thee. . . .

CHIRON.

How now! what would'st thou?

FAUST.

Thy course arrest!

CHIRON.

I pause not.

FAUST.

Take me with thee; grant my quest!

CHIRON.

Mount! So I can inquire, as on we fare,

Whither art bound? Thou standest on the banks;

Prepar'd I am, thee through the stream to bear.

FAUST.

(Mounting.) Where'er thou wilt. Have evermore my thanks. . . .

The mighty man, the pedagogue of old
Whose fame it was, a hero-race to mould:
The noble Argonauts, with all their peers,
Who form'd the poet's world, in bygone years—

CHIRON.

That pass we over! Pallas' self indeed
As Mentor is not honor'd; to my thought,
All, in the end, in their own way proceed,
As though, in sooth, they never had been taught.

FAUST.

The leech who names each plant, who knows
All roots, e'en that which deepest grows,
Wounds who assuageth, sickness who doth chase,
In mind and body's strength I here embrace—

CHIRON.

Were hero wounded on the field,
Counsel and aid I could impart;
But, in the end, to priests I yield,
And women-herbalists my healing art.

FAUST.

In thee the truly great man speaks,
To words of praise who stops his ears;
Who acts, while privacy he seeks,

As were he one of many peers.

CHIRON.

Well skill'd thou seemest, to beguile
People and prince with glozing wile.

FAUST.

At least by thee 'twill be confess'd,—
The greatest of thy time hast seen, the best;
Hast with the noblest vied, in earnest strife,
And liv'd of demigods the arduous life!
But 'mong those figures of heroic mould,
In virtue whom pre-eminent didst hold?

CHIRON.

In the high circle of the Argonauts,
Each valiant was in fashion of his own,
And, by the virtue which inspir'd his thoughts,
Where others fail'd, he could suffice alone;
The Dioscuri ever did prevail
Where youthful bloom and beauty turn'd the scale;
Resolve, prompt deeds for others' welfare, these
The portion fair of the Boreades;
Reflective, wary, strong, in council wise,
So Jason lorded, dear to woman's eyes.
Then Orpheus, tender, contemplative still;—
Smote he the lyre, all own'd his wondrous skill.
Lynceus, through rocks and shoals, who, keen of sight,

Guided the holy ship, by day and night.

In fellowship is danger fronted best,

Where one achieves, extoll'd by all the rest.

FAUST.

Of Hercules to me wilt naught impart?

CHIRON.

Alas! wake not the longing in my heart. . . .

Never had Phœbus met my gaze,

Ares, or Hermes,—such their name;

When, as divine what all men praise

Before my raptured vision came!

A monarch born, in youth array'd

With glorious beauty; homage due

He to his elder brother paid,

And to the loveliest women too;

His second bears not Mother Earth,

Nor Hebe leads to heaven again;

Song strives in vain to tell his worth,

Tortur'd is marble too, in vain!

FAUST.

To give such form to mortal ken

The sculptor's boasted power is weak.

The fairest hast portray'd of men,

Now of the loveliest woman speak!

CHIRON.

What! Woman's beauty! Empty phrase,
Too oft an image void of life;
The being only can I praise,
Joy-giving and with gladness rife.
For Beauty in herself is bless'd;
Grace makes resistless, where possess'd,
Like Helena, whom once I bare.

FAUST.

Her thou hast borne?

CHIRON.

Yea! On this back.

FAUST.

Was I not 'mazed enough? Alack!
And now such seat must bless me!

CHIRON.

By my hair
Me hath she grasp'd, as thou dost now.

FAUST.

I lose myself! Oh, tell me, how?
She is in truth my sole desire!
Her, whence and whither didst thou bear?

CHIRON.

Easy to tell what you require.

Their little sister, then the robbers' prey,
The Dioscuri had redeem'd; but they,—
The ravishers, not wont to be subdu'd,
Took courage, and with stormful rage pursu'd;
The brothers, with their sister, urg'd their way
Towards the marsh, that near Eleusis lay:
The brothers waded; plashing, over it I swam;
Then off she sprang, and fondly press'd
My mane, all dripping; self-possess'd,
She sooth'd and thank'd, with sweet reserve and coy!
How charming was she! Young, of eld the joy!

FAUST.

Just seven years old. . . .

CHIRON.

The philologues, I see,
As they themselves deceiv'd, so have they thee.
Unique, in sooth, your mythologic dame:
After his pleasure her the poet shows;
Forever young, old age she never knows;
Her figure, love-inspiring, aye the same;
Ravish'd when young, courted when youth is flown—
Enough, no bonds of time the poets own.

FAUST.

So let her also by no time be bound!
At Pheræ by Achilles she was found

Beyond time's limits—happiness how rare!
In spite of destiny, love triumph'd there;
And should I not, with powerful longing rife,
Draw forth that matchless figure into life,
The deathless being, born of gods the peer,
Tender as great, sublime yet ever dear?
Thou saw'st her once, whom I to-day have seen,
Charming as fair, fair as desir'd, I ween!
Enthrall'd is my whole being, heart and brain;
I cease to live, unless I her obtain!

CHIRON.

Stranger! Thou art enraptur'd, as men deem;
Yet among spirits, brain-struck thou dost seem.
'Tis well this madness hath assail'd thee here,
Since, only for some moments, every year,
My wont it is to Manto to repair;
She, Æsculapius' child, in silent prayer
Implores her sire, who honor thus would gain,
Now to illumine the physicians' brain,
That from rash death-strokes they henceforth refrain—
To me the dearest of the Sibyl's guild,
Not wildly mov'd, with helpful kindness fill'd;
After a brief delay, thy perfect cure,
Through power of simples, can her art secure.

FAUST.

But cured I would not be! My mind is strong!

Then were I abject like the vulgar throng!

CHIRON.

Scorn not the healing of the noble fount.

We now are at the place; with speed, dismount.

FAUST.

Whither, upon this night, with horror fraught,

Me, through the pebbly stream, to land hast brought?

CHIRON.

Here Rome and Hellas madly spurn'd in fight,

(Olympus left, Peneios to the right,)

The mightiest realm that e'er in sand was lost;

The monarch flies, triumphs the burgher host.

Look up! Here stands, significantly near,

The fane eternal, bath'd in moonlight clear.

MANTO.

(Dreaming within.)

Horse-hoofs shake the air,
Rings the sacred stair,
Demigods draw near.

CHIRON.

Right! Open but thine eyes! I'm here!

MANTO.

(Awaking.) Welcome! Thou hast not fail'd, I see.

CHIRON.

Still stands thy temple-home for thee!

MANTO.

Unwearied roam'st thou far and wide?

CHIRON.

In quiet dost thou aye abide,

While I in ceaseless change delight?

MANTO.

I wait, time circles me.—This wight?

CHIRON.

Him hath this ill-reputed night

Caught in its whirl, and hither brought.

Helen, with mind and sense distraught,

Helen, he for himself would win,

But how and where he knows not to begin;

Worthy is he thy healing art to prove.

MANTO.

Who the impossible desires, I love.

[Chironis already far away.]

Enter, bold man, be joy thy meed!

This gloomy path to Proserpine doth lead.

She at Olympus' hollow foot

Doth lurk for unallow'd salute.

In bygone time I Orpheus smuggled here;

Do thou fare better! Forward! Do not fear!

[They descend.]

The Upper Peneios, as before.

SIRENS.

Plunge into Peneios' flood!

There beseems to swim rejoicing,

Song on song in chorus voicing,

For the unhallow'd people's good.

Without water health is none!

In bright bands to the Ægean,

Speed we now with sounding pæan;

Every joy will then be won.

[Earthquake.]

Back the foaming wave is rushing,

In its bed it flows no more;

Quakes the earth, the floods are gushing,

Bursting smokes the pebbly shore.

Let us fly! Come, every one!

Bodes this marvel good to none.

Hence! each noble, joyous guest,

Seaward to our gladsome fest,

Where the wavelets' glittering band

Lightly swelling, lave the strand;

There where Luna, mirror'd true,

Moistens us with holy dew!

There is life's unfetter'd motion—

Here an earthquake's dire commotion!

Hence! Ye wise ones, fly apace!

Horror reigneth in this place.

SEISMOS.

(Bellowing and blustering in the depths.) Once more heave with might and main,

With the shoulders bravely strain:

So the upper world we gain,

Where to us must all things bend!

SPHINX.

What a most unpleasant quaking,

Hideous storm-blast, awe-awaking!

What a heaving, what a throe,

Surging, swaying, to and fro!

Horror not to be endur'd!

But our post we'll not forsake,

Though all Hell were loose to break.

Now uprears itself a dome,

Wonderful. With age long hoar,

He it is who built of yore

Delos' isle amid the foam,

Heaving it from out the sea,

For her, a mother soon to be;

Striving, pressing, upward-tending,

Arms wide-stretching, back low-bending,

Atlas-like, amid the surf
Shale he raises, grass and turf,
Pebbles, gravel, loam and sand,
Tranquil cradle of our strand:
Crosswise, he a track did wrest
From the valley's tranquil vest:
Caryatid, of giant mould,
He, with strength that ne'er grows old,
Bears, half buried, earth his zone,
A huge scaffolding of stone—
But his course must here be stay'd!
Sphinxes here their stand have made.

SEISMOS.

That have I wrought, myself alone,
This will mankind at last declare;
Had I not shaken, and upthrown,
How had the world been now so fair?
Into the pure ethereal blue,
Their crests how should you mountains raise,
Had I not heav'd them forth to view,
To charm the painter's raptur'd gaze,
What time (my sires meanwhile surveying,
Chaos and Night), myself I bare
Stoutly, and, with the Titans playing,
Pelion and Ossa toss'd like balls in air?

Madly we rag'd, by youthful heat possess'd,
Till, fairly wearied out at last,
With malice, on Parnassus' crest,
We, like twin-caps both mountains cast. . . .
There with the Muses' hallowed choir,
Apollo finds a glad retreat;
For Zeus too, and his bolts of fire,
I rais'd aloft his glorious seat.
So now, have I, with direful strain,
Press'd from the depths to upper air,
And joyous dwellers call amain
New life henceforth with me to share.

SPHINXES.

Primeval had been deem'd, I trow,
What here hath struggled into birth,
Had we ourselves not witness'd how
It tore itself from out the earth.
Now upwards bushy groves themselves extend,
Rocks pressing upon rocks still forward tend;
Yet not for this shall any sphinx retreat:
Untroubled we retain our sacred seat.

GRIFFINS.

Gold in leaflets, gold in flitters,
Through the crannies how it glitters;
Let none rob you of the prize—

Up! to seize it, Emmets, rise!

CHORUS OF ANTS.

Giants, the light to greet,
Upward aspiring
Hurl'd it; with pattering feet
Climb, never tiring!
Nimbly press out and in!
Each cleft is screening
(Seek ye each crumb to win),
Gold worth the gleaning;
Even the least of all
Must ye uncover;
Haste, in each cranny small
Gold to discover.
Swarms, in quest of pelf
Toil without leisure!
Heed not the hill itself;
Gather the treasure!

GRIFFINS.

In with it; pile the golden heap!

Upon it we our claws will lay;

Bolts of the surest fashion, they

The greatest treasure safe will keep.

PIGMIES.

We a footing here have got,
How it chanc'd, doth not appear;
Whence we issued, question not;
Once for all we're settled here!
Seat for merry life doth yield,
Every country, every land;
Is a rocky cleft reveal'd,
There the dwarf is straight at hand;
Dwarf and dwarfess, model pair,
Swiftly each its labor plies.
Know I cannot if it were
So before in Paradise;
Here all find we for the best,
So our stars we thank; for still,
Mother Earth, in east and west,

Bringeth forth with right good will.

DACTYLS.

Hath she, in a single night
Brought these tiny ones to light,
She the smallest will create;
Each forthwith will find his mate.

ELDEST OF THE PIGMIES.

Hasten, make ready,
Prompt be, and steady!
Swift to the deed!
Let strength be for speed!
Peace still is reigning;
Build uncomplaining
The smithy, to burnish
Armor, and furnish
All war's belongings
Now for the host!
Ants in swift throngings,
Busily post;—
Metals procure, and you,
Dactyls, a tiny crew,
Yet an unnumber'd band,
Hear our command;
Wood bring with speed!
Flamelets in secret heap;
Them still alive to keep,
Coals too we need!

GENERALISSIMO.

With arrow and bow
Now march on the foe:
The herons that o'er
Yon fish-pond now soar,
Numberless nesting,
Haughtily breasting,
Shoot altogether,
That so we may
With helm and feather
Ourselves array!

ANTS AND DACTYLS.

Deliverance is vain!

The iron we bring,
They forge the chain;
Our freedom to wring
'Tis not yet the hour:
Crouch then to their power!

THE CRANES OF IBYCUS.

Cry of murder, dying, wailing!
Wing-strokes, anguish'd, unavailing!
What lament, what agony,
Pierces to our realms on high!
All are murder'd now; the water,
Red with blood, betrays the slaughter;
Wanton lust of ornament
Hath the heron's plumage shent:
See it o'er the helmet wave
Of each greasy, crook-legg'd knave!
Comrades of our army, ye
Heron-wanderers of the sea,
Be with us for vengeance mated,
In a cause so near related:
Let none spare or strength or blood!
Deathless hatred to this brood!

[They disperse, croaking in the air.]

MEPHIS.

(On the plain.) The Northern witches I could curb; with these,

Your foreign spirits, I am ill at ease.

The Blockberg is convenient when you roam:

Go where you may, you find yourself at home;

For us Dame Ilsa watches on her stone,

Heinrich is cheerful on his mountain-throne,

The Snorers grunt if Elend but appears,

Yet all is settled for a thousand years;

But here, stand still or walk, and who can know

Whether the ground upheaves not from below?

Through a smooth valley merrily I wind,
And all at once there rises from behind
A mountain,—scarce a mountain,—yet of height
To intercept the sphinxes from my sight. . . .
Adown the valley many a flame aspires;
Round some adventure quiver still the fires . . .
Dances, and round me hovers to entice,
An amorous crew, with many a coy device.
But soft:—Accustom'd to forbidden sweets,
One seeks to snatch them, wheresoe'er one meets!

LAMIÆ.

(Luring Mephistopheles after them.)

Fleeter, still fleeter!
Ever advancing!
Then again staying,
Prattling and playing!
Nothing is sweeter
Than the hoar sinner,
After us dancing,
Thus to allure;
Limping and stumbling,
Fretting and grumbling,
To penance sure,
Draweth he nigh;
His stiff leg dragging,
Comes he unflagging,
As him we fly.

MEPHIS.

(Standing still.) Accursed Fate! Dupes truly styl'd!

From Adam downward, fool'd, beguil'd!

We age—but who's in wisdom school'd?

Wert not enough already fool'd?

We know how good for naught these creatures;
Pinch'd at the waist, with painted features;
No soundness in their bodies slim;—
Grasp where we may, rotten is every limb:
We know, we see, we handle it in life—
And yet we dance, if but the carrion fife!

LAMIÆ.

(Stopping.) Hold! He considers, lingers, stands;
Meet him, lest he escape your hands!

MEPHIS.

(Advancing.) Push on! nor, like a simpleton,
Let web of doubt entangle thee!
For if of witches there were none,
The devil who would devil be!

LAMIÆ.

Round this hero circle we!
Love for one within his breast,
Soon itself will manifest.

MEPHIS.

By this light's uncertain gleam
Beauteous damosels ye seem,
So from blame shall you be free.

EMPUSA.

(Rushing in.) And I also! One with you,

Now admit me to your crew!

LAMIÆ.

One too many, she I ween

Spoiler of our sport hath been.

EMPUSA.

(*To Mephistopheles.*)

Thee doth thy cousin dear salute,

Empusa with the Ass's foot!

Thine but a horse's hoof, yet thee,

Cousin, I greet most courteously!

MEPHIS.

Myself unknown I fancied here—

And yet, alas, near kinsfolk meet;

From Hartz to Hellas, far and near,

So runs the rede, you'll cousins greet!

EMPUSA.

I with resolve can act, can take

Full many a shape; but for thy sake,

That I to thee do honor pay,

The Ass's head I don to-day.

MEPHIS.

I see, with people of this sort,

Relationship doth much import;

Yet come what may, 'tis all the same;

The Ass's head I must disclaim.

LAMLÆ.

This hag avoid! She comes to scare
Whatever lovely seems and fair;
What lovely was and fair before,
When she draws near, is so no more.

MEPHIS.

These smooth slim cousins, short or tall,
Make me suspicious, one and all;
I fear, those rosy cheeks behind,
Some metamorphoses to find.

LAMLÆ.

Come, take thy choice; we many are.
Catch hold! If reigns thy lucky star,
Thou of the lot mayst draw the best.
What means this hankering delay?
The wooer wretchedly dost play,
With haughty mien and lofty crest!
Amid our troop now see him glide;
Throw by degrees your masks aside,
And be your proper selves confess'd!

MEPHIS.

I've made my choice, the fairest, she . . .

[Embracing her.]

Dry as a besom! Woe is me!

[*Seizing another.*

And this? . . . a fright, oh, wretched lot!

LAMIÆ.

Deserv'st thou better? Think it not!

MEPHIS.

The little one I fain would clasp. . . .

A lizard glides from out my grasp,

And serpent-like her polish'd hair.

Anon a taller one I catch. . . .

A thyrsus-staff alone I snatch,

That for a head doth pine-cone wear.

Where will this end? . . . One plump and round,

With whom some solace may be found—

I'll try my fortune once again!—

Right flabby, squashy; such a prize,

Your Oriental dearly buys. . . .

But ah! The puff-ball bursts in twain!

LAMIÆ.

Quick as lightning, disunite!

Hover ye, in dusky flight,

Round the intruding witch's son,

In uncertain, ghastly rings,

Flitter mice, on noiseless wings!

Too cheaply he'll escape anon.

MEPHIS.

(Shaking himself.) I have not grown much wiser, that is clear.

The North's absurd, absurd 'tis also here;

Ghosts here as there, a devilish crew,

Folk are insipid, poets too!

'Tis here a masquerade as there,

A sensual dance, as everywhere;

At beauty's mask I clutch'd amain—

And seiz'd, what made me stand aghast. . . .

Yet to deceive myself I'm fain,

If only longer it would last!

[Losing his way among the rocks.]

Where am I? Whither tend my pains?

Where was a path, there chaos reigns;

I by smooth roads have hither sped,

Rude bowlders now impede my tread;

I clamber up and down in vain—

My sphinxes, where shall I regain?

Ne'er had I dream'd so mad a thing:

Such mountain in a single night!

A bold witch-journey is this flight,

Their Blockberg with them here they bring!

OREAD.

(From the natural rock.)

Hither ascend! My mountain old

Its form primeval still doth hold—
My steep and rocky steps revere,
Extremest branch of Pindus—here,
Unshaken have I rear'd my head,
When over me Pompeius fled;
Yon phantom shape that cheats the eye
Away, when crows the cock, will fly:
Such fables oft arise, I see,
And disappear as suddenly.

MEPHIS.

Honor to thee, thou reverend head;
With lofty oak-strength garlanded,
Moonshine, however clear and bright,
Faiileth to pierce thy rayless night!—
But, 'mong the bushes, comes this way
A light, that gleams with modest ray.
How fitly all things happen thus;
In truth! it is Homunculus!—
Whither away, thou tiny friend?

HOMUNCULUS.

Flitting from place to place, I wend.
In the best sense full fain I am to be;
And long impatiently my glass to break;
Only, from what I've seen and see,
Courage I lack the step to take.

But now, in confidence to speak,
Of two philosophers the track I seek;
I hearken'd, their discourse I overheard;
And Nature—Nature—was their only word:
Apart from these I would not go,
Somewhat of earthly being they must know,
And doubtless I at last shall learn
Whither most wisely I myself may turn.

MEPHIS.

Thy course shape thou thyself. Be wise!
For where your ghosts find entrance, there
Welcome is your philosopher:
That you his art and favor may delight,
A dozen new ones he brings forth to light.
Unless thou errest, reason dormant lies;
Wilt thou exist, through thine own effort rise!

HOMUNCULUS.

Such good advice should not neglected be.

MEPHIS.

So now away! Of this we more shall see.

[They separate.]

ANAXAGORAS.

(*To Thales.*) To yield is adverse to thy stubborn mind;
To bring conviction, needs there further proof?

THALES.

The wave yields willingly to every wind,
But from the beetling crag still keeps aloof.

ANAXAGORAS.

Through fiery vapor came this rock to birth.

THALES.

Moisture hath gender'd all that lives on earth.

HOMUNCULUS.

(Between them.) To walk beside you, suffer me!

I also greatly long to be.

ANAXAGORAS.

Hast thou, O Thales, ever in one night,
Such mountain out of slime brought forth to light?

THALES.

Never was Nature, with her living powers,
Measur'd by scale of days and nights and hours;
By law each shape she fashioneth, and hence,
E'en in the grand there is no violence.

ANAXAGORAS.

Yet such was here! Plutonic savage fire,
Æolian vaporous force, explosive, dire,
Burst through the ancient crusts of level earth,
And a new mountain came forthwith to birth.

THALES.

Why further press the case? at any rate,
'Tis there, and that is well. In such debate,
Leisure and precious time away one flings,
Your patient folk to keep in leading-strings.

ANAXAGORAS.

Quickly with myrmidons the mountain teems,
The clefts to people: forth there streams
Of pigmies, ants and gnomes, a living tide,
And other tiny bustling things beside.

(*To Homunculus.*)

After the Great hast ne'er aspir'd,
But hermit-like hast liv'd retir'd;
To lordship if thyself canst bring,
Forthwith I'll have thee crown'd as king.

HOMUNCULUS.

What says my Thales?

THALES.

Not with my consent;
With dwarfs we are with dwarfish deeds content:
While with the great the dwarf doth greatness win.
See there: of cranes the swarthy cloud,
They threaten the excited crowd,
And so would threat the king; with beak
Sharp-pointed and with talons fierce,

Down-swooping, they the pigmies pierce;
Fateful, their stormful ire they wreak;
A crime the herons doom'd to slaughter,
Brooding around their tranquil water;
But that death-shower of arrowy rain,
For bloody vengeance cries amain,
And doth with rage their kindred fill,
The pigmies' guilty blood to spill.
Of what avail helm, spear and shield?
What helps the dwarf the heron's plume?
How ant and dactyl shun their doom!
Wavers the host,—they fly, they yield.

ANAXAGORAS.

(After a pause, solemnly.)

If I, till now, the powers subterranean praise,
I, in this hour, my prayers to heaven upraise. . . .
Thou thron'd aloft, eternal, aye the same,
Threefold in aspect, and threefold in name,
Amid my people's woe I cry to thee,
Diana, Luna, Hecatè!
Deep pondering mind, expander of the breast,
Mighty within, though outwardly at rest,
Unclose the gulfs abyssmal of thy shade,
Be without spells thine ancient might display'd!

[Pause.

Am I too quickly heard?
And hath my prayer,
Ascending there,
Marred Nature's order with a word?

And greater, ever greater draweth near
The goddess' throne, her full-orbed sphere,
Enormous, fearful to the gaze!
Its fire grows redder through the haze. . . .
No nearer! Threatening orb, I pray;—
Ourselves and land and sea thou'lt sweep away!
Was it then true that dames of Thessaly
Through sinful trust in magic, thee
Have downward from thy pathway sung,
From thee have powers most baleful wrung? . . .
The glittering shield, behold, it darkles!
Sudden it splits, and flares and sparkles!
What a hissing! what a rattling!
Thunder and storm-blast fiercely battling!—
Humbled I fall before thy throne—
Pardon! myself invok'd it, I alone.

[Throws himself on his face.

THALES.

What hath this man not seen and heard!
I know not rightly how with us it far'd.
Like him I have not felt it. Ne'ertheless
The hours are out of tune, we must confess,

And Luna calmly as before,
In her own place aloft doth soar.

HOMUNCULUS.

Behold the pigmies' seat! The mound
Is pointed now, before 'twas round.
Convulsion huge I felt; a rock
Down from the moon, with sudden shock,
Hath fallen; and both friend and foe
Were crush'd and slaughter'd at a blow!
Yet arts like these I needs must praise,
That, working with creative might,
Upwards and downwards, could upraise,
This mountain in a single night.

THALES.

Peace! 'Twas but fancy. That vile brood,—
To swift destruction let them fare!
That thou wert not their king, is good.
Now to the sea's glad feast repair!
Strange guests are honor'd and expected there.

[They withdraw.]

MEPHIS.

(Clambering up the opposite side.)

Up rocky stairs and steep must I to-day,
Through ancient oaks' gnarl'd roots make toilsome way.
Upon my Hartz the piny atmosphere

Savors of pitch, and that to me is dear,
'Tis next to brimstone . . . Here, among the Greeks,
E'en for a trace of it one vainly seeks.
Inquisitive I am, and must inquire
Wherewith they feed hell-torment and hell-fire.

DRYAD.

In thine own land be prudently at home;
Thou hast not wit enough abroad to roam.
Towards home thou should'st not turn thy thought; while here
The honor of the sacred oaks revere.

MEPHIS.

The lost will aye in thought arise;
What we are used to, is our Paradise.
But say, what triple object do I trace,
By the dim light, in yonder cavern's shade?

DRYAD.

The Phorkyads! Go, venture to the place,
And speak to them, if thou art undismay'd!

MEPHIS.

And wherefore not? . . . I see it with amaze.
Proud as I am, e'en I must needs confess,
Their like I ne'er have seen; their ugliness
That of our hellish hags o'ersways!
Sins reprobated long,—will they
Waken henceforth the least dismay,

If men this threefold dread survey?

We would not suffer them to dwell

On threshold of our dreariest Hell;

Rooted in Beauty's land of fame,

Here to be styl'd antique they claim. . . .

They stir themselves, to scent me they appear,

Like vampire-bats, their twitter meets mine ear.

PHORKYAD.

Give me the eye, my sisters, forth to gaze,

So near our fane who boldly thus delays!

MEPHIS.

Most honor'd! To approach you give me leave,

That I your threefold blessing may receive.

As still unknown indeed I come to you,

Yet am, methinks, a distant cousin too.

Gods ancient and rever'd I've seen of yore,

Deeply have Ops and Rhea bow'd before;

Your own and Chaos' sisters, yesternight,

Or night before, the Parcaë, met my sight;

Yet on your like I ne'er before have gaz'd.

Silent I am, delighted and amaz'd.

PHORKYAD.

Intelligent this spirit seems to be.

MEPHIS.

That you no bard hath sung, surprises me.

And say, most worthy ones, how hath it been
That of your charms no pictur'd forms are seen?
Your shapes should sculpture labor to retain,
Not Juno, Pallas, Venus, and their train!

PHORKYADS.

Immers'd in solitude and night profound,
Such thought no entrance to our mind hath found!

MEPHIS.

How should it, from the world retir'd, when ye,
Yourselves by none beheld, can no one see!
You in such regions rather should reside
Where art and splendor reign in equal pride,
Where from a marble block, with genius rife,
Steps forth each day a hero into life,
Where—

PHORKYADS.

Silence! in us wake no longings new:
What would it profit us, if more we knew?
In night begot, to things of night allied,
Unto ourselves scarce known, unknown to all beside.

MEPHIS.

Not much, indeed, in such case can one say.
But each himself to others can convey:
One eye, one tooth suffices for you three;
So would it tally with mythology,

In two the being of the three to blend,
And your third semblance unto me to lend,
But for brief space.

ONE OF THE PHORKYADS.

What think you, may we try?

THE OTHER.

We'll venture—but without or tooth or eye.

MEPHIS.

With these the very best away you've ta'en;
Imperfect the stern image would remain!

ONE OF THE PHORKYADS.

Press one eye close—full easily 'tis done;
Now of your canine teeth display but one—
Forthwith, in profile, perfect and complete,
Our sisterly resemblance we shall greet.

MEPHIS.

Much honor! Be it so!

PHORKYADS.

So be it!

MEPHIS.

(As a Phorkyadin profile.)

Done!

Here stand I Chaos' well-beloved son!

PHORKYADS.

Daughters of Chaos we, by ancient right.

MEPHIS.

Me now they call, oh shame, hermaphrodite!

PHORKYADS.

What beauty our new triad gives to view!

Of eyes, and eke of teeth, we now have two.

MEPHIS.

Now must I shroud myself from mortal sight,

In pool of hell the devils to affright.

[*Exit.*

Rocky bays of the Ægean Sea.

The moon pausing in the zenith.

SIRENS.

(*Reclined upon the cliffs around, fluting and singing.*) Thou whom from thy realm
supernal,

Downward drew, with rites nocturnal,

Weird Thessalian sorceresses,

With thy glance, all things that blesses,

Now illumine the throng that presses

Through the waves with billowy motion,

Flooding all the rippling ocean

With the splendor of thy light!



artist: franz simm

FAUST. SECOND PART.

the sirens of the ægean sea

Luna fair, thy vassals greet thee;

Be propitious, we entreat thee!

NEREIDS AND TRITONS.

(As wonders of the sea.) Sing aloud, with shriller singing,

Let it, through broad ocean ringing,

Call its people, far and near!—

From the storm's dread whirlpools hiding,

We in stillest depths were biding;

Gracious song allures us here.

See, we deck ourselves enraptur'd,

With the treasures we have captur'd,

Golden chain and clasp and gem,

Spangled zone and diadem;

All this fruitage is your prey;

Down to us these shipwreck'd treasures,

You have lur'd with your sweet measures,

You, the Dæmons of our bay!

SIRENS.

Well we know, through sea-waves gliding,

In their crystal depths abiding,

Live the fishes, sorrow-free;

Yet blithe roamers, hither thronging,

We to-day to know are longing

That ye more than fishes be.

NEREIDS *AND* TRITONS.

Ere your song hath hither brought us,

Of this question we've bethought us;

Sisters, Brothers, hasten we!

Briefest journey, doubt dispelling,

Yieldeth proof sufficing, telling

That we more than fishes be!

[They retire.]

SIRENS.

In a twinkling, straight away,

Sped to Samothrace have they.

Vanish'd with a favoring wind!

What their purpose? what to gain,

Where the high Cabiri reign?

Gods they are, the strangest, who,

Self-evolv'd, are ever new,

Yet to their own nature blind.
Kindly linger on thy height,
Gracious Luna, that the night
Tarry may, lest daylight breaking
Drive us hence, our haunts forsaking!

THALES.

(On the shore, to Homunculus.)

Thee to old Nereus gladly would I lead;
Not distant are we from his cave indeed;
But sour he is and obstinate,
Moreover hath a stubborn pate!
The race entire of mortal kind
Is never to the grumbler's mind.
But he the future can disclose,
Hence each to him due reverence shows,
And gives him honor at his post;
To many he hath rendered aid.

HOMUNCULUS.

Let's knock, that trial may be made!
At once my glass and flame it will not cost.

NEREUS.

Men's voices are they, that mine ear hath heard?
With anger straight mine inmost heart is stirr'd!
Forms—striving still, who high as gods would soar,
Yet to be like themselves, doom'd evermore.

Long years could I have dwelt in godlike rest,
But ever was impell'd to aid the best;
And when at last I saw the accomplish'd deed,
It was as though they ne'er had heard my rede.

THALES.

Yet people trust in thee, thou Ocean Seer;
Wise art thou; chase us not! This flamelet here,
That man's similitude doth wear, survey,
In everything thy counsel he'll obey.

NEREUS.

Counsel! What good to men hath counsel brought?
On stubborn ears fall prudent words in vain;
Oft as the deed dire punishment hath wrought,
Self-will'd as ever mortals aye remain.
How fatherly I Paris warn'd, or e'er
His lust another's consort did ensnare!
On Hellas' shore fearless he stood and bold;
What I in spirit saw, I there foretold:
The reeking winds, the upstreaming ruddy glow,
Rafters ablaze, murder and death below,
Troy's day of doom—fast bound in deathless rhyme,
A terror and a portent for all time.
The scoffer mock'd the old man's oracle;
He follow'd his own lust, and Ilion fell,
A giant corpse, slowly its death-pangs ceas'd,—

To Pindus' eagles a right welcome feast.
Ulysses too—did I not oft presage
To him dark Circe's wiles, the Cyclop's rage,
His own delay, his comrades' reckless vein,
And what not else? And hath it brought him gain?
Till, sorely batter'd, he full late, at last,
By favoring wave on friendly shore was cast.

THALES.

Such conduct to the sage must needs give pain;
Yet still the good man trieth once again.
A grain of thanks that richly him repays.
Tons of ingratitude still overweighs.
I and this youngster no slight boon require.
Wisely *to be* is now his sole desire.

NEREUS.

Spoil not for me my present mood, most rare!
Far other aims to-day engross my care;
My daughters I've invoc'd to come to me,
The Dorides, the Graces of the sea.
Neither Olympos nor your region bears
Form so replete with grace, so lithe as theirs.
From Dragons of the sea, with loveliest motion,
They cast themselves upon the steeds of Ocean,
One with the element that round them plays,
The very foam would seem their forms to raise.

'Mid rainbow-hues of Venus' pearly car,
Comes Galatea, beauty's choicest star,
Who, since on us hath Cypris ceas'd to smile,
As goddess honored is on Paphos' Isle;
And so for long the gracious one doth own,
As heiress, temple-town and chariot-throne.
Away! Harsh words, and hatred in the heart
Have in the Father's raptur'd hour no part.
Away to Proteus! Ask that being strange
The secret of existence and of change.
[He retires towards the sea.]

THALES.

We by this step, it seems, have nothing won;
For if we light on Proteus, straight he's gone,
And if he wait, he only says at last
Things that perplex, and make one stand aghast.
Yet, once for all, such counsel thou dost need;
So then to try him, onward let us speed!
[They retire.]

SIRENS.

(On the rocks above.)

What are these, far off appearing,
Through the billowy realm careering?
Like to sails of snowy whiteness,
Zephyr-guided, such their brightness,
Hither borne with gentle motion,
These the lustrous nymphs of Ocean!
Downward climb we; hark! They're singing;

Hear ye not their voices ringing!

NEREIDS *AND* TRITONS.

Those whom thus our hand upraises
Scatter blessings;—sing their praises!
From Chelone's giant shield,
Shines an awful form reveal'd:
Gods they are whom we rejoicing
Hither bring, glad pæans voicing.

SIRENS.

Little in height,
Potent in might,
Hoar gods from the wave
The shipwreck'd who save!

NEREIDS *AND* TRITONS.

To our peaceful revel speeding,
The Cabiri we are leading;
Where their power the hapless shieldeth,
Kindly sway there Neptune wieldeth.

SIRENS.

Yield we must to you.
Ye the sinking crew,
With resistless power,
Save in shipwreck's hour.

NEREIDS *AND* TRITONS.

Three we bring, our triumph sharing,
But the fourth refus'd, declaring
That for all abiding yonder,
He the sole one is to ponder.

SIRENS.

Thus one god doth jeer
At his fellows still.
All the good revere,
Dread ye every ill!

NEREIDS.*AND*TRITONS.

There of them should seven be.

SIRENS.

Where then are the other three?

NEREIDS.*AND*TRITONS.

That we cannot answer: rather,
On Olympos question farther:
There the eighth perchance is pining,
Whom none thinks upon. Inclining
Graciously, they us have greeted—
But all are not yet completed.
The incomparable, these;—
Pressing onward, aye aspiring,
Full of longing, still desiring
What can ne'er be reach'd, to seize.

SIRENS.

Every power enthron'd,
Sun or Moon that sways,
In our prayers is own'd;
'Tis our wont; it pays.

NEREIDS.*AND*TRITONS.

How brightly shines our fame, behold,
Leading this festivity!

SIRENS.

Heroes of the ancient days
Lack henceforth their meed of praise,
How great soe'er their fame of old;
Though they have won the fleece of gold,
Ye have the Cabiri.

(Repeated in full Chorus.)

Though they have won the fleece of gold,

We! ye! have the Cabiri.

[The Nereids and Tritons pass on.]

HOMUNCULUS.

These uncouth figures, I am fain
For earthen pots to take them,
Gainst them the wise ones strike amain
Their stubborn heads, and break them!

THALES.

The very thing they most desire.
The rusty coin is valued higher.

PROTEUS.

(Unperceived.) This pleases me, the old in fable:
The stranger 'tis, the more respectable!

THALES.

Where art thou, Proteus?

PROTEUS.

(Ventriloquizing, now near, now far away.) Here! and here!

THALES.

I pardon the stale jest; appear,
And with a friend vain words forego!
From a false place dost speak, I know.

PROTEUS.

(As from a distance.) Farewell!

THALES.

(Softly to Homunculus.)

He's close at hand. Now brightly flare,

He's curious as a fish; where'er
He hide himself, that flame, be sure,
Hither forthwith will him allure.

HOMUNCULUS.

Full light I'll pour, yet care must take
Lest with the shock the glass should break.

PROTEUS.

(In the form of a gigantic porpoise.) What shines with radiancy so dear?

THALES.

(Concealing Homunculus.)

Good! If thou wish it, thou canst draw more near;
Let the slight trouble vex thee not. I pray,
Thyself upon two human feet display.
'Tis solely by our leave, and courtesy,
That what we now conceal, who wills may see.

PROTEUS.

(In a noble form.) Thy sophist's tricks, it seems, dost still employ.

THALES.

Thy figure to transform still gives thee joy.

[He has uncovered Homunculus.]

PROTEUS.

(Astonished.) A glittering dwarflein! Ne'er beheld before!

THALES.

Fain to exist, he counsel doth implore.

He is, from him I heard it, come to earth
Only half-form'd, through some mysterious birth.
Fairly endow'd with qualities ideal,
The power he lacks, firmly to grasp the real,
Till now the glass alone to him gives weight;
But he at once would be incorporate.

PROTEUS.

A genuine virgin's son art thou;
Born ere thou shouldst be, I trow!

THALES.

(In a whisper.) Further it seemeth critical to me;
He an hermaphrodite appears to be.

PROTEUS.

The sooner 'twill succeed; where'er
He comes, he happily will fare.
With much reflection we may here dispense;
In the broad sea thy being must commence;
On a small scale one there begins,
Well pleas'd the smallest to devour;
Till, waxing step by step, one wins,
For loftier achievement, ampler power.

HOMUNCULUS.

A tender air is wafted here;
Dear is to me the breeze, the fragrance dear!

PROTEUS.

Right, dearest youth! Farther away
Still more delightful 'twill be found;
Ineffable the airs that play
This narrow tongue of land around.
Thence, near enough, the train we see,
Now floating hither. Come with me!

THALES.

I too will go with thee; proceed!

HOMUNCULUS.

A threefold spirit-step, wondrous indeed!

TELCHINES OF RHODES.

(Upon hippocampi and sea-dragons, bearing Neptune's trident.)

CHORUS.

The trident we forg'd, wherewith Neptune assuages
Old Ocean's wild waves, when most fiercely he rages:
His clouds when the Thunderer spreads o'er the skies,
To their rolling terrific then Neptune replies;
And when from on high the jagg'd lightning doth leap,
Then wave after wave dashes up from the deep;
And all that in anguish their joint rage o'erpower'd,
Long whirl'd to and fro, by the depth is devour'd;
To-day then the sceptre to us hath he lent.—
Now joyously float we, serene and content!

SIRENS.

You, to Helios dedicated,
You, to bright day consecrated,
Hail we to this hour, whose light
Doth to Luna's praise invite!

TELCHINES.

Thou loveliest Queen of yon o'ervaulting sphere,
The praise of thy brother with rapture dost hear:
To Rhodus' blest island an ear thou dost lend,
Thence one deathless pæan to him doth ascend.
The day-course he opens and with fiery gaze,
When finish'd his journey, our troop he surveys;
The cities and hills, shore and wave, yield delight
To the glorious God, and are lovely and bright.
No mist hovers o'er us, and should one draw near,
A ray and a zephyr—the island is clear:
His form the high god beholds multiplied there,
As stripling, as giant, the Mighty, the Fair—
The power of the gods it was we who began
To portray in the form, not unworthy, of man.

PROTEUS.

Grudge them not their boastful singing,
To the holy sun, life-bringing,
Dead works are an idle jest.
Fusing mould they; when completed
Stands their god with rapture greeted,
Straight with triumph swells their breast!
These proud gods, so fondly cherish'd,—
What their doom, inquire ye? Prone,
By an earthquake overthrown,
Melted, they long since have perish'd.

Toil of earth, whate'er it be,
Nothing is but drudgery;
Life in ocean better fareth:
Thee to endless water beareth
Proteus-Dolphin.
[He transforms himself.]
Fairly sped!
Bravely, on my back careering,
Thou shalt prosper, onward steering,
And to Ocean thee I'll wed.

THALES.

Obeys the noble inspiration,
And at its source begins creation,
Make ready for the great enterprise!
By laws eternal still ascending,
Through myriad forms of being wending,
To be a man in time thou'lt rise.
[Homunculus mounts the Proteus dolphin.]

PROTEUS.

In spirit come to boundless ocean:
Unfetter'd there in every motion,
At thine own pleasure thou shalt wend;
But let not higher rank allure thee;
Attaining manhood, I assure thee,
Then all with thee is at an end!

THALES.

As it may happen; good it seems to me,
In one's own day a stalwart man to be.

PROTEUS.

(ToThales.) One of your stamp, perchance! For they

Abide awhile, nor pass away;

Since 'mong the troops of spirits pale,

As pass the centuries, thy form I hail.

SIRENS.

(On the rocks.)

See yon cloudlets, how they mingle
Round the moon in circlet bright!
Doves they are, whom love doth kindle,
With their pinions pure as light!
Paphos hath her bird-choir sent us,
Girt with radiance they appear.
Now our fête may well content us,
Fraught with rapture full and clear!

NEREUS.

(ApproachingThales.) Yonder ring, an airy vision

Nightly wanderer might maintain;

But with juster intuition,

Other views we entertain:

Doves they are, whose escort playeth

Round my daughter's pearly car;

Wondrous art their movement swayeth,

Learn'd by them in days afar.

THALES.

That I also hold for best,

Peace that yieldeth to the good,

If in warm and silent nest

Something holy still doth brood.

PSYLLLANDMARS!

(On sea-bulls, sea-calves, and sea-rams.) In the rugged Cyprian caves,

Shelter'd from the shocks of Ocean,

From the earthquake's dire commotion,

Fann'd by Zephyr's viewless waves,

There, as in the days afar,

We, with conscious rapture, are

Guardians of Cythera's car,

And through breathings of the night,

Through the rippling wavelets bright,

Viewless still to mortal sight,

We the loveliest daughter lead.

Us nor winged lion scares,

Nor eagle, as our task we ply,

Nor cross, nor crescent, though it flares

Aloft, emblazon'd in the sky;

To and fro, alternate swaying,

Each the other driving, slaying,

Fields and towns in ashes laying:

Thus with joyous speed,

Onward our loveliest mistress we lead.

SIRENS.

Circling still, with gentle motion,

Round the chariot, line on line,

Gliding o'er the waves of ocean,
With your movements serpentine,
Come ye stalwart Nereides,
Sturdy damsels, gracious, wild;
Bring ye, tender Dorides,
Galatea, fair and mild,
Image of her mother, she
Earnest is, of god-like mien,
Worthy immortality,
Yet, like earth's fair dames, your queen
Winsome is, with grace serene!

DORIDES.

(Passing in chorus before Nereus, mounted upon dolphins.)

Luna, light and shadow throwing,
Round this youthful band, shine clear!
For we come our Father showing
Prayerfully, our bridegrooms dear.
(To Nereus.)
Them, soft pity's voice obeying,
From the rock's fell tooth we bore,
And on moss and sea-weed laying,
Warm'd them back to light once more;
Kisses upon us bestowing,
Thus their grateful temper showing;
View them kindly, we implore!

NEREUS.

Precious indeed the twofold gain:

To show compassion, and delight obtain!

DORIDES.

Dost praise, O Father, our endeavor?
Grudge us not our joy, well-earn'd;
Deathless youth, enjoyed forever
In the bliss of love return'd!

NEREUS.

Would ye enjoy your captur'd treasure!

Then mould each youth to be a man;

Powerless am I to do your pleasure;
Accord your prayer Zeus only can.
The waves, whose foam around you playeth,
All steadfastness in love ignore,
And if its spell no longer swayeth,
Then place them quietly ashore.

DORIDES.

Dear ye are, sweet youths, in sooth;
Yet from you we needs must sever:
We have crav'd eternal truth,
But the Gods allow it never!

THE YOUTHS.

Gallant sailor-youths and true,
If ye still will fondly tend us;
Life so fair we never knew,
Nor could fate a fairer send us.

[Galatea approaches in the shell chariot.]

NEREUS.

'Tis thou, my beloved one!

GALATEA.

O Sire! what delight!

Linger, ye dolphins, enchain'd is my sight.

NEREUS.

Gone already! They forsake me,

Speeding on with circling motion!

What to them the heart's emotion!

Oh! that with them they would take me!

Yet such rapture yields one gaze,
The livelong year it well repays.

THALES.

Hail! all hail! The cry renew!
Blooms my spirit, pierced through
By the Beautiful, the True! . . .
All from water sprang amain!
All things water doth sustain:
Ocean grant thy deathless reign!
Were no clouds by thee outspread,
No rich brooklets by thee fed,
On their course no rivers sped,
And no streamlets perfected,
What then were the world, what were ocean and plain?
'Tis thou, who the freshness of life dost maintain.

ECHO.

(Chorus of the collective circles.)

'Tis thou, from whom freshness of life pours amain!

NEREUS.

Far distant now they wheel and turn,
And vainly glance for glance must yearn;
Circle in circle wide extending,
The countless throngs, in order blending,
Urge o'er the waves their glad career.
But Galatea's pearly throne,

Behold I still, behold; alone
Now it glitters like a star
'Midst, the crowd; with radiance tender,
Shines through the press the lov'd one's splendor;
Though so far, so very far,
Still it shimmers bright and clear,
Ever true and ever near!

HOMUNCULUS.

In this moisture calm and dear,
All I shine on doth appear
Exquisitely fair!

PROTEUS.

In this living dewy sphere,
First thy flamelet shineth clear,
Breathing tones most rare.

NEREUS.

But lo! what new mystery, fraught with surprise,
Reveals itself now, 'mid yon crowds, to our eyes?
What flames round the shell, round the feet of my child?
Now strongly it glitters, now sweetly, now mild,
As if by the pulses of love it were sway'd!

THALES.

Homunculus is it, by Proteus betray'd . . .
A yearning majestic these symptoms disclose,
Presageful they tell of his passionate throes;
Against the bright throne he'll be shatter'd! It glows,

It flashes, it sparkles, abroad now it flows!

SIRENS.

What marvel illumines the billows, which dash

Against one another in glory? They flash,

They waver, they hitherward glitter, and bright

All forms are ablaze in the pathway of night;

And all things are gleaming, by fire girt around.

Prime source of creation, let Eros be crown'd!

Hail ye billows! Hail to thee,
Girt by holy fire, O sea!
Water hail! Hail fire's bright glare!
Hail to this adventure rare!

ALL TOGETHER.

Hail each softly blowing gale!
Caverns rich in marvels, hail!
Highly honor'd evermore
Be the elemental four!

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ACT III.



Before the Palace of Menelaus in Sparta.

Enter Helena, with a chorus of captive Trojan women. Penthalis, leader of the chorus.

HELENA.

The much admir'd and much upbraided, Helena,
From yonder strand I come, where erst we disembark'd,
Still giddy from the roll of ocean's billowy surge,
Which, through Poseidon's favor and through Euros' might,
On lofty crested backs hither hath wafted us,
From Phrygia's open field, to our ancestral bays.
Yonder King Menelaus, glad of his return,
With his brave men of war, rejoices on the beach.
But oh, thou lofty mansion, bid me welcome home,
Thou, near the steep decline, which Tyndareus, my sire,
From Pallas' hill returning, here hath builded up;
Which also was adorn'd beyond all Sparta's homes,
What time with Clytemnestra, sister-like, I grew,
With Castor, Pollux, too, playing in joyous sport.
Wings of yon brazen portals, you I also hail!

Through you, ye guest-inviting, hospitable gates,
Hath Menelaus once, from many princes chosen,
Shone radiant on my sight, in nuptial sort array'd.
Expand to me once more, that I the king's behest
May faithfully discharge, as doth the spouse beseem.
Let me within, and all henceforth behind remain,
That, charg'd with doom, till now darkly hath round me storm'd!
For since, by care untroubled, I these sites forsook,
Seeking Cythera's fane, as sacred wont enjoin'd,
And by the spoiler there was seiz'd, the Phrygian,
Happen'd have many things, whereof men far and wide
Are fain to tell, but which not fain to hear is he
Of whom the tale, expanding, hath to fable grown.

CHORUS.

Disparage not, O glorious dame,
Honor'd possession of highest estate!
For sole unto thee is the greatest boon given;
The fame of beauty that all overtowers!
The hero's name before him resounds,
So strides he with pride;
Nathless at once the stubbornest yields
To beauty, the presence which all things subdues.

HELENA.

Enough! I with my spouse, ship-borne, have hither sped,
And to his city now by him before am sent.

But what the thought he harbors, that I cannot guess.
Come I as consort hither? Come I as a queen?
Come I as victim for the prince's bitter pangs,
And for the evils dire, long suffer'd by the Greeks?
Conquer'd I am; but whether captive, know I not:
For the Immortal Powers fortune and fame for me
Have doom'd ambiguous; direful ministers that wait
On beauty's form, who even on this threshold here,
With dark and threat'ning mien, stand bodeful at my side!
Already, ere we left the hollow ship, my spouse
Look'd seldom on me, spake no comfortable word;
As though he mischief brooded, facing me he sat.
But now, when to Eurotas' deeply curving shores
Steering our course, scarce had our foremost vessel's beak
The land saluted, spake he, as by God inspir'd:
"Here let my men of war, in order'd ranks, disembark;
I marshal them, drawn up upon the ocean strand;
But thou, pursue thy way, not swerving from the banks,
Laden with fruit, that bound Eurotas' sacred stream,
Thy coursers guiding o'er the moist, enamell'd meads,
Until thou may'st arrive at that delightful plain,
Where Lacedæmon, once a broad fruit-bearing field,
By mountains stern surrounded lifteth now its walls.
Set thou thy foot within the tower-crown'd princely house,
Assemble thou the maids, whom I at parting left,

And with them summon too the wise old stewardess.
Bid her display to thee the treasures' ample store,
As by thy sire bequeath'd, and which, in peace and war,
Increasing evermore, I have myself up-piled.
All standing shalt thou find in ancient order; for,
This is the prince's privilege, that to his home,
When he returns at last, safe everything he finds,
Each in its proper place, as he hath left it there.
For nothing of himself the slave hath power to change."

CHORUS.

Oh, gladden now, with glorious wealth,
Ever increasing, thine eye and heart!
For beautiful chains, the adornment of crowns,
Are priding themselves, in haughty repose;
But step thou in, and challenge them all,
They arm themselves straight;
I joy to see beauty contend for the prize,
With gold, and with pearls, and with jewels of price.

HELENA.

Forthwith hath follow'd next this mandate of my lord:
"Now when in order thou all things hast duly seen,
As many tripods take, as needful thou may'st deem,
And vessels manifold, which he at hand requires,
Who duly would perform the sacrificial rite,
The caldrons, and the bowls, and shallow altar-plates;

Let purest water, too, from sacred fount be there,
In lofty pitchers; further, store of season'd wood,
Quick to accept the flame, hold thou in readiness;
A knife, of sharpest edge, let it not fail at last.
But I all other things to thy sole care resign.”
So spake he, urging me at once to part; but naught,
Breathing the breath of life, the orderer appoints,
That, to the Olympians' honor, he to slaughter doom'd:
Suspicious seems it! yet, dismiss I further care;
To the high gods' decree be everything referr'd,
Who evermore fulfil, what they in thought conceive;
It may, in sooth, by men, as evil or as good
Be counted, it by us, poor mortals, must be borne.
Full oft the ponderous axe on high the priest hath rais'd,
In consecration o'er the earth-bow'd victim's neck.
Nor could achieve the rite, for he was hinder'd,
Or by approaching foe, or intervening God.

CHORUS.

What now will happen, canst thou not guess;

Enter, queen, enter thou in,
Strong of heart!
Evil cometh and good
Unexpected to mortals;
Though foretold, we credit it not.
Troya was burning, have we not seen
Death before us, terrible death!
And are we not here,
Bound to thee, serving with joy,
Seeing the dazzling sunshine of heaven,
And of earth too the fairest,

Kind one—thyself—happy are we!

HELENA.

Come what come may! Whate'er impends, me it behoves
To ascend, without delay, into the royal house,
Long miss'd, oft yearn'd for, well-nigh forfeited;
Before mine eyes once more it stands, I know not how.
My feet now bear me not so lightly as of yore,
When up the lofty steps I, as a child, have sprung.

CHORUS.

Fling now, O sisters, ye
Captives who mourn your lot,
All your sorrows far from you.
Share ye your mistress' joy!
Share ye Helena's joy,
Who to the dear paternal hearth,
Though returning full late in sooth,
Nathless with surer, firmer tread
Joyfully now approaches!
Praise ye the holy ones,
Happy restoring ones,
Gods, the home-leaders, praise ye!
Soars the enfranchis'd one,
As upon outspread wings,
Over the roughest fate, while in vain
Pines the captur'd one, yearning-fraught,
Over the prison-battlements
Arms outstretching, in anguish.
Nathless her a god hath seized,
The exil'd one,
And from Ilion's wreck
Bare her hitherward back once more,
To the ancient, the newly-adorned
Father-house,
After unspeakable
Pleasure and anguish,
Earlier youthful time,
Newly quicken'd, to ponder.

PENTHALIS.

(As leader of the Chorus.)

Forsake ye now of song the joy-surrounded path,
And toward the portal-wings turn ye forthwith your gaze!
What see I, sisters? Here, returneth not the queen?
With step of eager haste, comes she not back to us?—
What is it, mighty queen, that in the palace-halls,
Instead of friendly hail, could there encounter thee,
And shatter thus thy being? Thou conceal'st it not;
For I abhorrence see, impress'd upon thy brow,
And noble anger, that contendeth with surprise.

HELENA.

(Who has left the folded doors open, excited.) No vulgar fear beseems the daughter of high Zeus,

And her no lightly-fleeting terror-hand may touch;
But that dire horror which, from womb of ancient Night,
In time primeval rising, still in divers shapes,
Like lurid clouds, from out the mountain's fiery gorge,
Whirls itself forth, may shake even the hero's breast.
Thus have the Stygian gods, with horror fraught, to-day
Mine entrance to the house so mark'd, that fain I am,
Back from the oft-time trod, long-yeard-for threshold, now,
Like to a guest dismiss'd, departing, to retire.
Yet no, retreated have I hither to the light;
No further shall ye drive me, Powers, who'er ye be!

Some expiation I'll devise, then purified,
The hearth flame welcome may the consort as the lord.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

Discover, noble queen, to us thy handmaidens,
Devotedly who serve thee, what hath come to pass!

HELENA.

What I have seen ye too, with your own eyes, shall see,
If ancient Night, within her wonder-teeming womb,
Hath not forthwith engulf'd, once more, her ghastly birth;
But yet, that ye may know, with words I'll tell it you:—
What time the royal mansion's gloomy inner court,
Upon my task intent, with solemn step I trod,
I wonder'd at the drear and silent corridors.
Fell on mine ear no sound of busy servitors,
No stir of rapid haste, officious, met my gaze;
Before me there appear'd no maid, no stewardess,
Who every stranger erst, with friendly greeting, hail'd.
But when I near'd at length the bosom of the hearth,
There saw I, by the light of dimly smouldering fire,
Crouch'd on the ground, a crone, close-veil'd, of stature huge,
Not like to one asleep, but as absorb'd in thought!
With accent of command I summon her to work,
The stewardess in her surmising, whom perchance
My spouse, departing hence, with foresight there had plac'd;
Yet, closely muffl'd up, still sits she, motionless;

At length, upon my threat, uplifts she her right arm,
As though from hearth and hall she motion'd me away.
Wrathful from her I turn, and forthwith hasten out,
Towards the steps, whereon aloft the Thalamos
Rises adorn'd, thereto the treasure-house hard by;
When, on a sudden, starts the wonder from the floor;
Barring with lordly mien my passage, she herself
In haggard height displays, with hollow eyes, blood-grim'd,
An aspect weird and strange, confounding eye and thought.
Yet speak I to the winds; for language all in vain
Creatively essays to body forth such shapes.
There see herself! The light she ventures to confront!
Here are we master, till the lord and monarch comes;
The ghastly brood of Night doth Phœbus, beauty's friend,
Back to their caverns drive, or them he subjugates.
[Phorkyasstepping on the threshold, between the door-posts.

CHORUS.

Much have I liv'd through, although my tresses
Youthfully waver still round my temples;
Manifold horrors have mine eyes witness'd;
Warfare's dire anguish, Ilion's night,
When it fell;
Through the o'erclouded, dust overshadow'd,
Tumult of war, to gods have I hearken'd,
Fearfully shouting; hearken'd while discord's

Brazen voices clang through the field

Rampartwards.

Ah, yet standing were Ilion's

Ramparts; nathless the glowing flames

Shot from neighbor to neighbor roof,

Ever spreading from here and there,

With their tempest's fiery blast,

Over the night-darken'd city.—

Flying, saw I through smoke and glare,

And the flash of the tongued flames,

Dreadful, threatening gods draw near;

Wondrous figures, of giant mould,

Onward striding through the weird

Gloom of fire-luminous vapor.

Saw I them, or did my mind,

Anguish-torn, itself body forth

Phantoms so terrible—nevermore

Can I tell; but that I this

Horrible shape with eyes behold,

This of a surety know I!

Yea, with my hands could clutch it even,

Did not fear, from the perilous

Venture, ever withhold me.

Tell me, of Phorkyas'
Daughters which art thou?
For to that family

Thee must I liken.
Art thou, may be, one of the gray-born?
One eye only, and but one tooth
Using still alternately?
One of the Graiæ art thou?
Darest thou, Horror,
Thus beside beauty,
Or to the searching glance
Phœbus' unveil thee?
Nathless step thou forward undaunted;
For the horrible sees he not,
As his hallow'd glances yet
Never gaz'd upon shadows.
But a tragical fate, alas,
Us, poor mortals, constrains to bear.
Anguish of vision, unspeakable,
Which the contemptible, ever-detestable,
Doth in lovers of beauty wake!
Yea, so hearken then, if thou dar'st
Us to encounter, hear our curse,
Hark to each imprecation's threat,
Out of the curse-breathing lips of the happy
ones,
Who by the gods created are!

PHORKYAS.

Trite is the word, yet high and true remains the sense:
That Shame and Beauty ne'er together, hand in hand,
Their onward way pursue, earth's verdant path along.
Deep-rooted in these twain dwelleth an ancient grudge,
So that, where'er they happen on their way to meet,
Upon her hated rival turneth each her back;
Then onward speeds her course with greater vehemence,
Shame fill'd with sorrow, Beauty insolent of mood,
Till her at length embraces Orcus' hollow night,
Unless old age erewhile her haughtiness hath tam'd.
You find I now, ye wantons, from a foreign shore,

With insolence o'erflowing, like the clamorous flight
Of cranes, with shrilly scream that high above our heads,
A long and moving cloud, croaking send down their noise,
Which the lone pilgrim lures, wending his silent way,
Aloft to turn his gaze; yet on their course they fare,
He also upon his: so will it be with us.
Who are ye then, that thus around the monarch's house,
With Mænad rage, ye dare like drunken ones to rave?
Who are ye then that ye the house's stewardess
Thus bay, like pack of hounds hoarsely that bay the moon?
Think ye, 'tis hid from me, the race whereof ye are?
Thou youthful, war-begotten, battle-nurtur'd brood,
Lewd and lascivious thou, seducers and seduc'd,
Unnerving both the soldier's and the burgher's strength!
Seeing your throng, to me a locust-swarm ye seem,
Which, settling down, conceals the young green harvest-field.
Wasters of others' toil! ye dainty revellers,
Destroyers in its bloom of all prosperity!
Thou conquer'd merchandise, exchang'd and marketed!

HELENA.

Who in the mistress' presence chides her handmaidens,
Audacious, doth o'erstep her household privilege;
For her alone beseems the praiseworthy to praise,
As also that to punish which doth merit blame.
Moreover with the service am I well content,

Which these have render'd me, what time proud Ilion's strength
Beleaguer'd stood, and fell and sank; nor less indeed
When we, of our sea-voyage the dreary changeful woe
Endur'd, where commonly each thinks but of himself.
Here also I expect the like from this blithe train;
Not what the servant is, we ask, but how he serves.
Therefore be silent thou, and snarl at them no more!
If thou the monarch's house till now hast guarded well
Filling the mistress' place, that for thy praise shall count;
But now herself is come, therefore do thou retire,
Lest chastisement be thine, instead of wellearn'd meed!

PHORKYAS.

The menial train to threat, a sacred right remains,
Which the illustrious spouse of heaven-favor'd lord
Through many a year doth earn of prudent governance.
Since that, now recogniz'd, thy ancient place as queen,
And mistress of the house, once more thou dost resume,
The long-time loosen'd reins grasp thou; be ruler here,
And in possession take the treasures, us with them!
Me before all protect, who am the elder-born,
From this young brood, who seem, thy swanlike beauty near,
But as a basely winged flock of cackling geese!

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

How hideous beside beauty showeth hideousness!

PHORKYAS.

How foolish by discretion's side shows foolishness!

[Henceforth the choristers respond in turn, stepping forth singly from the Chorus.]

FIRST CHORISTER.

Tell us of Father Erebus, tell us of Mother Night!

PHORKYAS.

Speak thou of Scylla, speak of her, thy sister-born!

SECOND CHORISTER.

From thy ancestral tree springs many a monster forth.

PHORKYAS.

To Orcus hence, away! Seek thou thy kindred there!

THIRD CHORISTER.

Who yonder dwell, in sooth, for thee are far too young.

PHORKYAS.

Tiresias, the hoary, go, make love to him!

FOURTH CHORISTER.

Orion's nurse of old, was thy great-granddaughter.

PHORKYAS.

Harpies, so I suspect, did rear thee up in filth.

FIFTH CHORISTER.

Thy cherish'd meagreness, whereon dost nourish that?

PHORKYAS.

'Tis not with blood, for which so keenly thou dost thirst.

SIXTH CHORISTER.

For corpses dost thou hunger, loathsome corpse thyself!

PHORKYAS.

Within thy shameless jaw the teeth of vampires gleam.

SEVENTH CHORISTER.

Thine I should stop were I to tell thee who thou art.

PHORKYAS.

First do thou name thyself; the riddle then is solv'd.

HELENA.

Not wrathful, but in grief, step I between you now,
Forbidding such alternate quarrel's angry noise;
For to the ruler naught more hurtful can befall,
Than, 'mong his trusty servants, sworn and secret strife;
The echo of his mandate then to him no more,
In swift accomplish'd deed responsively returns;
No, stormful and self-will'd, it rages him around,
The self-bewilder'd one, and chiding still in vain.
Nor this alone; ye have in rude unmanner'd wrath
Unblessed images of dreadful shapes evok'd,
Which so encompass me, that whirl'd I feel myself
To Orcus down, despite these my ancestral fields.
Is it remembrance? Was it frenzy seiz'd on me?
Was I all that? and am I? shall I henceforth be
The dread and phantom-shape of those townwasting ones?
The maidens quail: but thou, the eldest, thou dost stand,

Calm and unmov'd; speak, then, to me some word of sense!

PHORKYAS.

Who of long years recalls the fortune manifold,
To him Heaven's highest favor seems at last a dream.
But thou, so highly favor'd, past all bound or goal,
Saw'st, in thy life-course, none but love-in-flamed men,
Kindled by impulse rash to boldest enterprise.
Theseus by passion stirr'd full early seiz'd on thee,
A man of glorious form, and strong as Heracles.

HELENA.

Forceful he bore me off, a ten-year slender roe,
And in Aphidnus' keep shut me, in Attica.

PHORKYAS.

But thence full soon set free, by Castor, Pollux too,
In marriage wast thou sought by chosen heroband.

HELENA.

Yet hath Patroclus, he, Pelides' other self,
My secret favor won, as willingly I own.

PHORKYAS.

But thee thy father hath to Menelaus wed,
Bold rover of the sea, and house-sustainer too.



HELENA.

His daughter gave he, gave to him the kingdom's sway;
And from our wedded union sprang Hermione.

PHORKYAS.

But while he strove afar, for Crete, his heritage,
To thee, all lonely, came an all too beauteous guest.

HELENA.

Wherefore the time recall of that half-widowhood,
And what destruction dire to me therefrom hath grown!

PHORKYAS.

That voyage unto me, a freeborn dame of Crete,
Hath also capture brought and weary servitude.

HELENA.

As stewardess forthwith, he did appoint thee here,
With much entrusted,—fort and treasure boldly won.

PHORKYAS.

All which thou didst forsake, by Ilion's tower-girt town
Allur'd, and by the joys, the exhaustless joys of love.

HELENA.

Remind me not of joys. No, an infinitude

Of all too bitter woe o'erwhelm'd my heart and brain.

PHORKYAS.

Nathless 'tis said thou didst in twofold shape appear;

Seen within Ilion's walls, and seen in Egypt too.

HELENA.

Confuse thou not my brain, distraught and desolate!

Here even, who I am in sooth I cannot tell.

PHORKYAS.

'Tis also said, from out the hollow shadow-realm,

Achilles, passion-fir'd, hath join'd himself to thee,

Whom he hath lov'd of old, 'gainst all resolves of Fate.

HELENA.

As phantom I myself, to him a phantom bound;

A dream it was—thus e'en the very words declare.

I faint, and to myself a phantom I become.

[She sinks into the arms of the semi-chorus.]

CHORUS.

Silence! Silence!
False seeing one, false speaking one, thou!
Through thy horrible, single-tooth'd lips,
Ghastly, what exhalet
From such terrible loathsome gulf!
For the malignant one, kindness feigning,
Rage of wolf 'neath the sheep's woolly fleece,
Far more terrible is unto me than
Jaws of the hound three-headed.
Anxiously watching stand we here:
When? How? Where of such malice
Bursteth the tempest
From this deep-lurking brood of Hell?
Now, 'stead of friendly words, freighted with comfort,

Lethe-bestowing, gracious and mild,
Thou art summoning from times departed,
Thoughts of the past most hateful,
Overshadowing not alone
All sheen gilding the present,
Also the future's
Mildly glimmering light of hope.
Silence! Silence!
That fair Helena's soul,
Ready e'en now to take flight,
Still may keep, yea firmly keep
The form of all forms, the loveliest,
Ever illumin'd of old by the sun.

[Helena has revived, and again stands in the midst.]

PHORKYAS.

Forth emerge from fleeting cloudlets, sun resplendent of this day,
If when veil'd thou could'st delight us, dazzling now thy splendor reigns.
As the world unfolds before thee, thou dost gaze with gracious look.
Though as hideous they revile me, well the beautiful I know.

HELENA.

Giddy from the void I issue, that in fainting round me clos'd,
Rest once more I fain would cherish, for soreweary are my limbs;
Yet the queen it still beseemeth, yea all mortals it beseems,
Self-controll'd, to man their spirits, whatsoever of ill may threat.

PHORKYAS.

In thy greatness now thou standest, in thy beauty 'fore us there,
Tells thy glance that thou commandest; what command'st thou? speak it forth!

HELENA.

The delay your strife occasion'd, now prepare ye to retrieve:
Haste, a sacrifice to order, as the king commanded me!

PHORKYAS.

In the palace all is ready: censer, tripod, sharpen'd axe,
For lustration and for incense; now the destin'd victim show!

HELENA.

That to me the king disclos'd not.

PHORKYAS.

Spake it not? O doleful word!

HELENA.

What the sorrow that o'erpowers thee?

PHORKYAS.

Queen, it is thyself art meant!

HELENA.

I?

PHORKYAS.

And these.

CHORUS.

Oh, woe and wailing!

PHORKYAS.

Thou wilt perish by the axe.

HELENA.

Dreadful—yet surmis'd! Me wretched!

PHORKYAS.

Unavoidable it seems.

CHORUS.

And to us, ah what will happen?

PHORKYAS.

She a noble death will die;

But upon the lofty rafter, that upholds the gable-roof,

As in fowling-time the thrushes, ye shall struggle in a row.

[Helena and the Chorus stand astounded and terrified, in striking, well-arranged groups.]

PHORKYAS.

Poor phantoms!—Stand ye there like figures petrified,

In deadly fear to part from day, which is not yours.

Mortals, who phantoms are together like as ye,

Not willingly renounce the sun's resplendent beams;

Yet from their doom may none save them by force or prayer;

All know it, yet can few with pleasure welcome it!

Enough, ye all are lost. So to the work forthwith!

[She claps her hands; thereupon appear at the door masked dwarfish figures, who execute with alacrity the orders as they are delivered.]

Approach, thou swarthy, round, misshapen, goblin train!

Roll yourselves hither! Mischief work ye here at will.

The altar, golden-horn'd, bear ye, and give it place;

And let the gleaming axe o'erlay the silver rim!

The water-vessels fill, wherewith to wash away

Of black polluting gore, the horror-breathing stain;

The costly carpet here outspread upon the dust,

That so the victim may in royal fashion kneel,

And wrapp'd within its folds, although with sever'd head,
Sepulchr'd straight may be, with honorable rites!

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

The queen, absorb'd in thought, beside us stands apart;
Blenching the maidens droop, like meadowgrass when mown;
On me, the eldest, seems a sacred duty laid,
With thee to barter words, thou form of primal eld.
Experienc'd art thou, wise, well-minded seem'st to us,
Although this brainless troop, misjudging, thee revil'd:
Tell then, if thou dost know, of rescue possible.

PHORKYAS.

'Tis easy said. Alone it resteth with the queen
Herself to save, and you her handmaidens with her.
Needful is prompt resolve, and of the quickest too!

CHORUS.

Most revered among the Parcaë, wisest of the Sibyls thou,
Sheathed hold the golden scissors, light and life to us proclaim!
For our tender limbs already, feel we dangling, unrejoicing,
Swinging to and fro, that rather in the dance rejoic'd of yore,
Resting then on lover's breast.

HELENA.

These tremblers leave ye; sorrow feel I, naught of fear;
Yet know'st thou rescue, straight be it with thanks receiv'd!
To sage, far-seeing minds, oft the impossible
As possible doth show. Speak on and tell thy thought!

CHORUS.

Speak and tell us, tell us quickly; how may we escape the ghastly,
Odious nooses, that, with menace, like to ornaments the vilest,
Round our necks themselves are coiling? We, poor victims, feel beforehand,
Feel the stifling, feel the choking, if of all the gods, thou, Rhea,
Lofty mother, feel'st no pity!

PHORKYAS.

Have ye patience, to my story's course protracted
Still to hearken? Manifold its windings are.

CHORUS.

Patience enough! For while we hearken still we live.

PHORKYAS.

The man at home who tarries, noble wealth who guards,
And knoweth to cement his dwelling's lofty walls,
As also to secure his roof 'gainst stress of rain,
With him shall all go well, through the long day of life:
But lightly who o'ersteps, with rash and flying foot,
His threshold's sacred bounds, by guilty aim impell'd,
Shall find, on his return, the ancient place, indeed,
But alter'd everything, if not completely wreck'd.

HELENA.

Declare, whereto these trite and well-known proverbs here?
Thou should'st relate; stir not what needs must give offence!

PHORKYAS.

True history it is, in no wise a reproof.

As pirate Menelaus steer'd from bay to bay;

Mainland and islands, all he ravag'd as a foe,

With spoil returning home, as it within lies stor'd.

He before Ilion's walls hath wasted ten long years,

But on his homeward course how many know I not;

Meanwhile how fares it here where stands the lofty house

Of Tyndarus? How fares it with the region round?

HELENA.

Is then reproach in thee so thoroughly ingraft,

That, save to utter blame, thy lips thou canst not move?

PHORKYAS.

Thus stood, for many years, forlorn the sloping ridge

That northwards to the height rises in Sparta's rear,

Behind Taygetus, whence, still a merry brook,

Downward Eurotas rolls, and then, along our vale,

Broad-flowing among reeds, gives nurture to your swans.

There in the mountain-vale, behind, a stalwart race

Themselves establish'd, pressing from Cimmerian night,

And have uprear'd a fastness, inaccessible,

Whence land and folk around they harry, as they list.

HELENA.

This could they then achieve? Impossible it seems.

PHORKYAS.

They ample time have had; haply, some twenty years.

HELENA.

Is one the lord? Are they a numerous robber-horde?

PHORKYAS.

Not robbers are they, yet is one among them lord.

Of him I speak no blame, though once he sought me here;

He might have taken all, yet did content himself

With some few things—which he free-gifts, not tribute, nam'd.

HELENA.

And what his mien?

PHORKYAS.

Nowise amiss! He pleases me.

A cheerful man he is, courageous, and wellbuilt,

With understanding dower'd, as few among the Greeks.

As barbarous we brand the race, but yet, methinks,

So savage none can be as heroes, not a few,

Who man-devouring pests at Ilion show'd themselves.

His greatness I respect; did trust myself to him.

His fortress! That should ye with your own eyes behold!

'Tis something different from clumsy masonwork

The which your fathers have aloft, at random, pil'd,

Cyclopean like the Cyclops, one unwieldy stone

On stone unwieldy hurling! There quite otherwise,

Upright and level, all is fix'd by square and rule.

Gaze on it from without; upward it strives toward heaven,
So straight, so well adjusted, mirror-smooth like steel;
To clamber there, in sooth, your very thought slides down.
Within are ample courts, broad spaces girt around
With solid mason-work, of divers kinds and use;
Pillars, pilasters, arches, archlets, balconies
Are there, and galleries, for peering out and in,
And scutcheons.

HELENA.

What are they?

PHORKYAS.

Ajax upon his shield,
A coiled serpent bare, as ye yourselves have seen;
The seven chiefs at Thebes have figur'd emblems borne,
Each one upon his shield, significant and rich:
There moon and star were seen, on heaven's nightly field,
There goddess, hero, ladder, weapons, torches too,
And what with violence still threatens goodly towns.
Devices of like sort beareth our hero-band,
In color'd splendor, heir'd from primal ancestors;
There lions you behold, eagles, claw too and beak,
Then horns of buffalo, wings, roses, peacocktails,
Bars also, gold and black and silver, blue and red.
Such symbols in their halls hang pendent, row on row,
In halls that know no bound, ample as is the world;

There might ye dance!

CHORUS.

O tell us, be there dancers there?

PHORKYAS.

The best; a youthful band, blooming and golden-hair'd;

Of youth they breathe! Of yore so only Paris breath'd,

What time he to the queen approach'd too near.

HELENA.

Thou fall'st

Quite from thy part! To me declare the final word.

PHORKYAS.

That speakest thou; in earnest say distinctly yes!

Then with that fortress thee I'll straightway compass.

CHORUS.

Speak

That little word, and save thyself and us with thee!

HELENA.

How? Shall I harbor fear, lest Menelaus should

So ruthlessly transgress as rage to wreak on me?

PHORKYAS.

Hast thou forgotten how he, thy Deiphobus,

Thy slaughter'd Paris' brother, in unheard-of guise,

Hath mangl'd, he who strove thy stubborn widowhood

To bend, and gain'd his purpose! Nose and ears he lopp'd,

And mutilated sore; 'twas horror to behold!

HELENA.

That did he unto him; for my sake it was done.

PHORKYAS.

And for his sake, be sure, the like he'll do to thee.

Not to be shar'd is beauty; her who hath possess'd

Entire, destroyeth rather, cursing partnership.

[Trumpets in the distance; the Chorus shudders.

As the shrill trumpets' blare doth ear and entrails seize,

Reading asunder, so her talons jealousy

Fixes in that man's breast, who never can forget

What once he own'd, now lost, by him possess'd no more.

CHORUS.

Hear'st thou not the horns resounding? Seest thou not the gleam of arms?

PHORKYAS.

Be thou welcome! To thee, lord and monarch! gladly give I reckoning.

CHORUS.

But for us?

PHORKYAS.

Ye know full surely: 'fore your eyes her death you see,

Your own death mark too within there; no, for you there is no help.

[Pause.

HELENA.

I have the course devis'd, which next I will pursue.

An adverse Demon art thou, that full well I feel;
And fear thou wilt convert even the good to ill.
Nathless to yonder keep I straight will follow thee.
The rest I know: but what in her deep breast the queen
As mystery conceals, let it remain to all
A secret unreveal'd! Now, ancient one, lead on!

CHORUS.

O how gladly go we hence,
Urging our footsteps:
Death in our rear;
Once more before us
Rises a fortress,
With unscalable ramparts;
Us may they shelter as well,
Even as Ilion's keep,
Which succumb'd at last
Through contemptible craft alone!
*[Mists diffuse themselves, veiling the background; also the nearer
portion of the scene.]*
How! Sisters, how!
Sisters, gaze around!
Was it not cheerfulest day?
Mists are rising, wreathing aloft,
From Eurotas' hallow'd stream!
Vanish'd hath the beautiful,
Sedge-becrown'd marge from the gaze;
And the free graceful swans,
Proudly, silently, floating,
Joyfully together,
See I, ah! no more!
Yet, sisters, yet!
Singing hear I them,
Singing harsh tones from afar—
Death presaging, so mortals say;
Ah, that they to us may not,
'Stead of rescue's promis'd weal,
Ruin dire betoken at last,
Unto us, swanlike maids,
Fair, white-throated ones, and ah!
To our queen swan-gendered!
Woe to us, woe, woe!

All itself overshrouds,
Wrapp'd in vapor and mist:
Gaze on each other can we not!
What befalls? Do we walk?
Hover we now,
Tripping with light steps over the ground?
Seest thou naught? Floats not us before
Hermes perchance? Gleams not his golden wand,
Bidding, commanding us back to return,
Back to yon joyless realm, dusky and gray,
With intangible phantoms teeming,
The o'ercrowded, yet aye-empty Hades?

Deepens all at once the darkness. Rayless now dissolves the vapor,
Gray and murky, brown as stone-work. Walls ascend, our glances meeting,
Our free glances meeting sheer. Court is it? deep moat? or cavern?
'Tis in every case appalling! Sisters, ah, we are imprison'd,
'Prison'd now as erst we were!

Inner Court of the Castle,

Surrounded with rich fantastic buildings of the middle ages.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

Foolish and overswift, true type of womankind,
Dependent on the moment, sport of every gust
Of bale or blessing! Yet not either can ye bear
With constant courage. One still fiercely contradicts
The others, crosswise she by others is gainsaid;
Only in joy and pain ye, with the self-same tone,
Or howl or laugh. Be still and hearken what the queen,
High-soul'd, may here decide both for herself and us.

HELENA.

Where art thou, Pythonissa? Whatsoe'er thy name,

From out the gloomy vaults step forth of this stern keep!
Perchance, art gone to seek this wondrous hero-lord,
To herald my approach, reception kind be-speaking!
So take my thanks and quickly lead me unto him!
My wanderings I would end, repose I wish alone.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

Vainly thou lookest, queen, round thee on every side;
The hateful form hath vanish'd, or perchance remain'd
In yonder mist, from forth whose bosom hitherward,
We came, I wist not how, swiftly without a step;
Perchance, indeed, in doubt this labyrinth she treads,
Where many castles strangely mingle into one,
Greeting august and high demanding from its lord.
But yonder see above, where move in busy throngs,
In corridors, at casements, and through portals wide,
A crowd of menials passing, swiftly here and there;
Distinguish'd welcome this portends of honor'd guest.

CHORUS.

Expands now my heart! O, yonder, behold,
How modestly downward, with lingering step,
A fair youthful throng becomingly move
In march well-appointed! Say, by whose command
Now appeareth well-train'd, and so promptly array'd,
Of blooming boyhood, the glorious race?
What admire I the most? Is it their elegant gait,

Or the tresses that curl round their dazzling white brow,
Or the twin-blooming cheeks, with the hue of the peach,
And shaded like it with soft tender down?
Fain would I bite, but I shrink back in fear;
For in similar venture, replete was the mouth,
I shudder to tell it, with ashes!

But the most beautiful
Hither are wending;
What are they bearing?
Steps for the throne,
Carpet and seat,
Hangings and tent-
Adorning gear?
Hover the folds on high,
Cloud-garlands forming
Over the head of our queen;
Lo! now invited,
Climbs she the stately couch.
Forward advancing,
Step by step, treading,
Range yourselves there!
Worthy, oh worthy, thrice worthy of her,
Be blessing on such a reception!

[All that the Chorus has indicated takes place by degrees.]

(After pages and squires have descended in long procession, Faust appears above, on the steps, in knightly court costume of the middle ages; he descends slowly and with dignity.)

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

(Attentively observing him.) If to this man the gods have not, as is their wont,
But for a season lent this wonder-worthy form,
And if his lofty grace, his love-inspiring mien,
Be not their transient gift, success will sure attend
On all he undertakes, be it in strife with men,
Or in the petty war, with fairest women wag'd.

To many others him, in sooth, I must prefer,
Others, the highly priz'd, on whom mine eyes have gaz'd.
With slow, majestic step, by reverence withheld,
The prince do I behold. Towards him turn, O queen!

FAUST.

(Advancing, a man in fetters at his side.) 'Stead of most solemn greeting, as
beseemeth,

'Stead of most reverent welcome, bring I thee,
In chains fast manacled, this varlet, who
In duty failing, wrested mine from me.—
Here bend thy knee, before this noblest dame,
To make forthwith confession of thy guilt!—
This is, exalted potentate, the man,
Of rarest vision, from the lofty tower
Appointed round to gaze, the expanse of heaven,
Keenly to overlook, and breadth of earth,
If here or yonder aught present itself,
From the encircling hills, across the vale,
Towards this fortress moving; billowy herds,
Or warlike host perchance; those we defend,
These meet in fight. To-day, what negligence!
Thou comest hither, he proclaims it not;
August reception faileth, honor due
To guest so noble. Forfeited he hath
His guilty life, and in the blood of death,

Well-merited, should lie; but thou alone
May'st punish, or show mercy, at thy pleasure.

HELENA.

High as the honor thou accordedst me,
As judge, as potentate, and were it but,
As I suspect, to try me—so will I
The judge's foremost duty now fulfil,
To give the accus'd a hearing.—Therefore speak!

LYNCEUS,

the tower-warder.

Let me kneel and gaze upon her,
Let me live or let me die:
Pledg'd to serve, with truth and honor,
The god-given dame, am I.
Watching for the morning, gazing
Eastward for its rising, lo!
In the south, my vision dazing,
Rose the sun a wondrous show.
Neither earth nor heavenward turning,
Depth nor height my vision drew;
Thitherward I gaz'd, still yearning,
Her, the peerless one, to view.
Eyesight keen to me is granted,
Like to lynx on highest tree;
From the dream, which me enchanted,
Hard I struggled to be free.
Could I the delusion banish—
Turret—tower—barr'd gateway see?
Vapors rise, and vapors vanish;
Forward steps this deity!
Eye and heart to her I tender!
I inhale her gentle light;
Blinding all, such beauty's splendor
Blinded my poor senses quite;
I forgot the warder's duty,
I forgot the entrusted horn;
Threaten to destroy me—Beauty
Tameth anger, tameth scorn.

HELENA.

The ill, myself occasion'd, dare I not
Chastise. Ah, woe is me! What ruthless fate
Pursues me, everywhere the breasts of men
So to befool, that they nor spare themselves
Nor aught that claimeth reverence. Plundering now,
Seducing, fighting, harrying here and there,
Gods, heroes, demigods, yea demons too,
Perplex'd have led me, wandering to and fro;
Singly, the world I madden'd, doubly, more;
Now threefold, fourfold, bring I woe on woe!
This guiltless man discharge, let him go free,
No shame should light upon the god-befool'd.

FAUST.

Fill'd with amaze, O queen, I see at once
The unerring smiter, here the smitten one;
The bow I see, wherefrom hath sped the shaft
This man that wounded. Shaft doth follow shaft,
And me they smite. Them crosswise I perceive,
Feather'd, and whirring round through court and keep.
What am I now? Thou makest, all at once,
My trustiest, rebellious; insecure
My very walls; henceforth my hosts, I fear,
Will serve the conquering unconquer'd queen.
What now remaineth, save myself to yield,

And all I fancied mine, to thy sole sway?

Freely and truly, let me at thy feet,

Acknowledge thee as queen, who, coming here,

Hath won forthwith possession and a throne.

LYNCEUS.

(With a chest, followed by men bearing other chests.)

Back, queen, thou seest me once more!
One glance the rich man doth implore;
Poor as a beggar feeleth he,
Yet rich as prince—beholding thee.
What was I erst—what am I now?
What can I wish—what aim avow?
What boots it keenest sight to own?
Its glance reboundeth from thy throne!
We from the east still onward press'd,
And soon o'ermaster'd was the west;
A host of nations, long and vast—
The foremost knew not of the last;
The foremost fell; the next advance;
Ready the third with doughty lance—
Strengthen'd was each a hundredfold;
Thousands, unmark'd, lay stark and cold.
We rush'd along, we storm'd apace,
Lordship we won, from place to place;
And where to-day I sway achiev'd,
Next day another sack'd and reav'd.
Rapid the glance we took—one laid
His hand upon the fairest maid,
The steer one seiz'd of surest tread;
The horses all with us were led.
But my delight was everywhere
To peer about for things most rare;
And what another held in store,
To me was wither'd grass, no more.
On treasure's track I onward sped,
Only by my keen insight led;
In every coffer I could see,
Transparent was each chest to me.
Thus heaps of gold at length were mine,
And jewel-stones, with lustrous shine!—
The emerald's resplendent green
Alone may grace thy breast, fair queen.

Let pearl-drops hang 'twixt lip and ear,
The spoil of ocean! rubies, near
Thy dainty cheeks, their radiance lose,
Quench'd by their vermeil-tinctur'd hues.
The greatest treasures thus to-day,
Before thy presence here I lay;
And at thy feet, in homage yield
Harvest of many a bloody field.
Though I full many a chest have brought,
Yet more I have, with treasure fraught;
Let me attend thy path, and lo!
Thy treasure-vaults shall straight o'erflow.
For scarce dost thou the throne ascend,
Already bow, already bend,
Reason, and wealth, and sovereign power,
Before thy beauty's peerless dower.
All this I firmly held, as mine—
Freely relinquish'd, now 'tis thine!
Its worth I deem'd both vast and high—
Its nothingness I now descry.
What once was mine, doth from me pass,
Scatter'd like mown and wither'd grass.
With one kind look, give back once more,
In full, the worth it own'd before!

FAUST.

Hence quickly with the burden boldly earn'd,
Not blam'd in sooth, but yet without reward.
Already all is hers, which in its depths
The castle hides; to offer special gifts
Is bootless. Hence! Treasure on treasure heap,
In order due; of splendor yet unseen
Set forth the exalted pomp; and let the vaults
Glitter like heaven new-born; from lifeless life
A paradise prepare; before her steps,
With eager haste, let carpet, rich in flowers,
Unroll on flowery carpet! Let her tread

Meet dainty footing, and the brightest sheen,

Blinding to all but gods, her glance arrest!

LYNCEUS.

Slight is our lord's behest; 'tis play,

A pleasant pastime, to obey:
Not wealth alone, the blood no less
O'ersways this beauty's fond excess!
Tam'd is the host, and falchions keen,
Now blunt and lame, have lost their sheen;
The sun beside her form divine,
Weary and cold, forgets to shine;
While near the riches of her face,
Empty is all, devoid of grace.
[Exit.

HELENA.

(*To Faust.*) With thee I fain would speak, therefore ascend,

And seat thee at my side! The vacant place

Invites its owner, and secures me mine.

FAUST.

First, kneeling, let my true allegiance be

Accepted, noble lady; let me kiss

The hand that now uplifts me to thy side!

Me as co-regent strengthen of thy realm,

No bound that knows; and for thyself obtain

Adorer, liegeman, warder, all in one!

HELENA.

Full many a wonder do I see and hear;

Amazement strikes me, much I have to ask.

Yet fain I am to know wherefore the speech

Of yonder man sounds strangely, strange and sweet:

Each tone appears accordant with the next,

And hath a word found welcome in the ear,

Another woos caressingly the first.

FAUST.

If thee our people's utterance thus delights,

O then be sure, their song will ravish thee,

Appeasing to their depths both ear and mind.

Yet were it best this language to essay;

Alternate speech invites it, calls it forth.

HELENA.

How thus to speak so sweetly I would know.

FAUST.

'Tis easy, from the heart the words must flow;

And when with fond desire the bosom yearns,

We look around and ask—

HELENA.

Who with us burns?

FAUST.

The spirit looks nor forward nor behind,

The present only—

HELENA.

There our bliss we find.

FAUST.

Wealth is it, pledge and fortune; I demand,

Who granteth confirmation?

HELENA.

This—my hand.

CHORUS.

Who would now upbraid our princess

Grants she to this castle's lord
Friendliest demeanor?
For confess, together are we
Captives now, as oft already,
Since the tragical overthrow
Ilios', and our piteous voyage,
Labyrinthine, with sorrow fraught.
Women wont to men's affection,
Choosers are they not in sooth,
Rather adepts are they;
And to gold-ringleted shepherds,
Maybe to Fauns darkly bearded,
As to them the occasion comes,
O'er thy delicate limbs must they
Yield completely an equal right.
Near and nearer sit they already,
Each on other reclining,
Shoulder to shoulder, knee to knee,
Hand in hand, rock they themselves
Over the throne's
High and loftily-cushion'd state:
For no scruple hath majesty,
Secretest raptures,
'Fore the eyes of the people,
All unblushingly thus to display.

HELENA.

I feel myself so distant, yet so near,

And all too gladly say: Here am I! here!

FAUST.

I tremble: scarcely breathe, words die away:

A dream it is, vanish'd have place and day!

HELENA.

Outworn I feel, and yet as life were new,

With thee entwin'd, to thee the unknown one true.

FAUST.

Forbear to ponder thy strange destiny!

Being is duty, were it momentarily.

PHORKYAS.

(Entering impatiently.)

On love's primer cast your eyes,
Its sweet lessons analyze,
Fondly sport in loverwise!
Yet thereto time fails, I ween.
Feel ye not the storm o'erhanging?
Hear ye not the trumpet clanging!
Ruin nears, with threatening mien.
Menelaus comes, and gleaming
With him waves of people streaming;
Arm ye for the conflict keen!
Girt by victors, conquest-heated,
Like Deiphobus, maltreated,
Forfeit thou must pay, O queen;
These light ware, shall from the halter
Dangle; ready on the altar
Sharpen'd axe for thee is seen!

FAUST.

Bold interruption, she annoyingly intrudes!

Not e'en in peril brook I senseless violence.

Ill message hideous make the fairest messenger;

Most hideous thou who dost ill tidings gladly bring.

They shall not profit thee; ay, shatter thou the air
With empty breath. In sooth, no danger lurketh here,
And danger's self would seem but idle threatening.

[Signals. Explosions from the towers, trumpets and cornets, martial music, a powerful army marches across the stage.]

FAUST.

No, straight assembl'd thou shalt see
Our heroes' close united band!
For woman's grace none wins but he
Who knows to shield with forceful hand.

[To the leaders, who separate themselves from their columns and step forward.]

With bridl'd rage and silent power,
Which victory must crown at length,
Ye of the north, the youthful flower,
Ye of the east, the blooming strength!
Steel-clad, with sunbeams round them breaking,
Empires they shatter with their spear;
They march—beneath them earth is shaking;—
They pass—it thunders in their rear.
At Pylos from our barques we landed—
The ancient Nestor was no more;
In vain their troops the kinglings banded,
'Gainst our free host, on Hellas' shore.
Drive from these walls, my voice obeying,
King Menelaus back to sea;
There let him, sacking and waylaying,
Fulfil his will and destiny.
I hail you dukes, for so ordaineth
Sparta's fair queen: before her lay
Mountain and valley; while she reigneth,
Ye too shall profit by her sway.
Guard, German, wall and fence extending,
Corinthus' bay, whate'er assails;
Goths, I confide to your defending,
Achaia, with its hundred vales;
March, Franks, your course to Elis steering,
Messene be the Saxon's share;
Normans, the sea from pirates clearing,

Of Argolis the strength repair.
Then shall each one, at home abiding,
Prowess and strength abroad make known;
Yet Sparta shall, o'er all presiding,
Be still our queen's ancestral throne.
Rejoicing in their lands, each nation
She sees, with every blessing crown'd;
Justice and light and confirmation,
Seek at her feet, with trust profound.



[Faust descends, the princes close a circle round him, in order better to hear his instructions and commands.]

CHORUS.

Who the fairest fain would possess,
Foremost, let him for weapons
Stoutly and wisely look all around!
Fond words for him may have won
What on earth is the highest:
Yet in peace possesseth he not:
Fawners slyly entice her from him,
Spoilers daringly snatch her from him;
This to guard against be he prepar'd!
I for this commend our prince,
Prize him higher than others,
Who, brave and prudent, himself hath leagu'd,
So that the stalwart obedient stand,
To his beck still attentive;
Loyally they his hests fulfil,
To his own profit, one and all,
Having his guerdon in his lord's thanks,
And for the loftiest glory of both.
For who shall snatch her away
From her potent possessor?
She is his, to him be she granted,
Doubly granted by us, whom he
Within, e'en like her, with impregnable ramparts,
Without, by mightiest host, surrounds.

FAUST.

Our gifts to these are great and glorious:

To every one a goodly land,

Fertile and broad. March on victorious!

Here in the midst take we our stand.

Girt round by waves in sunlight dancing,

Half island, thee—whose hill-chains blend

With Europe's mountains, widely branching—

Will they in rivalry defend.

Bless'd be this land, all lands transcending,

To every race, for evermore,

Which sees my queen the throne ascending,

As erst her birth it hail'd of yore.

When, 'mid Eurotas' reedy whisper,

Forth from the shell she burst to light,

Her mighty mother, brothers, sister,

Were blinded by the dazzling sight.

This land, her choicest bloom that layeth

Before thee, waiting thy behest—

Though the wide earth thy sceptre swayeth,

Oh love thy fatherland the best!

What though the sun's keen arrow coldly playeth,

Upon the mountain summits, jagg'd and bare,

Yet where the rock the verdure overlayeth,

The wild goat nibbling, crops its scanty fare;

The spring leaps forth, united plunge the fountains,
And meadow, gorge, and valley, all are green;
On broken pastures of a hundred mountains,
Spread far and wide, the woolly herds are seen;
With measur'd tread, cautious, in line divided,
By the steep edge, the horned cattle wend;
Yet for them all a shelter is provided,
O'er many a cave the vaulted rock doth bend!
Pan shields them there, and many a nymph appeareth,
In moist and bushy caverns dwelling free;
And yearning after higher spheres, upreareth
Its leafy branches tree close-press'd to tree—
Primeval woods! The giant oak there standing,
Links bough to bough, a stubborn, tortuous, maze;
The gentle maple, with sweet juice expanding,
Shoots clear aloft and with its burden plays—
And motherly for child and lambkin streameth,
'Mid silent shades, warm milk prepar'd for them;
Fruit close at hand, the plain's ripe nurture, gleameth,
And honey droppeth from the hollow stem.
Pleasure is here a birthright; vying
In gladness cheek and lip are found,
Each in his station is undying,
Content and blooming health abound.
And thus to all his father's strength unfoldeth

The gentle child, environ'd by sweet day.
Amaz'd we stand; each asks, as he beholdeth:
If gods they be, or men? so fair are they.
So when the part of hind Apollo playeth,
Like him the fairest shepherd-youth appears;
For there where Nature in clear circle swayeth,
Harmoniously are link'd her several spheres.

[Taking his seat beside Helena.

Thus happy Fate hath me, hath thee attended!
Behind us henceforth let the past be thrown!
From God supreme, oh feel thyself descended:
Thou to the primal world belong'st alone.
Thee shall no firm-built fortress capture;
Strong in eternal youth, expands
For us a sojourn, fraught with rapture,
Arcadia, near to Sparta's lands.
Allur'd to this bless'd region, hither
Hast fled to brightest destiny:
Thrones change to bowers that never wither;
Arcadian be our bliss and free!

[The scene is entirely changed. Close arbors recline against a series of rocky caverns. A shady grove extends to the base of the encircling rocks. Faust and Helena are not seen. The Chorus lies sleeping, scattered here and there.

PHORKYAS.

How long these maids have slept, in sooth I cannot tell;
Or whether they have dream'd what I before mine eyes

Saw bright and clear, to me is equally unknown.

So wake I them. Amaz'd the younger folk shall be,

Ye too, ye bearded ones, who sit below and wait,

Hoping to see at length these miracles resolv'd.

Arise! Arise! And shake quickly your crisped locks!

Shake slumber from your eyes! Blink not, and list to me!

CHORUS.

Only speak, relate, and tell us, what of wonderful hath chanc'd!

We more willingly shall hearken that which we cannot believe;

For we are aweary, weary, gazing on these rocks around.

PHORKYAS.

Children, how, already weary, though you scarce have rubb'd your eyes?

Hearken then! Within these caverns, in these grottoes, in these bowers,

Shield and shelter have been given, as to lovertwain idyllic.

To our lord and to our lady—

CHORUS.

How, within there?

PHORKYAS.

Yea, secluded

From the world; and me, me only, they to secret service call'd.

Highly honor'd stood I near them, yet, as one in trust beseemeth,

Round I gaz'd on other objects, turning hither, turning thither,

Sought for roots, for barks and mosses, with their properties acquainted;

And they thus remain'd alone.

CHORUS.

Thou would'st make believe that yonder, world-wide spaces lie within,
Wood and meadow, lake and brooklet; what strange fable spinnest thou!

PHORKYAS.

Yea, in sooth, ye inexperienc'd, there lie regions undiscover'd:

Hall on hall, and court on court; in my musings these I track.

Suddenly a peal of laughter echoes through the cavern'd spaces;

In I gaze, a boy is springing from the bosom of the woman

To the man, from sire to mother: the caressing and the fending,

All love's foolish playfulnesses, mirthful cry and shout of rapture,

Alternating, deafen me.

Naked, without wings, a genius, like a faun, with nothing bestial,

On the solid ground he springeth; but the ground, with counteraction,

Up to ether sends him flying; with the second, third rebounding

Touches he the vaulted roof.

Anxiously the mother calleth: Spring amain, and at thy pleasure:

But beware, think not of flying, unto thee is flight denied.

And so warns the faithful father: In the earth the force elastic

Lies, aloft that sends thee bounding; let thy toe but touch the surface,

Like the son of earth, Antæus, straightway is thy strength renew'd.

And so o'er these rocky masses, on from dizzy ledge to ledge,

Leaps he ever, hither, thither, springing like a stricken ball.

But in cleft of rugged cavern suddenly from sight he vanish'd;

And now lost to us he seemeth, mother wailleth, sire consoleth,

Anxiously I shrug my shoulders. But again, behold, what vision!

Lie there treasures hidden yonder? Raiment broider'd o'er with flowers
He becomingly hath donn'd;
Tassels from his arms are waving, ribbons flutter on his bosom,
In his hand the lyre all-golden, wholly like a tiny Phœbus,
Boldly to the edge he steppeth, to the precipice; we wonder,
And the parents, full of rapture, cast them on each other's heart;
For around his brow what splendor! Who can tell what there is shining?
Gold-work is it, or the flaming of surpassing spirit-power?
Thus he moveth, with such gesture, e'en as boy himself announcing
Future master of all beauty, through whose limbs, whose every member,
Flow the melodies eternal: and so shall ye hearken to him,
And so shall ye gaze upon him, to your special wonderment.

CHORUS.

This call'st thou marvellous,
Daughter of Creta?
Unto the bard's pregnant word
Hast thou perchance never listen'd?
Hast thou not heard of Ionia's,
Ne'er been instructed in Hellas'
Legends, from ages primeval,
Godlike, heroical treasure?
All, that still happeneth
Now in the present,
Sorrowful echo 'tis,
Of days ancestral, more noble;
Equals not in sooth thy story
That which beautiful fiction,
Than truth more worthy of credence,
Chanetd hath of Maia's offspring!
This so shapely and potent, yet
Scarcely-born delicate nursling,
Straight have his gossiping nurses
Folded in purest swaddling fleece,
Fasten'd in costly swathings,
With their irrational notions.
Potent and shapely, ne'ertheless,

Draws the rogue his flexible limbs,
Body firm yet elastic,
Craftily forth; the purple shell,
Him so grievously binding,
Leaving quietly in its place;
As the perfected butterfly,
From the rigid chrysalid,
Pinion unfolding, rapidly glides,
Boldly and wantonly sailing through
Sun-impregnated ether.
So he, too, the most dextrous,
That to robbers and scoundrels,
Yea, and to all profit-seekers,
He a favoring god might be,
This he straightway made manifest,
Using arts the most cunning.
Swift from the ruler of ocean he
Steals the trident, yea, e'en from Arès
Steals the sword from the scabbard;
Arrow and bow from Phœbus too,
Also his tongs from Hephæstos:
Even Zeus', the father's, bolt,
Him had fire not scar'd, he had ta'en.
Eros also worsted he,
In limb-grappling, wrestling match;
Stole from Cypria as she caress'd him,
From her bosom, the girdle.



Fr. Pecht del

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[Editor: illegible word]

Helena.

[An exquisite, purely melodious lyre-music resounds from the cave. All become attentive, and appear soon to be inwardly moved; henceforth, to the pause indicated, there is a full musical accompaniment.]

PHORKYAS.

Hark those notes so sweetly sounding;
Cast aside your fabl'd lore:
Gods, in olden time abounding,—
Let them go! their day is o'er.
None will comprehend your singing;
Nobler theme the age requires:
From the heart must flow, upspringing,
What to touch the heart aspires.

[She retires behind the rock.]

CHORUS.

To these tones, so sweetly flowing,
Dire one! dost incline thine ears,
They in us, new health bestowing,
Waken now the joy of tears.
Vanish may the sun's clear shining,
In our soul if day arise,
In our heart we, unrepining,
Find what the whole world denies.

Helena, Faust, Euphorion *in the costume indicated above.*

EUPHORION.

Songs of childhood hear ye ringing,
Your own mirth it seems; on me
Gazing, thus in measure springing,
Leap your parent-hearts with glee.

HELENA.

Love, terrestrial bliss to capture,
Two in noble union mates;
But to wake celestial rapture,
He a precious three creates.

FAUST.

All hath been achiev'd. Forever
I am thine, and mine thou art:

Blent our beings are—oh, never
May our present joy depart!

CHORUS.

Many a year of purest pleasure,
In the mild light of their boy,
Crowns this pair in richest measure.
Me their union thrills with joy!

EUPHORION.

Now let me gambol,
Joyfully springing!
Upward to hasten
Through ether winging,
This wakes my yearning,
This prompts me now!

FAUST.

Gently! son, gently!
Be not so daring!
Lest ruin seize thee
Past all repairing,
And our own darling
Whelm us in woe!

EUPHORION.

From earth my spirit
Still upward presses;
Let go my hands now,
Let go my tresses,
Let go my garments,
Mine every one!

HELENA.

To whom, bethink thee,
Now thou pertainest!
Think how it grieves us
When thou disdainest
Mine, thine, and his,—the all
That hath been won.

CHORUS.

Soon shall, I fear me,
The bond be undone!

HELENA *AND* FAUST.

Curb for thy parents' sake,
To us returning,
Curb thy importunate
Passionate yearning!
Make thou the rural plain
Tranquil and bright.

EUPHORION.

But to content you
Stay I my flight.

[Winding among the Chorus and drawing them forth to dance.]

Round this gay troop I flee
With impulse light.
Say is the melody,
Say is the movement right?

HELENA.

Yea, 'tis well done; advance,
Lead to the graceful dance
These maidens coy!

FAUST.

Could I the end but see!
Me this mad revelry
Fills with annoy.

EUPHORION *AND THE* CHORUS.

(Dancing and singing, they move about in interweaving lines.)

Moving thine arms so fair
With graceful motion,
Tossing thy curling hair
In bright commotion;
When thou with foot so light
Over the earth doth skim,

Thither and back in flight,
Moving each graceful limb;
Thou hast attain'd thy goal,
Beautiful child,
All hearts thou hast beguil'd,
Won every soul.

[*Pause.*

EUPHORION.

Gracefully sporting,
Light-footed roes,
New frolic courting,
Scorn ye repose:
I am the hunter,
Ye are the game.

CHORUS.

Us wilt thou capture,
Urge not thy pace;
For it were rapture
Thee to embrace,
Beautiful creature,
This our sole aim!

EUPHORION.

Through trees and heather,
Bound all together,
O'er stock and stone!
Whate'er is lightly won,
That I disdain;
What I by force obtain,
Prize I alone.

HELENA *AND* FAUST.

What vagaries, sense confounding!
Naught of measure to be hop'd for!
Like the blare of trumpet sounding,
Over vale and forest ringing.
What a riot! What a cry!

CHORUS.

(Entering quickly one by one.)

Us he pass'd with glance scorn-laden;
Hastily still onward springing,
Bearing now the wildest maiden
Of our troop, he draweth nigh.

EUPHORION.

(Bearing a young maiden.)

I this wilful maid and coy
Carry to enforc'd caress;
For my pleasure, for my joy
Her resisting bosom press,
Kiss her rebel lips, that so
She my power and will may know.

MAIDEN.

Loose me! in this frame residing,
Burns a spirit's strength and might;
Strong as thine, our will presiding
Swerveth not with purpose light.
Thinkest, on thy strength relying,
That thou hast me in a strait?
Hold me, fool! thy strength defying,
For my sport, I'll scorch thee yet!

[She flames up and flashes into the air.]

Follow where light breezes wander,
Follow to rude caverns yonder,
Strive thy vanish'd prey to net!

EUPHORION.

(Shaking off the last flames.)

Rocks all around I see,
Thickets and woods among!
Why should they prison me?
Still am I fresh and young.
Tempests, they loudly roar,
Billows, they lash the shore;
Both far away I hear;
Would I were near!

[He springs higher up the rock.]

HELENA, FAUST *AND* CHORUS.

Would'st thou chamois-like aspire?
Us thy threaten'd fall dismays!

EUPHORION.

Higher must I climb, yet higher,
Wider still must be my gaze.
Know I now, where I stand:
'Midst of the sea-girt land,
'Midst of great Pelops' reign,
Kin both to earth and main.

CHORUS.

Canst not near copse and wold
Tarry, then yonder,
Ripe figs and apple-gold
Seeking, we'll wander;
Grapes too shall woo our hand,
Grapes from the mantling vine.
Ah, let this dearest land,
Dear one, be thine!

EUPHORION.

Dream ye of peaceful day?
Dream on, while dream ye may!
War! is the signal cry.
Hark! cries of victory!

CHORUS.

War who desireth
While peace doth reign,
To joy aspireth
Henceforth in vain.

EUPHORION.

All whom this land hath bred;
Through peril onward led,
Free, of undaunted mood,
Still lavish of their blood,
With soul untaught to yield,
Rending each chain!

To such the bloody field,
Brings glorious gain.

CHORUS.

High he soars,—mark, upward gazing,—
And to us not small doth seem:
Victor-like, in harness blazing,
As of steel and brass the gleam!

EUPHORION.

Not on moat or wall relying,
On himself let each one rest!
Firmest stronghold, all defying,
Ever is man's iron breast!
Dwell for aye unconquer'd would ye?
Arm, by no vain dreams beguil'd!
Amazons your women should be,
And a hero every child!

CHORUS.

O hallow'd Poesie,
Heavenward still soareth she!
Shine on, thou brightest star,
Farther and still more far!
Yet us she still doth cheer;
Ever her voice to hear,
Joyful we are.

EUPHORION.

Child no more; a stripling bearing
Arms appears, with valor fraught:
Leagu'd with the strong, the free, the daring,
In soul already who hath wrought.
Hence, away!
No delay!
There where glory may be sought.

HELENA AND FAUST.

Scarcely summon'd to life's gladness,
Scarcely given to day's bright gleam,
Downward now to pain and sadness
Would'st thou rush, from heights supreme!

Are then we
Naught to thee?
Is our gracious bond a dream?

EUPHORION.

Hark! What thunders seaward rattle,
Echoing from vale to vale!
'Mid dust and foam, in shock of battle,
Throng on throng, to grief and bale!
And the command
Is, firm to stand;
Death to face, nor ever quail.

HELENA, FAUST, *AND* CHORUS.

Oh what horror! Hast thou told it!
Is then death for thee decreed?

EUPHORION.

From afar shall I behold it?
No! I'll share the care and need!

HELENA, FAUST, *AND* CHORUS.

Rashness to peril brings,
And deadly fate!

EUPHORION.

Yet—see a pair of wings
Unfoldeth straight!
Thither—I must, I must—
Grudge not my flight!

[He casts himself into the air; his garments support him for a moment; his head flames, a trail of light follows him.]

CHORUS.

Icarus! Icarus!
Oh woeful sight!

[A beautiful youth falls at the parents' feet, we imagine that in the dead we recognize a well-known form; yet suddenly the corporeal part vanishes; the aureole rises like a comet to heaven; dress, mantle and lyre remain lying on the ground.]

HELENA *AND* FAUST.

Follows on joy newborn
Anguishful moan!

EUPHORION'S VOICE.

(From the depths.)

Leave me in realms forlorn,
Mother, not all alone!

[Pause.

CHORUS.

(Dirge.)

Not alone—for hope we cherish,
Where thou bidest thee to know!
Ah, from daylight though thou perish,
Ne'er a heart will let thee go!
Scarce we venture to bewail thee,
Envy we sing thy fate:
Did sunshine cheer, or storm assail thee,
Song and heart were fair and great.
Earthly fortune was thy dower,
Lofty lineage, ample might,
Ah, too early lost, thy flower
Wither'd by untimely blight!
Glance was thine the world discerning,
Sympathy with every wrong,
Woman's love for thee still yearning,
And thine own enchanting song.
Yet the beaten path forsaking,
Thou didst run into the snare:
So with law and usage breaking,
On thy wilful course didst fare;
Yet at last high thought has given
To thy noble courage weight,
For the loftiest thou hast striven—
It to win was not thy fate.
Who does win it? Unreplying,
Destiny the question hears,
When the bleeding people lying,
Dumb with grief, no cry uprears!—
Now new songs chant forth, in sorrow
Deeply bow'd lament no more;

Them the earth brings forth to-morrow,
As she brought them forth of yore!

[Full pause. The music ceases.]

HELENA.

(*To Faust.*) An ancient word, alas, approves itself in me:

That joy and beauty ne'er enduringly are link'd!

Rent is the bond of life, with it the bond of love;

Lamenting both, I say a sorrowful farewell,

And throw myself once more, once only, in thine arms.—

Persephoneia, take the boy, take also me!

[She embraces Faust, her corporeal part vanishes, her garment and veil remain in his arms.]

PHORKYAS.

Hold fast what doth of all alone remain to thee,

The garment, loose it not! Already hale

The demons at its skirts, and it would fain

Drag to the nether regions. Hold it fast!

The goddess is it not, whom thou hast lost,

Yet godlike 'tis. Avail thee of the high

Inestimable gift, and upward soar;

Thee o'er all common things 'twill swiftly bear

Through ether, long as there thou canst abide.

We meet again, far, far away from here.

[Helena's garments dissolve into clouds, they envelop Faust, raise him aloft, and pass with him from the scene.]

PHORKYAS:

(Takes Euphorion's dress, mantle and lyre from the earth, steps into the proscenium; holding up the spoils, she says:)

A happy find hath me bestead.
The flame in sooth is vanished,
Yet for the world no grief I know:
Enough remaineth bards to consecrate,
Envy to scatter in their guild and hate;
And am I powerless genius to bestow,
Its vesture I can lend, at any rate.

[She sits down in the proscenium, at the foot of a pillar.]

PENTHALIS.

Now hasten, girls! At length we are from magic free,
From the soul-swaying spell of the Thessalian hag;
Free also from the blare confus'd of jangling tones,
The ear perplexing, and still worse the inner sense.
Away to Hades! Thither hath in haste the queen,
With earnest step, descended. Now, ye faithful maids,
Do ye, without delay, follow upon her track.
Her at the throne we find of the Inscrutable.

CHORUS.

Royal ladies, certes, everywhere are content;
E'en in Hades places take they supreme,
Proud to be with their peers allied,
With Persephone in friendship knit;
We, meanwhile, far off in meadows
Deep of asphodel abiding,
With far-reaching poplars,

And unfruitful willows conjoin'd,

What amusement or joy have we!

Flitting, bat-like to twitter—

Whispering, undelightsome, and ghostlike!

LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

Who hath no name achiev'd, nor at the noble aims,

Belongs but to the elements; so hence, begone!

My vehement desire is with my queen to be;

Not merit 'tis alone, fidelity as well,

Secure in yonder spheres, the individual life.

[*Exit.*

ALL.

Back are we given now to the daylight;
Certes, persons no more,
That feel we, that know we;
Nathless return we never to Hades!
Nature, eternally living,
Claims in us spirits,
We in her, a title undoubted.

A PORTION OF THE CHORUS.

We, amid the wavy-trembling of these thousand rustling branches.

Gently lure with dalliance charming from the root the vital currents,

Up into the boughs; with foliage, soon with lavish wealth of blossoms,

We adorn our tresses, floating in the breeze for airy growth.

Falls the fruit, forthwith assemble life-enjoying folk and cattle,

For the grasping, for the tasting, swiftly coming, onward pressing,

And, as 'fore the gods primeval, so all bend around us here.

ANOTHER PORTION.

Where these rocky walls are imag'd in the smooth, far-gleaming mirror,
Moving in the gentle wavelets, soothingly we onward glide,
Listen, hearken, to all music: birdie's singing, reedy-fluting,
Is it Pan's loud voice tremendous—voice responsive straight replies:
Whisper is it?—we too whisper; thunders it?—we roll our thunder
In o'erwhelming reprecussion, threefold, tenfold, echoing back.

A THIRD PORTION.

Sisters, we, of spirit mobile, hasten with the brooklets onward;



artist: franz simm.

FAUST. SECOND PART.

helen leaving faust.

For yon hill-slopes, richly mantl'd, charm us rising far away.
Ever downwards, ever deeper, in meandering course we water
Now the meadows, then the pastures, then the garden round the house;
There, across the landscape, slender cypress shafts our banks o'erpeering,
Telling of our crystal mirror, upwards into ether soar.

A FOURTH PORTION.

Roam ye others, at your pleasure; we will circle, we will rustle
Round the slopes so richly planted, on its prop where sprouts the vine.
By the vintager's emotion, we throughout the livelong day,
See what doubtful issue waiteth on his busy loving care:
Now with hoe, and now with mattock, earth upheaping, pruning, binding,
Prayeth he to all Celestials, chiefly to the Sun-God prays.
Bacchus frets himself, the weakling, little for his faithful vassal,
Rests in arbors, leans in grottoes, toying with the youngest faun;
For his visions what he lacketh, dreaming half inebriate,
Stor'd in skins, in jars and vessels, ready for his use he finds,
Right and left in cool recesses treasur'd for eternal time.
But at length have the Celestials, hath now Helios 'fore them all,
Breathing, moistening, warming, glowing, fill'd the berries' teeming horn:
Where the vintager in silence labor'd, there is sudden life,
Busy stir in every alley, rustles round from vine to vine;
Baskets creak, and pitchers clatter, and the loaded vine-troughs groan,
All towards the mighty wine-press, to the presser's sturdy dance;
And so is the sacred fullness of the purely-nurtur'd berries
Rudely trodden; foaming, seething, now it mingles, foully squash'd;
And now splits the ear the cymbal, with the beaker's brazen tones,
For himself hath Dionysos from his mysteries reveal'd;
Comes he with goat-footed satyrs, reeling nymphs goat-footed too,
And meanwhile unruly brayeth shrill, Silenus' long-ear'd beast—
Naught is spar'd; all law and order cloven hoofs are treading down—

All the senses whirl distracted, hideously the ear is stunn'd;

Drunkards for their cups are groping, over-full are head and paunch;

Careful one is, there another, yet the tumult waxes loud:

Since the newer must to garner, they the old skins quickly drain.

[The curtain falls. Phorkyas, in the proscenium, rises to a gigantic height, descends from the cothurni, lays aside mask and veil, and reveals herself as Mephistopheles, in order, so far as it may be necessary, to comment upon the piece by way of epilogue.]

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ACT IV.



High Mountain.

Strong jagged rocky summit. A cloud approaches, leans against the rock, and sinks down upon a projecting level. It divides.

FAUST.

(Steps forth.) On deepest solitudes down-gazing, far below my feet,

Full thoughtfully I tread this lofty mountain ridge,

My cloudy car forsaking, me which softly bare,

Through days of sunshine, hither over land and sea.

Slowly it melts from me, not scatter'd suddenly;

Towards the East the mass strives in its rolling march.

In admiration lost, the eye strives after it;

Moving it now divides, wavelike, and full of change;

Yet will it shape itself—mine eye deceives me not,

On sun-illumin'd pillows, gloriously reclines,

Of giant size indeed, a godlike female form;

I see it, like to Juno, Leda, Helena;

In majesty and love before mine eye it floats!

Ah, now it scatters; formless, broad, uptowering,

Rests in the East, and there, like ice-hills far away,

Mirrors of fleeting life the deep significance.

Yet round me hovers still, a mist-wreath, tender, light,

Surrounding breast and brow, cheering, caressing, cool.

Lightly it rises now, still lingering, high and higher,—

Together draws. Doth me a rapturing form delude,

As youth's first fondly priz'd, long-yearn'd for, highest good?

Well up the earliest treasures of my deepest heart:

To me Aurora's love, so light of wing, it shows,

The swift-experienc'd glance, the first, scarce understood,

Which, long and firmly held, each treasure overshadowed!

Like beauty of the soul rises the gracious form,

Dissolveth not, but upward into ether floats,

And with it, of my being draws the best away.

[A seven-league boot tramps down, another immediately follows. Mephistopheles descends. The boots stride onward in haste.]

MEPHIS.

That's forward striding, I must own!

But tell me, what dost thou intend,

That 'mid such horrors dost descend,

Such wilderness of yawning stone?

Though not precisely here, I know it well;

This was in sooth the very floor of Hell.

FAUST.

Of foolish legends never fails thy store;

Such to give forth dost thou begin once more?

MEPHIS.

(Seriously.) When God the Lord—the reason well I know,—

Us from the air had bann'd to depths profound,

There, where of fire eterne the central glow

With lurid flames still circles round and round,

By the too brilliant light, we found that we

O'ercrowded were, and plac'd unpleasantly.

Forthwith to cough the devils all were fain;

From top to bottom straight they spat amain;

With sulphur-stench and acids thus inflated,

Hell, with foul gas, so hugely was dilated,

That earth's smooth surface, by the fiery blast,

Thick as it was, cracking must burst at last.

That all things are revers'd we now discern;

What bottom was, is summit in its turn;

Also in this the proper lore they base,

To give the undermost the highest place;

For from the hot and slavish cave we fare

Into the lordship of the boundless air;

An open secret, long time well conceal'd,

And to the folk only of late reveal'd.

FAUST.

To me are mountain-masses grandly dumb;

I question neither whence nor why they come.

Herself when Nature in herself had founded,

This globe of earth she then hath purely rounded,
Took both in summit and in gorge delight,
Pil'd rock on rock, and mountain-height on height;
The hills she fashion'd next with gentle force,
And to the valleys slop'd their downward course:
Then growth and verdure came, and for her joy
She needs no mad convulsive freak employ.

MEPHIS.

Ay! so you say, sun-clear to you it lies;
But who was present there, knows otherwise.
I was at hand when, seething still below,
Swell'd the abyss, belching a fiery tide,
When Moloch's hammer rocks, with thunderous blow
Welding, the fragments scatter'd far and wide.
'Neath massive foreign blocks still groans the land—
Such hurling-might say who can comprehend;
This your philosopher can't understand;
There lies the rock, must lie, and there's an end;
But to our shame doth all our thinking tend.
Your genuine common folk alone conceive,
And naught disturbs them in their creed;
Long since their wisdom ripen'd: they believe
A marvel 'tis, Satan receives his meed;
On crutch of faith my pilgrim hobbles on
To Devil's bridges, to the Devil's stone.

FAUST.

Noteworthy 'tis, Nature, as now I do,
To study from the Devil's point of view.

MEPHIS.

Be Nature what she may, what do I care!
My honor's touch'd: the Devil, sooth, was there!
We are the folk, the mighty to attain:
Convulsion, madness, force. 'Tis written plain!—
But now, at last, to make my meaning clear,
Did nothing please thee in our upper sphere?
In boundless space the world thou hast survey'd,
Its kingdoms and their glory, all display'd.
And yet, insatiate as thou art,
To thee did they no joy impart?

FAUST.

A project vast allur'd me on;
Divine it!

MEPHIS.

That I'll do anon.
Some capital I'd choose; therein a store
Of burgher-feeding rubbish at its core;
With crooked alleys, gabl'd peaks,
Markets confin'd, kale, turnips, leeks,
And shambles where blue flies repair,
On well-fed joints to fatten—there,

At any moment shalt thou find
Stench and activity combin'd;
Wide squares, with spacious streets between,
Which arrogate a lordly mien;
And lastly, boundless to the eye,
Beyond the gate, the suburbs lie.
Of coaches too, th' eternal roar,
Still rattling, behind, before,
Would charm me and the ceaseless flow
Of ant-swarms, running to and fro;
And let me walk, or let me ride,
Their central point I should abide,
By thousands honor'd and admir'd.

FAUST.

Such things I slightly estimate.
That men, it is to be desir'd,
Should multiply, should live at ease,
Be taught, develop'd if you please;—
More rebels thus you educate.

MEPHIS.

Then, in grand style, with conscious power, I'd rear
A pleasure-castle, some fair pleasance near:
Hill, valley, meadow, forest, glade,
Into a splendid garden made,
With velvet lawns and verdurous walls,

Straight paths, art-guided shadows, waterfalls,
From rock to rock constrain'd to wind,
And water-jets of every kind;
Majestic soaring there while at the sides,
With whiz and gush, threadlike the stream divides.
Then for the loveliest women I'd prepare
A tiny lodge, cosy and quiet; there
The countless hours, according to my mood
I'd spend, in that sweet social solitude—
Women, I say: since, once for all,
I in the plural think upon the Fair.

FAUST.

Modern and base! Sardanapal!

MEPHIS.

Might one but guess thy purpose? High,
Doubtless, and grandly bold! Since thou
By so much nearer to the moon didst fly,
Aptly thy choice might thither tend, I trow!

FAUST.

Not so. Upon this globe of ours
For grand achievement still there's space;
Something astounding shall take place,
For daring toil I feel new powers.

MEPHIS.

Fame also to achieve thou'rt fain?

That thou hast been with heroines is plain.

FAUST.

Dominion and estate by me are sought.

The deed is everything, the fame is naught!

MEPHIS.

Yet poets shall arise, thy fame

To after ages to proclaim,

Through folly, folly to inflame.

FAUST.

That is beyond thy scope, I ween;

How knowest thou, what man desires?

Adverse thy nature, bitter, keen,

How knoweth it, what man requires?

MEPHIS.

Be thy will done, since yield I must.

Me with the circuit of thy whims entrust.

FAUST.

Mine eye was fix'd upon the open sea:

Aloft it tower'd, upheaving; then once more

Withdrew, and shook its waves exultingly,

To storm the wide expanse of level shore—

That anger'd me, since arrogance of mood,

In the free soul, that values every right,

Through the impetuous passion of the blood,

Harsh feeling genders, in its own despite.

I deem'd it chance; more keenly eyed the main:

The billow paus'd, and then roll'd back again,

And from its proudly conquer'd goal withdrew;

The hour returns, the sport it doth renew—

MEPHIS.

(Ad spectatores.) For me there's nothing novel here, I own;

This for some hundred thousand years I've known.

FAUST.

(Continues passionately.)

On through a thousand channels it doth press,

Barren itself, and causing barrenness;

It waxes, swells, it rolls and spreads its reign

Over the waste and desolate domain.

There, power-inspir'd, wave upon wave sweeps on,

Triumphs awhile, retreats—and naught is done:

It to despair might drive me to survey

Of lawless elements the aimless sway!

To soar above itself then dar'd my soul;

Here would I strive, this force would I control!

And it is possible. Howe'er the tide

May rise, it fawneth round each hillock's side;

However proudly it may domineer,

Each puny height its crest doth 'gainst it rear,

Each puny deep it forcefully allures.

So swiftly plan on plan my mind matures;
This glorious pleasure for thyself attain;
Back from the shore to bar the imperious main,
Narrow the limits of the watery deep,
Constrain it far into itself to sweep!
My purpose step by step I might lay bare:
That is my wish, to aid it boldly dare!

[Drums and martial music behind the spectators, from the distance, on the right hand.]

MEPHIS.

How easy 'tis!—Hear'st thou the drums afar?

FAUST.

What, war again!—The prudent likes not war.

MEPHIS.

In peace or war the prudent doth obtain
From every circumstance his proper gain.
We watch, we mark each favoring moment; now,
The occasion smileth—Faustus, seize it thou!

FAUST.

Me, I entreat, this riddling nonsense spare.
And short and good, speak out;—thyself declare.

MEPHIS.

On my way hither I became aware
That the good emperor is vex'd with care;
Thou knowest him. The while we him amus'd,

And with the show of riches him abus'd,
Then the whole world to him was cheap, since he
While young attain'd to regal dignity;
This false resolve did then beguile his leisure,
That possible it is and right
Together these two interests to unite,
At once to govern, and to take one's pleasure.

FAUST.

A grievous error! He who would command,
His highest bliss must in commanding find.
With lofty will his bosom must expand,
Yet what he willeth may not be divin'd;
To trusty ear he whispers his intent,
'Tis realiz'd,—all feel astonishment;
So holds he still the most exalted place,
The worthiest. Enjoyment doth debase!

MEPHIS.

Such is he not; on pleasure he was bent!
Meanwhile the realm by anarchy was rent,
Where high and low were rang'd against each other,
And brother still pursu'd and slaughter'd brother,
Castle 'gainst castle, town 'gainst town had feud,
Guild against noble too; in conflict rude,
Chapter and flock against their bishop rose;
Who on each other gaz'd, were foes;

Within the churches death and murder reign,
Merchant and traveller at the gates were slain;
All wax'd in daring, nor to small extent;
To live was self-defence.—So matters went.

FAUST.

They went, they limp'd, they fell, again they rose,
Were overturn'd, roll'd headlong—such the close.

MEPHIS.

And such condition no one dar'd to blame,
Authority each could and each would claim;
The smallest even proudly rear'd his crest.
At length too mad it grew e'en for the best.
The able, they forthwith arose with might,
And said: Who gives us peace is lord, by right;
The Emperor cannot, will not!—Let us choose
Another, in the realm who shall infuse
Fresh life, and safety unto each assign,
Who in a world its vigor that renews,
Together peace and justice shall combine!

FAUST.

That sounds like priestcraft.

MEPHIS.

Priests in sooth were there;
The well-fed paunch, that was their primal care;
They implicated were above the rest.

The tumult swell'd, the priests the tumult bless'd;

Our Emperor, whom we beguil'd, perchance

To his last battle hither doth advance.

FAUST.

I pity him—so frank, so kind of heart.

MEPHIS.

Let us look on. There's hope ere life depart.

Him from this narrow vale let us deliver!

If rescu'd now, he rescu'd is forever.

How yet the die may fall, who may divine!

Vassals he'll have, if Fortune on him shine.

[They ascend the middle range of hills and survey the disposition of the army in the valley. Drums and military music resound from below.]

MEPHIS.

Well chosen the position is, I see;

We'll join them, perfect then the victory.

FAUST.

What there may we expect? Deceit!

Illusive sorcery! A hollow cheat!

MEPHIS.

Cunning to win war's lofty game!

Be constant to thy mighty aim,

The while thy goal dost bear in sight;

Secure we to the Emperor throne and land,

Then kneel, from him receiving as thy right,

The fief of the unbounded strand.

FAUST.

Already much for me hast done;

By thee be now a battle won!

MEPHIS.

No, do thou win it; forthwith here

As general-in-chief appear.

FAUST.

To my true honor it would tend,

There to command where naught I comprehend!

MEPHIS.

The general's staff, let that provide,

So the field-marshal's safe whate'er betide.

War's want of council to its source I've trac'd;

War's council I forthwith have bas'd

On mountain's and on man's primeval force:

Bless'd who together draws their joint resource.

FAUST.

What yonder bearing arms appears?

Hast thou arous'd the mountaineers?

MEPHIS.

No, but like Master Peter Squenze,

Of the whole mass the quintessence.

[The three mighty ones enter.]

My fellows now are drawing near!

Divers the clothes, the arms, they wear,

Of different ages they appear;

With them not badly shalt thou fare.

[Ad spectatores.

There's not a child but loves to see

Harness and arms of warlike knight;

And, allegoric as the rascals be,

They, for that reason, give the more delight.

BULLY.

(Young, lightly armed, in motley attire.) If one but looks into my eyes,

Straight let his jaws my clenched fist beware,

And if a coward from me flies,

Forthwith I seize him by the hair!

HAVEQUICK.

(Manly, well armed, in rich attire.) Such brawls are foolish, are invidious,

They forfeit what the occasion brings;

In *taking* only be assiduous;

Hereafter look to other things.

HOLDFAST.

(In years, strongly armed, without attire.) Not much by such a course is won;

Through great possessions soon we run,

Borne by the stream of life away.

To take is good, 'tis better fast to hold;

Be still by the gray carle controll'd,

And none from thee takes aught away.

[They descend the mountain together.]

On the Headland.

Drums and martial music from below. The Emperor's tent is pitched. Emperor, General-in-Chief, Attendants.

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

Still duly weigh'd appears our course,

Back to this vale at hand that lies,

To lead when somewhat press'd our force;

Our choice of ground, I trust, is wise.

EMPEROR.

How it succeeds must soon be known,

Me this half flight, this yielding, grieves, I own.

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

On our right flank, my prince, now cast your eyes!

Such ground doth war's ideal realize:

Not steep the hills, nor yet too easy to ascend,

The enemy ensnaring, while they ours befriend;

We, on the wavelike plain, are half conceal'd—

No cavalry durst venture on such field.

EMPEROR.

Save to commend naught now remains for me;

Here strength and courage can well tested be.

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

There, where the middle plain allures the sight,

Behold the phalanx, eager for the fight;
In the bright sunshine, gilded by its rays,
The lances glitter through the morning haze.
How darkly waves the mighty square below!
For bold emprise its thousands all aglow.
The mass's strength thou thus canst comprehend;
To them I trust, the foemen's strength to rend.

EMPEROR.

So fair a sight ne'er have I seen before:
Such host is worth its number, twice told o'er.

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

Of our left flank naught have I to relate.
Holding the stubborn cliffs, stout heroes wait;
Ablaze with arms, the rocky height ascends,
Which the close entrance to the pass defends.
Here, where the bloody onslaught none expect,
The hostile force will, I foresee, be wreck'd.

EMPEROR.

There march my lying kinsfolk, still who claim'd,
As me they uncle, cousin, brother, nam'd,
More and more license; till the sceptre's strength,
Its honor from the throne, they stole at length;
The empire, through their feuds, distracted lies,
Now, leagu'd as rebels, they against me rise!
The many waver, sway'd from side to side;

Then headlong rush, borne onward by the tide.

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

A trusty man, abroad for tidings sent,
Hastes down the rocks; oh, happy be the event.

FIRST SPY.

Fair success on us hath waited;
Through our bold and crafty art,
Here and there we penetrated;
Little good can we impart:
Many pure allegiance proffer'd;
But for their inaction they,
In excuse, these pretexts offer'd,
Public danger, civil fray—

EMPEROR.

Self-seekers, caring for themselves alone,
To duty, honor, gratitude, are blind!
If full your measure, you ne'er call to mind,
Your neighbor's house-fire may consume your own.

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

The second comes, descending heavily;
Tremble his limbs, a weary man is he.

SECOND SPY.

First with pleasure we detected
The wild tumult's erring course.
Undelaying, unexpected,
A new emperor leads his force;
And with his behests complying,
O'er the plain the concourse sweep.
This false banner, proudly flying,
They all follow now—like sheep!

EMPEROR.

As gain a rival emperor I hail;
That I am emperor, now first I feel!
But as a soldier did I don the mail;
For higher purpose now I'm clad in steel.
At every festival, how bright soe'er,
Though naught was wanting—danger fail'd me there.
When to the ring-sport at your call I went,
My heart beat high, I breath'd the tournament;
From war had ye not held me back, my name
For deeds heroic had been known to fame!
What self-reliance in my breast did reign,
When I stood mirror'd in the fire-domain;
The ruthless element press'd on elate,
'Twas but a show, and yet the show was great.
Fame, victory, my troubl'd dreams display'd—
I'll now achieve, what basely I delay'd!

[Heralds are despatched to challenge the rival Emperor.]



[Faustin armor, with half-closed visor. The three mighty ones, armed and clothed, as above.]

FAUST.

We come, we hope uncensur'd—foresight here
May yet avail, though needless it appear.
Thoughtful, thou know'st, and wise the mountain-race,
Of rock and nature they the secrets trace;
Spirits, who long have left the level ground,
Are to their rocky heights more firmly bound:
Through labyrinthine clefts they labor, where
Rich fumes metallic fill the gaseous air;
Untir'd they separate, combine and test;
The hidden to make known is their sole quest;
With the light touch of spirit-might, they rear
Transparent figures, then in crystal clear
And its eternal silence, mirror'd true,
The doings of the upper world they view.

EMPEROR.

This I have heard, and think that it may be;
But, honest man, say: what is this to me?

FAUST.

The Norcian sorcerer, the Sabine, he
True, honorable servant is to thee;
What ghastly fate appall'd him, on the pyre!
Crackl'd the brushwood, rose the tongues of fire;
Dry fagots all around up-piled were seen,
Mingl'd with pitch, with brimstone-bars between,

Man's, God's, or devil's aid had been in vain—
Your majesty then burst the fiery chain!
'Twas there, in Rome. Deeply to thee he's bound,
And o'er thy path keeps watch with care profound;
Himself forgetting, from that moment he
Questions the stars, questions the depths for thee.
He bade us, at the swiftest, hither post,
To succor thee. Great powers the mountains boast:
There Nature works, omnipotently free—
The priest's dull mind blames it as sorcery.

EMPEROR.

On festal day when guest on guest we greet,
Joyful themselves, who joyance come to meet,
Well pleas'd we see them enter, each and all,
And, man by man, contract the spacious hall;
Yet highest welcome is the brave man's dower,
Who, as ally to aid us, comes with power,
When morning breaks, which doubtful issues wait,
While over it are pois'd the scales of Fate.
Nathless withhold awhile thy stalwart hand,
In this high moment, from the willing brand!
Honor the hour, when many thousands wend
To battle, for or 'gainst me to contend!
Man's self is man! Who would be thron'd and crown'd,
Of the high honor must be worthy found.

Now may this phantom, that against us stands,
This self-styl'd emperor, ruler of our lands,
The army's duke, lord of our feudal train,
By my own hand, be thrust to death's domain!

FAUST.

Whate'er the need to end the glorious fight,
To peril thine own head cannot be right.
Is not the helm with crest and plumage deck'd?
The head, our zeal which fires, it doth protect.
Without the head what could the members do?
Let that but sleep, forthwith all slumber too;
If it be injur'd, all are straight unsound,
And all revive, if it with health be crown'd.
Promptly the arm its own strong right doth wield,
And to protect the skull uplifts the shield;
Its proper duty well the sword doth know,
Parries with strength, and then returns the blow;
The active foot shares in the common weal,
And on the slain foe's neck doth plant the heel.

EMPEROR.

Such is mine anger: him I thus would treat,
Make his proud head a footstool for my feet!

HERALDS.

(Returning.)

Little profit, little credit,

From our challenge did we gain;
Noble 'twas, yet while we read it,
Us they flouted with disdain:
"Spent your Emperor's power,"—they say,
"Like echo in yon narrow vale;
Would we think of him to-day;—
Once there was:—so runs the tale."

FAUST.

What hath occur'd doth with their wish accord,
Who firm and true for thee would draw the sword.
The foe approach; thy troops impatient stand;
The moment favors; straight the charge command!

EMPEROR.

To the command all claim I now resign.

(To the General-in-Chief.)

To execute that duty, prince, be thine!

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

March then our right wing onward to the field!
The foemen's left, who even now ascend,
Ere they complete their final step, shall yield
To their tried valor who the slope defend!

FAUST.

Permission grant that this blithe hero be
Enroll'd among thy ranks, immediately,
That with thy ranks incorporate, he may
Have for his powerful nature ample play.

[He points to the right.]

BULLY.

(Steps forward.) His face to me who shows doth not escape,

Till both his jaws I've smash'd with sudden bang;

His back to me who turns, I strike his nape,—

Dangling adown his back, neck, head, and top-knot hang!

And if, with sword and club, thy men

Will strike, as on I rage before,

Man over man down-smitten, then

The foe shall welter in their gore!

[Exit.

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

Now let the centre phalanx follow slow,

And in full force with caution meet the foe!

Distress'd, they yield already on the right,

Their plan, by our attack, is shatter'd quite.

FAUST.

(Pointing to the middle one.) Let this one also thy command obey.

HAVEQUICK.

(Steps forward.) Unto the host's heroic pride,

Shall thirst for booty be alli'd;

Upon this goal be all intent;

The rival emperor's sumptuous tent.

Not long upon his throne he'll boast indeed!

Myself to battle will this phalanx lead.

SPEED-BOOTY,*SUTLER-WOMAN*.

(Fawning upon him.) Although his wife I may not be,

A sweetheart dear is he to me.

For us what harvest now is ripe!

Woman is fierce when she doth gripe,

Is ruthless when she robs; press on,

All is allow'd—when we have won.

[Exeunt.

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

Upon our left, as was to be expected,

With furious charge, their right is now directed.

The defile's rocky path they hope to gain;

To thwart their purpose man for man must strain.

FAUST.

(Beckons to the left.) Sire, I entreat, look also on this one;

If strength be stronger made, no harm is done.

HOLDFAST.

(Steps forward.) For the left wing dismiss all care!

For where I am, safe is possession there:

Herein doth age approve itself, we're told;

No lightning rendeth, what I hold!

[Exit.

MEPHIS.

(Coming down from above.)

Now to the background turn your gaze;

Forth from the jagg'd and rocky ways,
See how the armed warriors pour,
The narrow paths to straiten more,
With helm, shield, harness, sword and spear,
A wall they're forming in our rear,
Waiting the sign to strike the blow.

(Aside, to the knowing ones.)

From whence they come, ask not to know.
No time I lost; where I appear'd.
The armor-halls around were clear'd,
Footmen and horsemen, stood they there,
As if yet lords of earth they were;
Knight, emperor, king, they were of yore,
Now are they empty snail-shells, nothing more,—
Full many a ghost, thus arm'd for strife,
The middle ages have brought back to life;
What devilkin therein may lurk,
For this time it may do its work.

(Aloud.)

Hark, in their anger, how they clatter,
And like tin plates, each other batter;
Torn banners too, flapping aloft one sees,
That wait impatiently to catch the breeze.
Reflect, an ancient race stands ready there,
And in this modern combat fain would share.

[Terrible flourish of trumpets from above; perceptible wavering in the hostile army.]

FAUST.

Now dark the whole horizon shows,
Yet here and there presageful glows
A ruddy and portentous ray;
The weapons gleam, distain'd with blood;
The atmosphere, the rock, the wood,
The heavens, mingle in the fray.

MEPHIS.

Firmly the right flank holds its ground;
Among them towering there I see
Stout Hans, the nimble giant, he
His wonted strokes now deals around.

EMPEROR.

First on one lifted arm I gaz'd,
A dozen now I see uprais'd:
Not nature's laws are working here!

FAUST.

Of mist-wreaths hast not heard, above
The coast of Sicily that rove?
There hovering in daylight clear,
Uplifted in the middle air,
Mirror'd in exhalations rare,
A wondrous show the vision takes.
There cities waver to and fro,

There gardens rise, now high, now low,
As form on form through ether breaks.

EMPEROR.

It looks suspicious! For I there
See all the lofty spear-tops glare;
And through our phalanx, on each lance
I see a nimble flamelet dance:
Too spectral seems to me the sight!

FAUST.

Pardon, my lord! The traces they
Of spirit-natures pass'd away,
A reflex of the mighty Pair,
By whom were sailors wont to swear:
Here they collect their final might.

EMPEROR.

To whom are we beholden, say,
That nature, for our weal to-day,
Her rarest powers should here unite?

MEPHIS.

To whom save him, that master high,
Thy fate who bears within his breast?
The strong threat of thine enemy
His soul hath stirr'd to deep unrest.
His gratitude will see thee sav'd,
Though death in the attempt he brav'd.

EMPEROR.

They cheer'd, with pomp around my march they press'd;

I now was something: That I fain would test,

So, without thought, it pleas'd me, then and there,

To grant to that white beard the cooling air.

Thus of the clergy I the sport have cross'd,

And have, in sooth, thereby their favor lost;

Now shall I, when so many years are pass'd,

Of that glad deed the fruitage reap at last?

FAUST.

Rich interest bears the generous deed.

Now heavenward be thy glance directed:

An omen he will send; give heed!

Straight it appears—as I expected.

EMPEROR.

An eagle hovers in the heavenly height;

A griffin, with wild threats, attends his flight.

FAUST.

Give heed! Auspicious seems the sign.

Your griffin is of fabl'd line;

How, self-forgetting, can he dare

Himself with genuine eagle to compare!

EMPEROR.

Forthwith, in widespread circles wending,

Around they wheel; now, through the sky,

Impetuous, they together fly,
Each other's throat and plumage rending.

FAUST.

Mark how the sorry griffin, torn
And ruffl'd sore, his flight now steereth,
With drooping lion-tail, forlorn,
And 'mid the tree-tops disappeareth.

EMPEROR.

So be it, e'en as these portend!
With wonder fill'd, I wait the end.

MEPHIS.

(Towards the right.) Press'd by our onslaught, oft-repeated,
Our foes must yield, well nigh defeated,
Yet, waging still a dubious fight,
Onward they press toward their right,
And thus embarrass in the fray
The left flank of their chief array.
Our phalanx its firm point doth bring,
Like lightning 'gainst their dexter wing,
The foe, where weakest, they engage.
Now, as when storm-vex'd billows rage,
Wildly contend, with equal might,
Both armies in the double fight.
More glorious deed was never done,
Ours is the field, the victory's won!

EMPEROR.

(On the left side, to Faust.)

Suspicious yonder it doth seem;
Our station hazardous I deem,
No stones they hurl against the foe,
Scal'd are the lower rocks, and lo!
Deserted those above appear;
The foe,—in solid mass, draw near;
With might and main still pressing on,
Perchance the passage they have won:
Of skill unholy such the end!
Your arts to futile issues tend!

[Pause.

MEPHIS.

Hither, my ravens twain are winging!
For us what message are they bringing?
We are, I fear, in evil plight.

EMPEROR.

What want these birds, mischance portending?
They come their swarthy sails extending,
Straight from the hot and rocky fight.

MEPHIS.

(To the ravens.) Close to mine ears now take your post.

Whom you protect, is never lost;
For shrewd your counsel is and right.

FAUST.

(To the Emperor.) Of pigeons thou hast heard, returning

Homeward, for nest and fledglings yearning,

Steering their flight from far-off lands.

But here a difference obtaineth:

Pigeons suffice while peace still reigneth,

But war the raven-post demands.

MEPHIS.

The message tells of sore distresses.

See yonder how the tumult presses

Our heroes' rocky wall around!

The nearest heights are now ascended,

Win they the pass by ours defended,

In sorry plight we should be found.

EMPEROR.

So I deluded am at last!

Around me you have drawn your net;

I've shudder'd, since it held me fast!

MEPHIS.

Take courage! Naught is lost as yet;

Patience unties the hardest knot!

Still sharpest is the final stand.

My trusty messengers I've got;

Command me, that I may command.

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF.

(Who meanwhile has arrived.) With these thou hast thyself alli'd,

I long have griev'd to see them at thy side;

No stable good doth conjuring earn.

To change the battle now I can't pretend;

They have begun it, they may end!

My staff I unto thee return.

EMPEROR.

It for some better hour retain,

Which Fate for us may have in store.

This fellow and his ravens twain,

His horrid comrades, I abhor!

(To Mephistopheles.)

The staff I can't on thee bestow,

Thou seemest not the proper man;

Command, and save us from the foe!

Then happen may what happen can.

[Exit into the tent with the General-in-Chief.]

MEPHIS.

Him may the stupid staff defend!

To us small profit would it lend;

There was a kind of cross thereon.

FAUST.

What is to do?

MEPHIS.

Why, all is done!

Now haste, my cousins, swart and fleet,

To the great mountain lake; the Undines greet,

And for a seeming flood, entreat them fair!

The actual they indeed, through female art,

Hard to conceive, from semblance know to part;

That it the actual is, then each will swear.

[*Pause.*

FAUST.

The water-maidens must our raven-pair

Rightly have flatter'd and with cunning rare:

Yonder it drops already; see

From many a bare rock's barren side,

Gushes the full, swift-flowing tide—

'Tis over with their victory.

MEPHIS.

Strange greeting give the rushing streams—

Perplex'd the boldest climber seems.

FAUST.

Already downward brook to brook is sweeping,

Doubl'd from many a gorge again they're leaping;

A stately water-arch one stream doth throw;

Now o'er the rock's broad level smoothly gliding,

Anon, with flash and roar, again dividing,

It plunges stepwise to the vale below.

To stem the flood what boots their brave endeavor?

Them from the mighty flood may none deliver.

Before the tumult wild myself must quail!

MEPHIS.

Nothing I see of all these watery lies;

They bring illusion but to human eyes;

With joy the wondrous change I hail.

Headlong the masses pour, a shining throng;

The fools imagine they will soon be drown'd,

And while they snort upon the solid ground,

Like swimmers laughably they move along.

Now reigns confusion all around.

[The ravens return.

To the high master you I will commend.

Yourselves, would ye as masters prove—attend;

Straight to the glowing smithy fare,

To the dwarf-folk, who tireless there

Strike sparks from metal and from stone—

With them, while chattering, desire

A shining, dazzling, bursting fire,

As to man's highest fancy shown.

True, lightning-flashes gleaming from afar,

And, swift as vision, fall of loftiest star,

May happen every summer night;

But flashes amid tangl'd bushes found,
And stars that hiss upon the humid ground—

These are in sooth, no common sight:

So must ye, without much annoy,

Entreaties first, and then commands, employ.

[Exeunt the ravens. All happens as prescribed.]

MEPHIS.

Thick darkness o'er the foe is spreading!

They in uncertainty are treading!

Deluding flashes everywhere;

Then blindness, from the sudden glare!—

All that has wondrously succeeded;

But now some terror-sound is needed.

FAUST.

The hollow weapons from the armories,

Feel themselves stronger in the open breeze;

They rattle there above, and clatter on—

A wonderful discordant tone.

MEPHIS.

Quite right. They can be rein'd no more;

As in the gracious times of yore,

The sound of knightly blows is rife;

Armlets and leg-protecting gear,

As Guelphs and Ghibellines appear,

Swift to renew the eternal strife:

Firm in transmitted hate, they close,

While far and wide resound their blows,

The rancor ending but with life.

At last, in every devil's fête

Most potently works party hate,

Till the last horror closes all;

Discordant sounds of rout and panic,

Between whiles, piercing, shrill, Satanic,

Through the wide valley rise and fall.

[War tumult in the Orchestra, passing at last into cheerful military music.]

The Rival Emperor's Tent. Throne, Rich Surroundings.

Havequick, Speed-Booty.

SPEED-BOOTY.

So here the first we are, I see!

HAVEQUICK.

No raven flies so fast as we.

SPEED-BOOTY.

What treasure-heaps lie here and there!

Where to begin? To finish, where?

HAVEQUICK.

So full the space, I'm hard to please:

I know not what I first should seize!



SPEED-BOOTY.

This carpet is the thing for me,
My bed is apt too hard to be.

HAVEQUICK.

Here a steel club is hanging, such,
Long, as mine own, I've wish'd to clutch.

SPEED-BOOTY.

The mantle red, with golden seams—
I've seen its fellow in my dreams.

HAVEQUICK.

(Taking the weapon.)

With this full soon the work is done:
One strikes him dead, and passes on.
Much hast thou pack'd, yet, for thy pains,
Nothing of worth thy sack contains:
This plunder in its place may rest.
One among many, take this chest!
The host's appointed pay they hold;
Within its belly is pure gold.

SPEED-BOOTY.

A murderous weight is this! I may

Nor lift, nor carry it away.

HAVEQUICK.

Duck quickly! Thou must bend! I'll pack

The booty on thy stalwart back.

SPEED-BOOTY.

Alack! alack! 'Tis all in vain!

The load will break my back in twain.

[The chest falls, and springs open.

HAVEQUICK.

There lies of ruddy gold a heap;

Be quick, the prize away to sweep!

SPEED-BOOTY.

(Stoops down.) Now fling it in my lap with speed!

There's plenty to supply our need.

HAVEQUICK.

Now there's enough! Away then, pack!

[She rises.

The apron has a hole, alack!

Where thou dost stand, and where dost go,

The treasure lavishly dost sow.

HALBERDIERS.

(Of our Emperor.) Sacred this place! What do ye here?

Why pillage thus the Emperor's gear?

HAVEQUICK.

Cheaply we sold our limbs, I trow!

Our share of spoil we gather now,

In hostile tents, the victors' due;

And we—why we are soldiers too.

HALBERDIERS.

It suits not in our ranks to be

Soldier at once and thief. For he

To serve our Emperor who would claim,

Must bear an honest soldier's name!

HAVEQUICK.

Such honesty we know, by you

'Tis Contribution styl'd! Ye, too,

Upon the self-same footing live:

The password of your trade is—Give!

(*ToSpeed-Booty.*)

Off with thy prey, right speedily!

For here no welcome guests are we.

[*Exeunt.*

FIRST HALBERDIER.

Say, wherefore didst thou not bestow

Upon the rascal's cheek a blow?

SECOND.

I know not; me my strength forsook;

So phantom-like to me their look!

THIRD.

Something there came to mar my sight.

It glimmer'd—I saw naught aright.

FOURTH.

In sooth, I know not what to say.

So hot it was the livelong day!

Fearful, oppressive, close, as well;

While one man stood, another fell;

We grop'd, still striking at the foe;

Opponents fell at every blow—

Floated before our eyes a mist;

Then in our ear it buzz'd, humm'd, hiss'd.

So on it went—now are we here;

The manner of it is not clear!

[Enter the Emperor, with four Princes. The Halberdiers retire.]

EMPEROR.

Be with him as it may, the day is ours. Sore-batter'd,

Over the level plain the foe in flight are scatter'd.

Here stands the vacant throne; with tapestry hung round,

The traitor's treasure too narrows the tented ground.

By our own guards defended, we wait with exultation,

And with imperial pomp, the envoys of each nation.

Here from all sides arrive glad tidings hour by hour:
The realm is pacified, and gladly owns our power.
Though in our fight perchance some magic arts were wrought,
Yet at the last, ourselves—we, only we, have fought.
To combatants, in sooth, chance still may work for good—
From Heaven falls a stone, on foemen it rains blood;
Strange sounds of wondrous power from rocky caves may flow,
Which lift our courage high, and strike with fear the foe.
Object of lasting scorn, prostrate the vanquish'd lies,
While to the favoring God the victor's praises rise;
All blend with him, nor need that he should give the word—
“We praise Thee, Lord our God!” from million throats is heard.
Yet as the highest praise, my own breast I'll explore,
Searching with pious glance, which rarely happ'd before.
A young and joyous prince, of time may waste the dower:
Him years will teach, at last, th' importance of the hour.
Hence to ally myself with you, most worthy four,
For house, and court, and realm, will I delay no more.

(To the First.)

Thine was, O Prince, the wise arrangement of the host,
And in the crisis thou heroic skill could'st boast;
Therefore work thou as may with times of peace accord.
Arch-Marshal name I thee; to thee I give the sword.

ARCH-MARSHAL.

Thy host, within the realm till now employ'd alone,

Shall on the border guard thy person and thy throne.

Then be it ours, when crowds make glad on festive day

Thy large ancestral hall, thy banquet to array.

I'll hold it at thy side, or bear it thee before,

Of highest majesty the escort evermore.

EMPEROR.

(To the Second.) With valor who, like thee, doth courtesy unite,

Arch-Chamberlain shall be. The duties are not light.

Of all the house-retainers chief art thou; them I find

But sorry servants, still to household strife inclin'd:

In honor held, may they, from thy example, see

How they to prince, to court, to all, may gracious be.

ARCH-CHAMBERLAIN.

The master's lofty thought to further, bringeth grace:

Ever to aid the good, nor injure e'en the base,

Frank, without guile to be, and calm without disguise,

That thou should'st know me, Sire, this boon alone I prize.

Dare fancy to that feast press on with pinions bold—

Thou goest to the board, I reach the ewer of gold,

Thy rings I take, that while joy reigneth and delight,

Thy hand may be refresh'd, while gladdens me thy light.

EMPEROR.

Too earnest feel I now to think of joyous fest;

Yet be it so—a glad commencement still is best!

(To the Third.)

Arch-Steward thee I choose. Therefore henceforth to thee
The chase, the poultry-yard, the farm shall subject be.
Choice of my favorite dishes still for me prepare,
As them the month brings round, and dress'd with proper care.

ARCH-STEWARD.

Strict fasting be for me the duty that I boast,
Until before thee plac'd the dish to please thee most:
The kitchen-service shall with me co-operate,
The far to bring anear, seasons to ante-date.
Thee charm not viands rare, wherewith thy board is grac'd;
Simple and racy food, thereto inclines thy taste.

EMPEROR.

(To the Fourth.) Since festivals perforce alone engage us now,
To Cupbearer transform'd, young hero, straight be thou!
Arch-Cupbearer, henceforth the duty shall be thine
To see our cellars stor'd richly with generous wine.
Be temperate thyself; be not misled through mirth,
Howe'er allurements tempt, to which the hour gives birth!

ARCH-CUPBEARER.

Your highness, youth itself, if trust therein be shown,
Stands, ere one looks around, to man's full stature grown.
Myself I too transport to that great festive day:
The imperial sideboard then right nobly I'll array;
Of gold and silver there shall splendid vessels shine,
Yet first the loveliest cup will I select as thine—

A clear Venetian glass, wherein joy lurking waits:

The flavor it improves, yet ne'er inebriates.



In such a wondrous cup too great our trust may be;

Thy moderation, Sire, still more protecteth thee.

EMPEROR.

What, in this solemn hour, I have conferr'd on you,

Receive with confidence, from valid lips and true;

Great is the Emperor's word, and every gift makes sure,

For confirmation yet there needs his signature.

This duty to prepare, and royal writ thereto,

The fitting man appears, at the fit moment too.

[*The Archbishop and Arch-Chancellor enter.*

If to the keystone trusts its weight the vaulted arch,

Securely built it then defies time's onward march.

Thou seest four princes here. E'en now we have decided

How governance shall be for house and court provided.

What the whole realm concerns, be that with weight and power,

To you, ye princes five, entrusted from this hour.

In landed wealth ye shall all others far excel;

Hence, with their heritage who from our standard fell,

The bounds of your possessions I forthwith expand:
Ye faithful ones, be yours full many a goodly land,
Also the lofty right, should time the occasion send,
Through purchase, chance, exchange, their limits to extend;
To practise undisturb'd, this is secur'd to you,
What sovereign rights soe'er, as landlords, are your due;
As judges, be it yours to speak the final doom,—
From your high stations none will to appeal presume.
Then tribute, tax, and tithe, safe-conduct, toll, and fee,
Mine-salt, and coinage-dues, your property shall be.
That thus my gratitude may validly be shown,
In rank I you have rais'd next the Imperial throne.

ARCHBISHOP.

In name of all be given our deepest thanks to thee!
Us mak'st thou strong and firm,—thy power shall strengthen'd be.

EMPEROR.

Yet higher dignities I to you five will give.
Still live I for my realm, and still rejoice to live;
Nathless of my great sires the chain withdraws my gaze,
From keen endeavor back, the coming doom to face:
I also, in *His* time, must bid my friends adieu;
The emperor to name shall then belong to you.
On the high altar rais'd, crown ye his sacred brow,
And peacefully shall end, what stormful was e'en now!

ARCH-CHANCELLOR.

With pride in their deep breasts, with lowly gestures, stand
Princes, before thee bow'd, the foremost of the land.
So long as in our veins the faithful current plays,
The body we, which still thy lightest impulse sways!

EMPEROR.

And, to conclude, what we to-day have done, made sure,
Shall be henceforth for aye, by writ and signature;
Ye hold indeed as lords, possession, full and free,
Yet on these terms—that it partition'd ne'er shall be,
And howsoe'er increas'd, what ye from us receive
Ye to your eldest son shall undivided leave.

ARCH-CHANCELLOR.

For our weal and the realm's, to parchment will I straight,
With joyful mind, confide a statute of such weight;
The Chancery shall seal and document procure,
Then shall confirm it, Sire, thy sacred signature!

EMPEROR.

And so I you dismiss, that on this glorious day,
In solemn conclave met, deliberate ye may.

[The temporal lords retire. The Archbishop remains, and speaks in a pathetic tone.]

ARCHBISHOP.

The chancellor is gone; the bishop doth remain,
His father's heart for thee trembles with anxious pain:
Him a deep warning soul impels thine ear to seek.

EMPEROR.

What in this joyous hour is thy misgiving? Speak!

ARCHBISHOP.

With what a bitter pang find I, in such an hour,
Thy consecrated head in league with Satan's power!
Confirm'd upon thy throne, as it appeareth,—true;
But in despite of God, and Father Pontiff too!
Hearing of this, forthwith, will he pronounce thy doom;
With sacred fire thy realm, accurs'd, will he consume;
For he forgets not how, the day when thou wast crown'd,
E'en at that hour supreme, the sorcerer hast unbound;
To Christendom's foul shame, on that accursed head,
From out thy diadem, mercy's first beam was shed.
Now smite upon thy breast, and from thy guilty prey
Back to our holy church some little share repay.
The broad hill-space whereon thy tent did lately stand,
Where, thee to aid, themselves did evil spirits band,
There, where the Prince of Lies did late thine ears abuse,
Taught piously, that spot devote to pious use,—
With mountains and thick wood, so far as they extend,
With verdant slopes which yield rich pasture, without end;
Clear lakes, alive with fish, unnumber'd brooks that flow,
With swift and snakelike course, down to the vale below;
Then the broad vale itself, with meadow, hollow, plain—
Let thy repentance speak, and mercy thou'lt obtain!

EMPEROR.

For this, my grievous fault, terror so fills my mind,
By thine own measure be the bounds by thee assign'd.

ARCHBISHOP.

First shall the space defil'd, by sin so desecrated,
To service of the Highest straight be consecrated!
Swift, to the spirit-eye, the massive walls aspire,
The morning sun's first beam already gilds the choir;
Crosswise the structure grows, the nave, in length and height
Expanding, straightway fills believers with delight.
Through the wide portal now, they throng with ardent zeal,
While over hill and vale resounds the bells' first peal—
From lofty towers they ring, which heavenward strive amain,
The penitent draws near, there to be born again.
On consecration day—that day soon may we see!—
The highest ornament shall then thy presence be.

EMPEROR.

And be my pious wish, through work so great made known,
The Lord our God to praise, and for my sin atone!
Enough! Already rais'd my spirit now I feel.

ARCHBISHOP.

As chancellor, I claim both covenant and seal.

EMPEROR.

A deed which to the church shall all these rights secure—
Bring it, I will with joy affix my signature.

ARCHBISHOP.

(Takes leave, but turns back again at the door.) Thou, as the work proceeds, to it must dedicate

The land's collective dues—tribute, and tithe, and rate—

Forever. Ample wealth for due support we need,

And careful governance still heavy costs doth breed.

For swift erection too, on spot so waste, some gold,

From thy rich plunder, thou from us wilt not withhold.

Moreover, we shall want—this I cannot disguise—

Timber, and lime, and slate, and such far-off supplies;

Taught from the pulpit, these the willing people bears:

The church still blesses him, who for her service cares.

[Exit.

EMPEROR.

Heavy and sore the sin whose burden I bewail!

Those odious sorcerers have wrought me grievous bale!

ARCHBISHOP.

(Returning once more with profound obeisance.) Pardon, O Sire, thou hast to that unworthy man

The realm's seashore convey'd; yet him shall smite the ban,

Unless with tithe and dues, with rent and taxes, thou,

Repentant, also there our holy church endow.

EMPEROR.

(With ill-humor.) The land is not yet there; broad in the sea it lies.

ARCHBISHOP.

For him the time will come who potent is and wise.

For us still may your word in its full powers remain.

[*Exit.*

EMPEROR.

(*Alone.*) So may I sign away the realm o'er which I reign!

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ACT V.



Open Country.

WANDERER.

Yes, 'tis they, their branches rearing,
Hoary lindens, strong in age;—
There I find them, reappearing,
After my long pilgrimage!
'Tis the very spot;—how gladly
Yonder hut once more I see,
By the billows raging madly,
Cast ashore, which shelter'd me!
My old hosts, I fain would greet them,
Helpful they, an honest pair;
May I hope to-day to meet them?
Even then they aged were.
Worthy folk, in God believing!
Shall I knock? or raise my voice?
Hail to you if, guest receiving,
In good deeds ye still rejoice!

BAUCIS.

(A very aged woman.)

Stranger dear, beware of breaking
My dear husband's sweet repose!
Strength for brief and feeble waking
Lengthen'd sleep on age bestows.

WANDERER.

Mother, say then, do I find thee,
To receive my thanks once more,
In my youth who didst so kindly,
With thy spouse, my life restore?
Baucis, to my lips half-dying,

Art thou, who refreshment gave?

[*The husband steps forth.*

Thou Philemon, strength who plying,
Snatch'd my treasure from the wave?
By your flames, so promptly kindl'd,
By your bell's clear silver sound—
That adventure, horror-mingl'd,
Hath a happy issue found.
Forward let me step, and gazing
Forth upon the boundless main,
Kneel, and thankful prayers upraising,
Ease of my full heart the strain!

[*He walks forward upon the downs.*

PHILEMON.

(*To Baucis.*)

Haste to spread the table, under
The green leafage of our trees.
Let him run, struck dumb with wonder,
Scarce he'll credit what he sees.

[*He follows the wanderer. Standing beside him.*

Where the billows did maltreat you,
Wave on wave in fury roll'd,
There a garden now doth greet you,
Fair as Paradise of old.
Grown more aged, as when stronger,
I could render aid no more;
And, as wan'd my strength, no longer
Roll'd the sea upon the shore:
Prudent lords, bold serfs directing,
It with trench and dyke restrain'd;
Ocean's rights no more respecting.
Lords they were, where he had reign'd.
See, green meadows far extending;—
Garden, village, woodland, plain.
But return we, homeward wending,
For the sun begins to wane.
In the distance sails are gliding,
Nightly they to port repair;
Bird-like, in their nests confiding,
For a haven waits them there.

Far away mine eye discerneth
First the blue fringe of the main;
Right and left, where'er it turneth
Spreads the thickly-peopl'd plain.

In the Garden. The Three at Table.

BAUCIS.

(To the stranger.) Art thou dumb? No morsel raising

To thy famish'd lips?

PHILEMON.

I trow,

He of wonders so amazing

Fain would hear; inform him thou.

BAUCIS.

There was wrought a wonder truly,

Yet no rest it leaves to me;

Naught in the affair was duly

Done, as honest things should be!

PHILEMON.

Who as sinful can pronounce it?

'Twas the emperor gave the shore;—

Did the trumpet not announce it

As the herald pass'd our door?

Footing firm they first have planted

Near these downs. Tents, huts, appear'd;

O'er the green, the eye, enchanted,

Saw ere long a palace rear'd.

BAUCIS.

Shovel, axe, no labor sparing,
Vainly pli'd the men by day;
Where the fires at night shone flaring,
Stood a dam, in morning's ray.
Still from human victims bleeding,
Wailing sounds were nightly borne;
Seaward sped the flames, receding;
A canal appear'd at morn!
Godless is he, naught respecting;
Covets he our grove, our cot;
Though our neighbor, us subjecting,
Him to serve will be our lot.

PHILEMON.

Yet he bids, our claims adjusting,
Homestead fair in his new land.

BAUCIS.

Earth, from water sav'd, mistrusting,
On thine own height take thy stand.

PHILEMON.

Let us, to the chapel wending,
Watch the sun's last rays subside;
Let us ring, and prayerful bending,
In our fathers' God confide!
Palace.

[Spacious ornamental garden; broad, straight canal. Faustin extreme old age, walking about, meditating.

LYNCEUS, *THE WARDER.*

(Through a speaking-trumpet.) The sun sinks down, the ships belated

Rejoicing to the haven steer.

A stately galley, deeply freighted,

On the canal, now draweth near;

Her chequer'd flag the breeze caresses,

The masts unbending bear the sails;

Thee now the grateful seaman blesses,

Thee at this moment Fortune hails.

[The bell rings on the downs.

FAUST.

(Starting.) Accursed bell! Its clamor sending,

Like spiteful shot it wounds mine ear!

Before me lies my realm unending;

Vexation dogs me in the rear;

For I, these envious chimes still hearing,

Must at my narrow bounds repine;

The linden grove, brown hut thence peering,

The moldering church, these are not mine.

Refreshment seek I, there repairing?

Another's shadow chills my heart,

A thorn, nor foot nor vision sparing,—

O far from hence could I depart!

WARDER.

(As above.) How, wafted by the evening gales,

Blithely the painted galley sails;

On its swift course, how richly stor'd!

Chest, coffer, sack, are heap'd aboard.

A Splendid Galley.

Richly and brilliantly laden with the produce of foreign climes.

Mephistopheles. The Three Mighty Comrades.

CHORUS.

Here do we land,
Here are we now.
Hail to our lord;
Our patron, thou!

[They disembark. The goods are taken ashore.] Mephis. So have we prov'd our worth—content

If we our patron's praises earn:

With but two ships abroad we went,

With twenty we to port return.

By our rich lading all may see

The great successes we have wrought.

Free ocean makes the spirit free:

There claims compunction ne'er a thought!

A rapid grip there needs alone;

A fish, a ship, on both we seize.

Of three if we the lordship own,

Straightway we hook a fourth with ease,

Then is the fifth in sorry plight—

Who hath the power, has still the right;

The *What* is ask'd for, not the *How*.

Else know I not the seaman's art:

War, commerce, piracy, I trow,

A trinity, we may not part.

THE THREE MIGHTY COMRADES.

No thank and hail;
No hail and thank!
As were our cargo
Vile and rank!
Disgust upon
His face one sees:
The kingly wealth
Doth him displease!

MEPHIS.

Expect ye now
No further pay;
For ye your share
Have ta'en away.

THE THREE MIGHTY COMRADES.

To pass the time,
As was but fair;
We all expect
An equal share.

MEPHIS.

First range in order,
Hall on hall,
These wares so costly,
One and all!
And when he steps
The prize to view,
And reckons all
With judgment true,
He'll be no niggard;
As is meet,
Feast after feast

He'll give the fleet.
The gay birds come with morning tide;
Myself for them can best provide.

[The cargo is removed.]

MEPHIS.

(To Faust.) With gloomy look, with earnest brow

Thy fortune high receivest thou.

Thy lofty wisdom has been crown'd;

Their limits shore and sea have found;

Forth from the shore, in swift career,

O'er the glad waves, thy vessels steer;

Speak only from thy pride of place,

Thine arm the whole world doth embrace.

Here it began; on this spot stood

The first rude cabin form'd of wood;

A little ditch was sunk of yore

Where plashes now the busy oar.

Thy lofty thought, thy people's hand,

Have won the prize from sea and land.

From here too—

FAUST.

That accursed here!

It weighs upon me! Lend thine ear;—

To thine experience I must tell,

With thrust on thrust, what wounds my heart;

To bear it is impossible—

Nor can I, without shame, impart:

The old folk there above must yield;

Would that my seat those lindens were;

Those few trees not mine own, that field,

Possession of the world impair.

There I, wide view o'er all to take,

From bough to bough would scaffolds raise;

Would, for the prospect, vistas make,

On all that I have done to gaze;

To see at once before me brought

The masterwork of human thought,

Where wisdom hath achiev'd the plan,

And won broad dwelling-place for man.—

Thus are we tortur'd;—in our weal,

That which we lack, we sorely feel!

The chime, the scent of linden bloom,

Surround me like a vaulted tomb.

The will that nothing could withstand,

Is broken here upon the sand:

How from the vexing thought be safe?

The bell is pealing, and I chafe!

MEPHIS.

Such spiteful chance, 'tis natural,

Must thy existence fill with gall.

Who doubts it! To each noble ear,

This clanging odious must appear;
This cursed ding-dong, booming loud,
The cheerful evening sky doth shroud;
With each event of life it blends,
From birth to burial it attends,
Until this mortal life doth seem,
Twixt ding and dong, a vanish'd dream!

FAUST.

Resistance, stubborn selfishness,
Can trouble lordliest success,
Till, in deep angry pain one must
Grow tired at last of being first!

MEPHIS.

Why let thyself be troubl'd here?
Is colonizing not thy sphere?

FAUST.

Then go, to move them be thy care!
Thou knowest well the homestead fair,
I've chosen for the aged pair—

MEPHIS.

We'll bear them off, and on new ground
Set them, ere one can look around.
The violence outliv'd and past,
Shall a fair home atone at last.

[He whistles shrilly.]

The *Threeenter*.

MEPHIS.

Come! straight fulfil the lord's behest;

The fleet to-morrow he will feast.

THE THREE.

The old lord us did ill requite;

A sumptuous feast is ours by right.

MEPHIS.

(To the spectators.) What happ'd of old, here happens too:

Still Naboth's vineyard meets the view.

[1 *Kings* xvi.

Deep Night.

LYNCEUS, *THE WARDER*.

(On the watch-tower, singing.) Keen vision my birth-dower,

I'm plac'd on this height,
Still sworn to the watch-tower,
The world's my delight.
I gaze on the distant,
I look on the near,
On moon and on planet,
On wood and the deer:
The beauty eternal
In all things I see;
And pleas'd with myself
All bring pleasure to me.
Glad eyes, look around ye
And gaze, for whate'er
The sight they encounter,
It still hath been fair!

[*Pause*.

Not alone for pleasure-taking
Am I planted thus on high;

What dire vision, horror-waking,
From yon dark world scares mine eye!
Fiery sparkles see I gleaming
Through the lindens' twofold night;
By the breezes fann'd, their beaming
Gloweth now with fiercer light!
Ah! the peaceful hut is burning;
Stood its moss-grown walls for years;
They for speedy help are yearning—
And no rescue, none appears!
Ah, the aged folk, so kindly,
Once so careful of the fire,
Now, to smoke a prey, they blindly
Perish, oh, misfortune dire!
'Mid red flames, the vision dazing,
Stands the moss-hut, black and bare;
From the hell, so fiercely blazing,
Could we save the honest pair!
Lightning-like the fire advances,
'Mid the foliage, 'mid the branches;
Wither'd boughs,—they flicker, burning,
Swiftly glow, then fall;—ah, me!
Must mine eyes, this woe discerning,
Must they so far-sighted be!
Down the lowly chapel crashes
'Neath the branches' fall and weight;
Winding now, the pointed flashes
To the summit climb elate.
Roots and trunks the flames have blighted;
Hollow, purple-red, they glow!

[*Long pause. Song.*

Gone, what once the eye delighted,
With the ages long ago!

FAUST.

(*On the balcony, towards the downs.*)

From above what plaintive whimper?

Word and tone are here too late!

Wails my warder; me, in spirit

Grieves this deed precipitate!

Though in ruin unexpected
Charr'd now lie the lindens old,
Soon a height will be erected,
Whence the boundless to behold.
I the home shall see, enfolding
In its walls, that ancient pair,
Who, my gracious care beholding,
Shall their lives end joyful there.

MEPHIS.*AND*THE THREE.

(Below.)

Hither we come full speed. We crave
Your pardon! Things have not gone right!
Full many a knock and kick we gave,
They open'd not, in our despite;
Then rattl'd we and kick'd the more,
And prostrate lay the rotten door;
We call'd aloud with threat severe,
Yet sooth we found no listening ear.
And as in such case still befalls,
They heard not, would not hear our calls;
Forthwith thy mandate we obey'd,
And straight for thee a clearance made.
The pair—their sufferings were light,
Fainting they sank, and died of fright.
A stranger, harbor'd there, made show

Of force, full soon was he laid low;
In the brief space of this wild fray,
From coals, that strewn around us lay,
The straw caught fire; 'tis blazing free,
As funeral death-pyre for the three.



FAUST.

To my commandments deaf were ye!
Exchange I wish'd, not robbery.
For this your wild and ruthless part;—
I curse it! Share it and depart!

CHORUS.

The ancient saw still rings to-day:
Force with a willing mind obey;
If boldly thou canst stand the test,
Stake house, court, life, and all the rest!

[Exeunt.]

FAUST.

The stars their glance and radiance veil;
Smoulders the sinking fire, a gale
Fans it with moisture-laden wings,
Vapor to me and smoke it brings.

Rash mandate—rashly too obey'd!—

What hither sweeps like spectral shade?

Midnight.*Four gray women enter.*

FIRST.

My name, it is Want.

SECOND.

And mine, it is Blame.

THIRD.

My name, it is Care.

FOURTH.

Need, that is my name.

THREE.

(Together.) The door is fastbolted, we cannot get in;

The owner is wealthy, we may not within.

WANT.

There fade I to shadow.

BLAME.

There cease I to be.

NEED.

His visage the pamper'd still turneth from me.

CARE.

Ye sisters, ye cannot, ye dare not go in;

But Care through the keyhole an entrance may win.

[Care disappears.]

WANT.

Sisters, gray sisters, away let us glide!

BLAME.

I bind myself to thee, quite close to thy side.

NEED.

And Need at your heels doth with yours blend her breath.*

THE THREE.

Fast gather the clouds, they eclipse star on star.

Behind there, behind, from afar, from afar,

There comes he, our brother, there cometh he—Death.

FAUST.

(In the palace.) Four saw I come, but only three went hence.

Of their discourse I could not catch the sense;

There fell upon mine ear a sound like breath,

Thereon a gloomy rhyme-word follow'd—Death;

Hollow the sound, with spectral horror fraught!

Not yet have I, in sooth, my freedom wrought;

Could I my pathway but from magic free,

And quite unlearn the spells of sorcery,

Stood I, oh, nature, man alone 'fore thee,

Then were it worth the trouble man to be!

Such was I once, ere I in darkness sought,

And curses dire, through words with error fraught,

Upon myself and on the world have brought;

So teems the air with falsehood's juggling brood,

That no one knows how them he may elude!
If but one day shines clear, in reason's light—
In spectral dream envelops us the night;
From the fresh fields, as homeward we advance—
There croaks a bird: what croaks he? some mischance!
Ensnar'd by superstition, soon and late;
As sign and portent, it on us doth wait—
By fear unmann'd, we take our stand alone;
The portal creaks, and no one enters,—none.

(Agitated.)

Is some one here?

CARE.

The question prompteth, yes!

FAUST.

What art thou then?

CARE.

Here, once for all, am I.

FAUST.

Withdraw thyself!

CARE.

My proper place is this.

FAUST.

(First angry, then appeased. Aside.) Take heed, and speak no word of sorcery.

CARE.

Though by outward ear unheard,
By my moan the heart is stirr'd;
And in ever-changeful guise,
Cruel force I exercise;
On the shore and on the sea,
Comrade dire hath man in me,
Ever found, though never sought,
Flatter'd, curs'd, so have I wrought.
Hast thou as yet Care never known?

FAUST.

I have but hurried through the world, I own.
I by the hair each pleasure seiz'd;
Relinquish'd what no longer pleas'd,
That which escap'd me I let go,
I've crav'd, accomplish'd, and then crav'd again;
Thus through my life I've storm'd—with might and main,
Grandly, with power, at first; but now, indeed,
It goes more cautiously, with wiser heed.
I know enough of earth, enough of men;
The view beyond is barr'd from mortal ken;
Fool, who would yonder peer with blinking eyes,
And of his fellows dream above the skies!
Firm let him stand, the prospect round him scan,
Not mute the world to the true-hearted man.
Why need he wander through eternity?
What he can grasp, that only knoweth he.
So let him roam adown earth's fleeting day;
If spirits haunt, let him pursue his way;

In joy or torment ever onward stride,
Though every moment still unsatisfied!

CARE.

To him whom I have made mine own
All profitless the world hath grown:
Eternal gloom around him lies;
For him suns neither set nor rise;
With outward senses perfect, whole,
Dwell darkneses within his soul;
Though wealth he owneth, ne'ertheless
He nothing truly can possess.
Weal, woe, become mere phantasy;
He hungers 'mid satiety;
Be it joy, or be it sorrow,
He postpones it till the morrow;
Of the future thinking ever,
Prompt for present action never.

FAUST.

Forbear! Thou shalt not come near me!
I will not hear such folly. Hence!
Avaunt! This evil litany
The wisest even might bereave of sense.

CARE.

Shall he come or go? He ponders;—
All resolve from him is taken;
On the beaten path he wanders,
Groping on, as if forsaken.
Deeper still himself he loses,
Everything his sight abuses,
Both himself and others hating,
Taking breath—and suffocating,
Without life—yet scarcely dying,
Not despairing—not relying.
Rolling on without remission:
Loathsome ought, and sad permission,
Now deliverance, now vexation,
Semi-sleep,—poor recreation,
Nail him to his place and wear him,

And at last for hell prepare him.

FAUST.

Unblessed spectres! Ye mankind have so
Treated a thousand times, their thoughts deranging;
E'en uneventful days to mar ye know,
Into a tangl'd web of torment changing!
'Tis hard, I know, from demons to get free,
The mighty spirit-bond by force untying;
Yet Care, I never will acknowledge thee,
Thy strong increeping, potency defying.

CARE.

Feel it then now; as thou shalt find
When with a curse from thee I've wended:
Through their whole lives are mortals blind—
So be thou, Faust, ere life be ended!

[She breathes on him.]



FAUST.

(Blind.) Deeper and deeper night is round me sinking;
Only within me shines a radiant light.
I haste to realize, in act, my thinking;
The master's word, that only giveth might.

Up, vassals, from your couch! my project bold,
Grandly completed, now let all behold!
Seize ye your tools; your spades, your shovels ply;
The work laid down, accomplish instantly!
Strict rule, swift diligence,—these twain
The richest recompense obtain.
Completion of the greatest work demands
One guiding spirit for a thousand hands.
Great Fore-Court of the Palace.

Torches.

MEPHIS.

(An overseer leading the way.)

This way! this way! Come on! come on!
Ye Lemures, loose of tether,
Of tendon, sinew, and of bone,
Half natures, patch'd together!

LEMURES.

(In chorus.)

At thy behest we're here at hand;
Thy destin'd aim half guessing—
It is that we a spacious land
May win for our possessing.
Sharp-pointed stakes we bring with speed,
Long chains wherewith to measure.
But we've forgotten why indeed
To call us was thy pleasure.

MEPHIS.

No artist-toil we need to-day;
Sufficeth your own measure here:
At his full length the tallest let him lay!

Ye others round him straight the turf uprear;
As for our sires was done of yore,
An oblong square delve ye once more.
Out of the palace to the narrow home—
So at the last the sorry end must come!

LEMURES.

(Digging, with mocking gestures.)

In youth when I did live and love,
Methought, 'twas very sweet!
Where frolic rang and mirth was rife,
Thither still sped my feet.
Now with his crutch hath spiteful age
Dealt me a blow full sore:
I stumbl'd o'er a yawning grave,
Why open stood the door!

FAUST.

(Comes forth from the palace, groping his way by the door-posts.)

How doth the clang of spades delight my soul!
For me my vassals toil, the while
Earth with itself they reconcile,
The waves within their bounds control,
And gird the sea with steadfast zone—

MEPHIS.

(Aside.) And yet for us dost work alone,
While thou for dam and bulwark carest;
Since thus for Neptune thou prepares,
The water-fiend, a mighty fête;
Before thee naught but ruin lies;

The elements are our allies;
Onward destruction strides elate.

FAUST.

Inspector!

MEPHIS.

Here.

FAUST.

As many as you may,
Bring crowds on crowds to labor here;
Them by reward and rigor cheer;
Persuade, entice, give ample pay!
Each day be tidings brought me at what rate
The moat extends which here we excavate.

MEPHIS.

(Half aloud.) They speak, as if to me they gave
Report, not of a moat—but of a grave.*

FAUST.

A marsh along the mountain chain
Infecteth what's already won;
Also the noisome pool to drain—
My last best triumph then were won:
To many millions space I thus should give,
Though not secure, yet free to toil and live;
Green fields and fertile; men, with cattle blent,

Upon the newest earth would dwell content,
Settled forthwith upon the firm-bas'd hill,
Uplifted by a valiant people's skill;
Within, a land like Paradise; outside,
E'en to the brink, roars the impetuous tide,
And as it gnaws, striving to enter there,
All haste, combin'd, the damage to repair.
Yea, to this thought I cling, with virtue rife,
Wisdom's last fruit, profoundly true:
Freedom alone he earns as well as life,
Who day by day must conquer them anew.
So girt by danger, childhood bravely here,
Youth, manhood, age, shall dwell from year to year;
Such busy crowds I fain would see,
Upon free soil stand with a people free;
Then to the moment might I say:
Linger awhile, so fair thou art!
Nor can the traces of my earthly day
Through ages from the world depart!
In the presentiment of such high bliss,
The highest moment I enjoy—'tis this.

[Faust sinks back, the Lemures lay hold of him and lay him upon the ground.]

MEPHIS.

Him could no pleasure sate, no joys appease,
So woo'd he ever changeful phantasies;

The last worst empty moment to retain,
E'en to the last, the sorry wretch was fain.
Me who so stoutly did withstand—
Time conquers,—lies the old man on the sand!
The clock stands still—

CHORUS.

Stands still, no sound is heard;
The index falls—

MEPHIS.

It falls, 'tis finish'd now.

CHORUS.

Yes, it is past!

MEPHIS.

Past, 'tis a stupid word.

Why past?

Past and pure nothingness are one, I trow.

Of what avail creation's ceaseless play?

Created things forthwith to sweep away?

“There, now 'tis past.”—'Tis past, what may it mean?

It is as good as if it ne'er had been,

And yet as if it Being did possess,

Still in a circle it doth ceaseless press:

I should prefer the Eternal—Emptiness.

BURIAL.

LEMUR.

(Solo.) Who hath the house so badly built,

With shovel and with spade?

LEMURES.

(In chorus.) For thee, sad guest, in hempen vest,

'Tis all too deftly made.

LEMUR.

(Solo.) Who furnish'd hath so ill the place?

Chair, table, where are they?

LEMURES.

(In chorus.) Short was the let; there came apace

New claimants, day by day.

MEPHIS.

There lies the body, would the spirit flee,

I'd show him speedily the blood-sign'd scroll—

Yet they've so many methods, woe is me,

To cheat the devil now of many a soul!

On the old way one is not sure;

Upon the new we're not commended;

Else had I done it unattended;

Assistants must I now procure.

In all things we're in evil plight!

Transmitted usage, ancient right—

In these the time for confidence is past.

With the last breath once sped the soul away;

And like the nimblest mouse, I watch'd my prey;
Snap! Lock'd within my claws I held it fast;
Now she delays, nor will the dismal cell,
The loathsome body, leave, though reft of life,
The elements, in ceaseless strife,
Her, in the end, disgracefully expel.
For days and hours I've plagu'd myself ere now;—
Abides the sorry question;—when? where? how?
Old death has lost his power, once swift and strong;
If dead or no? in doubt we tarry long;
On rigid members oft I've lustful gaz'd;
'Twas but a feint, it stirr'd, once more itself uprais'd!

[Fantastic gestures of conjuration.

Come swiftly on! Double your speed; no pause!
Lords of the straight, lords of the crooked horn!
Chips of the ancient block, true devils born,
Hither bring ye forthwith Hell's murky jaws.
Hell, to be sure, full many jaws may claim;
Which gape as rank enjoins, and dignity;
But we however in this final game,
Not so particular henceforth will be.

[The ghastly jaws of Hell open on the left.

Clatter the corner-teeth; the fire-stream whirling,
The vault's abyss doth overflow,
And through the background-smoke upcurling

The town of flame I see in endless glow;
Up to the very teeth the ruddy billow dashes;
The damn'd, salvation hoping, swim amain,
Them in his jaws the huge hyena crashes,
Then they retrace their path of fiery pain.

In nooks fresh horrors lurk to scare the sight,
In narrowest space supremest agony:

Full well ye do, thus sinners to affright,
They hold it but for dream, deceit and lie.

(To the stout devils, with short straight horns.)

Now, paunchy slaves, with cheeks that hotly burn,

On hellish brimstone richly fed, ye glow,

Clumsy and short, with necks that never turn—

For gleam like phosphor-light, watch here below:

It is the soul, Psyche, with soaring wing;

The wings pluck off, so 'tis a sorry worm.

First with my seal I'll stamp the ugly thing,

Then off with it to fiery-whirling storm!

Mark ye the lower regions duly,

Ye bladders! 'tis your duty so!

If there she likes to harbor,—truly,

We cannot accurately know;

She in the navel loves to bide:

Take heed, lest from you thence away she glide!

(To the lean devils, with long crooked horns.)

Buffoons, ye fuglemen, a giant crew,
Grasp in the air, still clutch without repose,
With outstretch'd arms, claws sharp and pliant too,
The fluttering, fleeing creature to enclose!
In her old home she rests uneasily,
Genius aspires, it fain would soar on high.

[Glory from above, on the right.]

THE HEAVENLY HOST.

Follow, ye envoys bless'd,
Leave, brood of Heaven, your rest,
Earthward to steer:
Sinners do ye forgive,
Dust cause ye now to live!
Floating on outspread wing
Through nature's sphere,
Kindliest traces bring
Of your career!

MEPHIS.

Discordant tones I hear, an odious noise
Comes with unwelcome daylight from above:



artist: franz simm.

FAUST. SECOND PART.

angels strewing roses on the body of faust.
A mawkish whimper, fit for girls and boys,
Such as a canting taste doth still approve.
Ye know how we, in hours with curses fraught,
Plann'd the destruction of the human race:
The most atrocious product of our thought
In their devotion finds a fitting place.
They come, the fools, in hypocritic guise!
Full many a soul from us they've snatch'd away—
With our own weapons warring 'gainst us, they
Are devils also, only in disguise.
Here your defeat eternal shame would bring;
On to the grave, and to the margin cling!

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

(Scattering roses.)

Roses, with dazzling sheen,
Balsam outpouring!
Float heaven and earth between,
Sweet life restoring!
Branchlets with plummy wing,
Buds softly opening
Hasten to blow!
Burst into verdure, Spring,
Purple and green!
To him who sleeps below,
Paradise bring!

MEPHIS.

(To the Satans.) Why duck and shrink? Is this hell's wonted way?

Stand firm, and let them scatter to and fro.

Back to his place each fool! Imagine they,

Forsooth, with such a pretty flowery show,
To cover the hot devils, as with snow?
They'll shrink and shrivel where your breathings play.
Blow now, ye Blowers! Hold! not quite so fast!
Pales the whole bevy 'neath your fiery blast.
Not quite so fiercely! Mouth and nostril close!
Your breathing now too strongly blows.
O that ye never the just mean will learn!
That shrivels not alone, 'twill scorch and burn.
Floating they come, with poisonous flames and clear;
Stand firm against them, press together here!—
Force is extinguish'd, courage all is spent;
A strange alluring glow the devils scene.

ANGELS.

Blossoms, with rapture crown'd,
Flames fraught with gladness,
Love they diffuse around,
Banishing sadness,
As the heart may:
Words, blessed truth that tell,
Give, by their potent spell,
Spirits eterne to dwell
In endless day!

MEPHIS.

A curse upon the idiot band!
Upon their heads the Satans stand!
Tail foremost down the hellward path
Plunge round and round the clumsy host.
Enjoy your well-earn'd fiery bath!
But for my part, I'll keep my post.

[Striking aside the hovering roses.]

Off, will-o'-the-wisp! How bright soe'er thy ray,
Captur'd, thou'rt but an odious, pulpy thing;
Why flutterest? Wilt vanish, straight away!—
Like pitch and brimstone to my neck dost cling?

ANGEL.

(Chorus.)

Doth aught thy nature mar?
Cease to endure it;
If 'gainst thy soul it war,
Must ye abjure it;
If to press in it try,
Quell it right valiantly!
'Tis love the loving one
Leadeth on high.

MEPHIS.

I'm all aflame, head, heart and liver burn—
An over-devilish element,
Than hellish fire more sharp by far!
Hence ye so mightily lament,
Unhappy lovers, who, when scorn'd ye are,
After your sweethearts still your necks must turn.
Thus too with me, what draws my head aside?
Them have I not to deadly war defi'd?
My fiercest hate their aspect wak'd of yore;
Hath something alien pierc'd me through and through?
These gracious youths, them am I fain to view!—
What now restrains me that I curse no more?
And if befool'd I now should be,

Who may henceforth "the fool" be styl'd?—

The rascals, whom I hate, for me

Too lovely are, I fairly am beguil'd!

Sweet children, tell me, to the race

Belong ye not of Lucifer?

So fair ye seem, you I would fain embrace!

At the right moment ye appear;

So pleasant 'tis, so natural, as though

I you had seen a thousand times before,

So lustfully alluring now ye show.

With every look your beauty charms me more!

O nearer come! O grant me but one glance!

ANGEL.

We come, why dost thou shrink as we advance?

So, if thou canst, abide; go not away.

[The angels hover round, and occupy the entire space.]

MEPHIS.

(Who is pressed into the proscenium.) As spirits damn'd we're blam'd by you—

Yourselves are yet the sorcerers true,

For man and maid ye lead astray.—

A curs'd adventure this I trow!

Is this love's element? My frame

In fire is plung'd, I scarcely now

Feel on my neck the scorching flame!—

Ye hover to and fro; with pinions furl'd

Float downward, after fashion of the world
Move your sweet limbs; in sooth that earnest style
Becomes you; yet, for once, I fain would see you smile;
That were for me a rapture unsurpass'd,—
A glance, I mean, like that which lovers cast:
A slight turn of the mouth, so is it done.—
Thee, tall and stately youth, most dearly thee I prize;
But ill beseemeth thee that priestly guise,
Give me one loving glance, I crave but one!
Ye might, with decency, less cloth'd appear,
O'er modest in such lengthen'd drapery.—
They wheel around, to see them in the rear!
All too enticing are the rogues for me!

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Love now with lustrous ray
Thy fires reveal!
Those to remorse a prey
Truth's power can heal;
No longer evils thrall,
Joyful and blest,
One with the All-in-all,
Henceforth they rest!

MEPHIS.

(Collecting himself.) How is't with me? The man entire, like Job,
Must loathe himself, cleft through with boil on boil,—
Yet triumphs too, after the first recoil,
If he his inward nature fairly probe,
And in himself confides and in his kin:

Sav'd are the noble devil parts within.

This love attack he casts upon the skin,—



Burnt out already are the cursed flames,

And, one and all, I curse you, as the occasion claims!

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Whom ye with hallow'd glow,
Pure fires, o'erbrood,
Bless'd in love's overflow,
Lives with the good.
Singing with voices clear,
Soar from beneath;
Pure is the atmosphere,
Breathe, spirit, breathe!

[They rise, bearing with them the immortal part of Faust.]

MEPHIS.

(Looking around.) How is it? Whither are they gone?

Me have ye cozen'd, young things though ye be!

They with their booty now are heavenward flown.

Therefore they nibbl'd at this grave! From me

A great rare prize they've captur'd: the high soul,

That pledg'd itself to me with written scroll,—

This have they filch'd away, right cunningly!

From whom shall I now seek redress?

Who can secure my well-earn'd right?

In thine old days thou'rt cheated! Yet confess,

Thou hast deserv'd it, art in sorry plight;
Mismanag'd have I in disgraceful sort,
Vast outlay shamefully away have thrown;
The devil's sense, though season'd well, the sport
Of common lust!—a love absurd I own.
And if the shrewd old devil chose
Himself to busy with this childish freak,
Not small the foolishness, the truth to speak,
Which him hath thus o'ermaster'd at the close.
Mountain Defiles, Forest, Rock, Wilderness.

Holy anchorites, dispersed up the hill, stationed among the clefts.

CHORUS *AND* ECHO.

Forests are waving here,
Rocks their huge fronts uprear,
Roots round each other coil,
Stems thickly crowd the soil;
Wave gusheth after wave,
Shelter yields deepest cave;
Lions, in silence round
Tamely that rove,
Honor the hallow'd ground,
Refuge of love.

PATER ECSTATICUS.

(Floating up and down.)

Joy's everlasting fire,
Love's glow of pure desire,
Pang of the seething breast,
Rapture, a hallow'd guest!
Darts, pierce me through and through,
Lances, my flesh subdue,
Clubs, me to atoms dash,
Lightnings, athwart me flash,
That all the worthless may

Pass like a cloud away,
While shineth from afar,
Love's germ, a deathless star.

PATER PROFUNDUS.

(Lower region.)

As the rock-chasm, sheer descending,
On chasm resteth more profound,
As thousand sparkling streamlets blending,
Foam in the torrent's headlong bound;
As soars, the realm of air invading,
The stem, impell'd by inward strain;
So love, almighty, all-pervading,
Doth all things mould, doth all sustain.
A roaring that the heart appalleth
Sounds as if shook the wood-crown'd steep;
Yet, lovely in its plashing, falleth
The wealth of water to the deep,
Refreshment to the valley bearing;
The atmosphere, with poison fraught,
The lightning cleareth, wildly flaring,
Whose deadly flash dire ruin brought—
Love's heralds these, His purpose telling
Who, ever-working, us surrounds.
Come, holy fire, within me dwelling,
Where, tortur'd in the senses' bounds,
Fetters of pain my soul enclosing,

Hold it immur'd in rayless gloom!

O God, my troubl'd thoughts composing,

My needy heart do thou illumine!

PATER SERAPHICUS.

(Middle region.)

Through the pine trees' waving tresses,

What bright cloud floats high and higher?

What it shrouds my spirit guesses!

Soars from earth and youthful choir.

CHORUS OF BLESSED BOYS.

Whither, father, are we hieing?

Tell us, kind one, who are we?

Happy are we, upward flying;

Unto all 'tis bliss to be!

FATHER SERAPHICUS.

Boys, ere soul or sense could waken,

Ye were born at midnight hour;

From your parents straightway taken,

For the angels a sweet dower.

You a loving one embraces,

This ye feel: then hither fare!

But of earth's rude paths no traces,

Blessed ones, your spirits bear.

In the organ now descending

Of my worldly, earth-born, eyes;

Use them, thus thy need befriending—

View the sphere that round you lies:

[He takes them into himself.]

There are trees; there rocks upsoaring;

Headlong there the flood doth leap;

Cleaves the torrent, loudly roaring,

Shorter passage to the deep.

BLESSED BOYS.

(From within.) Grand the scene, but fear awaking:—

Desolate the spot and drear,

Us with dread and horror shaking.

Hold us not, kind father, here!

PATER SERAPHICUS.

Rise to higher spheres, and higher!

Unobserv'd your growth, yet sure,

As God's presence doth inspire

Strength, by laws eternal, pure.

This the spirit's nurture, stealing

Through the ether's depths profound:

Love eternal, self-revealing,

Sheds beatitude around.

CHORUS OF BLESSED BOYS.

(Circling round the highest summit.)

Through ether winging,
Hands now entwine,
Joyfully singing

With feelings divine!
Taught by the Deity,
Trust in His grace;
Whom ye adore shall ye
See face to face!

ANGELS.

(Hovering in the higher atmosphere, bearing the immortal part of Faust.)

Sav'd is this noble soul from ill,
Our spirit-peer. Who ever
Strives forward with unswerving will,—
Him can we aye deliver;
And if with him celestial love
Hath taken part,—to meet him
Come down the angels from above;
With cordial hail they greet him.

THE YOUNGER ANGELS.

Roses, from fair hands descending,
Holy, penitent and pure,
Our high mission gladly ending,
Help'd our conquest to secure,
Making ours this spirit-treasure.
Demons shrank, in sore displeasure,
Devils fled, as we assail'd them,
Hell's accustom'd torture fail'd them,
They by pangs of love were riven;
The old Satan-master even,
Pierced was by sharp annoyance.
Conquer'd have we! shout with joyance!

THE MORE PERFECT ANGELS.

Sad 'tis for us to bear

Spirit earth-encumber'd;
Though of asbest he were,
Yet is he number'd
Not with the pure. For where
Worketh strong spirit-force,
Elements blending,
No angel may divorce
Natures thus tending
Of twain to form but one;
Parts them God's love, alone,
Their union ending.

THE YOUNGER ANGELS.

Mistlike, with movement rife,
Rock-summits veiling,
Near us a spirit-life
Upwards is sailing;
Now grow the vapors clear;
Yonder bless'd boys appear,
In chorus blending;
They from earth's pressure free
Circle united:
Still upward tending,
In the new spring with glee
Bathe they delighted:
Here let him then begin,
Yet fuller life to win,
With these united.

BLESSED BOYS.

Him as a chrysalis
Joyful receive we:
Pledge of angelic bliss
In him achieve we.
Loosen the flakes of earth
That still enfold him!
Great through the heavenly birth,
And fair, now behold him.

DOCTOR MARIANUS.

(In the highest, purest cell.)

Here is the prospect free,
The soul subliming.
Yonder fair forms I see,

Heavenward they're climbing;
In starry wreath is seen,
Lofty and tender,
Midmost the heavenly Queen,
Known by her splendor.

[*Enraptured.*

In thy tent of azure hue,
Queen supremely reigning,
Let me now thy secret view,



Vision high obtaining!
With the holy joy of love,
In man's breast, whatever
Lifts the soul to thee above,
Kind one, foster ever!
All invincible we feel,
If our arm thou claimest;
Suddenly assuag'd our zeal
If our breast thou tamest.
Virgin, pure from taint of earth,
Mother, we adore thee,
With the Godhead one by birth,
Queen, we bow before thee!

Cloudlets are pressing
Gently around her;

Her knee caressing
Cloudlets surround her;—
Penitents are they;
Ether inhaling,
Their sins bewailing.

Passionless and pure, from thee
Hath it not been taken,
That poor frail ones may to thee
Come, with trust unshaken.
In their weakness snatch'd away,
Hard it is to save them;
By their own strength rend who may
Fetters that enslave them!
Glide on slippery ground the feet
Swiftly downward sailing!
Whom befool not glances sweet,
Flattery's breath inhaling!
[*Mater Gloriosas* soars forward.

CHORUS OF FEMALE PENITENTS.

To realms eternal
Upward art soaring;
Peerless, supernal,
Hear our imploring,
Thy grace adoring.

[*St. Luke* vii. 36.

MAGNA PECCATRIX.

By the love, warm tears outpouring,
Laving as with balsam sweet,
Pharisaic sneers ignoring,

Of thy godlike Son the feet;
By the vase, rich odor breathing,
Lavishing its costly store;
By the locks, that gently wreathing,
Dried his holy feet once more—

MULIER SAMARITANA.

(St. John iv.)

By the well, whereto were driven
Abram's flocks in ancient days;
By the cooling draught thence given,
Which the Saviour's thirst allays;
By the fountain, still outending
Thence its waters, far and wide,
Overflowing, never-ending,
Through all worlds it pours its tide—

MARIA ÆGYPTIACA.

(Acta Sanctorum.)

By the hallow'd grave, whose portal
Clos'd upon the Lord of yore;
By the arm, unseen by mortal,
Back which thrust me from the door;
By my penance, slowly fleeting,
Forty years amid the waste;
By the blessed farewell greeting,
Which upon the sand I trac'd—

THE THREE.

Thou, unto the greatly sinning,
Access who dost not deny,
By sincere repentance winning
Bliss throughout eternity,
So from this good soul, thy blessing,
Who but once itself forgot,
Sin who knew not, while transgressing,
Gracious One, withhold thou not!

UNA PENITENTIUM.

(Formerly named Gretchen, pressing towards her.)

Incline, oh, incline,
All others excelling,
In glory aye dwelling,
Unto my bliss thy glance benign!
The lov'd one, ascending,
His long trouble ending,
Comes back, he is mine!

BLESSED BOYS.

(They approach, hovering in a circle.)

Mighty of limb, he towers
E'en now, above us;
He for this care of ours
Richly will love us.
Dying, ere we could reach
Earth's pain or pleasure;
What he hath learn'd he'll teach
In ample measure.

A PENITENT.

(Formerly named Gretchen.)

Encircl'd by the choirs of heaven,

Scarcely himself the stranger knows;
Scarce feels the existence newly given,
So like the heavenly host he grows.
See, how he every band hath riven!
From earth's old vesture freed at length,
Now cloth'd upon by garb of heaven,
Shines forth his pristine youthful strength,
To guide him, be it given to me;
Still dazzles him the new-born day.

MATER GLORIOSA.

Ascend, thine influence feeleth he,
He'll follow on thine upward way.

DOCTOR MARIANUS.

(Adoring, prostrate on his face.)

Penitents, her Saviour-glance
Gratefully beholding
To beatitude advance,
Still new powers unfolding!
Thine each better thought shall be,
To thy service given!
Holy Virgin, gracious be,
Mother, Queen of Heaven!

CHORUS MYSTICUS.

All of mere transient date
As symbol showeth;
Here, the inadequate
To fulness groweth;
Here the ineffable
Wrought is in love;
The ever-womanly
Draws us above.

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Egmont

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARGARET OF PARMA, *daughter of Charles V., and Regent of the Netherlands.*

COUNT EGMONT, *Prince of Gaure.*

WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

THE DUKE OF ALVA.

FERDINAND, *his natural Son.*

MACHIAVEL, *in the service of the Regent.*

RICHARD, *Egmont's Private Secretary.*

SILVA, }
GOMEZ, } *in the service of Alva.*

CLARA, *the Beloved of Egmont.*

Her MOTHER.

BRACKENBURG, *a Citizen's Son.*

SOEST, *a Shopkeeper,* }

JETTER, *a Tailor,* }
A CARPENTER, } *Citizens of Brussets.*

A SOAPBOILER, }

BUYCK, *a Hollander,* *a Soldier under Egmont.*

RUYSUM, *a Frieslander, an invalid Soldier, and deaf.*

VANSEN, *a Clerk.*

People, Attendants, Guards, etc.

The Scene is laid in Brussels.



Fr. Pecht del.

published by george barrie

[Editor: illegible word]

Clara.

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ACT I.



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SCENE I.—

Soldiers And Citizens, With Cross-bows.

Jetter(*steps forward, and bends his cross-bow*). Soest, Buyck, Ruysum.

SOEST.

Come, shoot away, and have done with it! You won't beat me! Three black rings, you never made such a shot in all your life. And so I'm master for this year.

JETTER.

Master and king to boot; who envies you? You'll have to pay double reckoning; 'tis only fair you should pay for your dexterity.

BUYCK.

Jetter, I'll buy your shot, share the prize, and treat the company. I have already been here so long, and am a debtor for so many civilities. If I miss, then it shall be as if you had shot.

SOEST.

I ought to have a voice, for in fact I am the loser. No matter! Come, Buyck, shoot away.

BUYCK.

(*Shoots.*) Now, corporal, look out!—One! two! three! four!

SOEST.

Four rings! So be it!

ALL.

Hurrah! Long live the king! Hurrah! hurrah!

BUYCK.

Thanks, sirs, master even were too much! Thanks for the honor.

JETTER.

You have no one to thank but yourself.

RUYSUM.

Let me tell you!—

SOEST.

How now, graybeard?

RUYSUM.

Let me tell you!—He shoots like his master, he shoots like Egmont.

BUYCK.

Compared with him I am only a bungler. He aims with the rifle as no one else does. Not only when he's lucky or in the vein; no! he levels, and the bull's-eye is pierced. I have learned from him. He were indeed a blockhead who could serve under him and learn nothing!—But, sirs, let us not forget! A king maintains his followers; and so, wine here, at the king's charge!

JETTER.

We have agreed among ourselves that each—

BUYCK.

I am a foreigner and a king, and care not a jot for your laws and customs.

JETTER.

Why, you are worse than the Spaniard, who has not yet ventured to meddle with them.

RUYSUM.

What does he say?

SOEST.

(*Loud to Ruysum.*) He wants to treat us; he will not hear of our clubbing together, the king paying only a double share.

RUYSUM.

Let him! under protest, however! 'Tis his master's fashion, too, to be munificent, and to let the money flow in a good cause.

[*Wine is brought.*

ALL.

Here's to his Majesty! Hurrah!

JETTER.

(*To Buyck.*) That means your Majesty, of course.

BUYCK.

My hearty thanks, if it be so.

SOEST.

Assuredly! A Netherlander does not find it easy to drink the health of his Spanish majesty from his heart.

RUYSUM.

Who?

SOEST.

(*Aloud.*) Philip the Second, King of Spain.

RUYSUM.

Our most gracious king and master! Long life to him.

SOEST.

Did you not like his father, Charles the Fifth, better?

RUYSUM.

God bless him! He was a king indeed! His hand reached over the whole earth, and he was all in all. Yet, when he met you, he'd greet you just as one neighbor greets another,—and if you were frightened, he knew so well how to put you at your ease—ay, you understand me—he walked out, rode out, just as it came into his head,

with very few followers. We all wept when he resigned the government here to his son. You understand me—he is another sort of man, he's more majestic.

JETTER.

When he was here, he never appeared in public, except in pomp and royal state. He speaks little, they say.

SOEST.

He is no king for us Netherlanders. Our princes must be joyous and free like ourselves, must live and let live. We will neither be despised nor oppressed, good-natured fools though we be.

JETTER.

The king, methinks, were a gracious sovereign enough, if he had only better counsellors.

SOEST.

No, no! He has no affection for us Netherlanders; he has no heart for the people; he loves us not; how then can we love him? Why is everybody so fond of Count Egmont? Why are we all so devoted to him? Why, because one can read in his face that he loves us; because joyousness, open-heartedness and good-nature speak in his eyes; because he possesses nothing that he does not share with him who needs it, ay, and with him who needs it not. Long live Count Egmont! Buyck, it is for you to give the first toast; give us your master's health.

BUYCK.

With all my heart; here's to Count Egmont! Hurrah!

RUYSUM.

Conqueror of St. Quintin.

BUYCK.

The hero of Gravelines.

ALL.

Hurrah!

RUYSUM.

St. Quintin was my last battle. I was hardly able to crawl along, and could with difficulty carry my heavy rifle. I managed, notwithstanding, to singe the skin of the French once more, and, as a parting gift, received a grazing shot in my right leg.

BUYCK.

Gravelines! Ha, my friends, we had sharp work of it there! The victory was all our own. Did not those French dogs carry fire and desolation into the very heart of Flanders? We gave it them, however! The old hard-fisted veterans held out bravely for a while, but we pushed on, fired away, and laid about us, till they made wry faces, and their lines gave way. Then Egmont's horse was shot under him; and for a long time we fought pell-mell, man to man, horse to horse, troop to troop, on the broad, flat, sea-sand. Suddenly, as if from heaven, down came the cannon-shot from the mouth of the river, bang, bang, right into the midst of the French. These were English, who, under Admiral Malin, happened to be sailing past from Dunkirk. They did not help us much, 'tis true; they could only approach with their smallest vessels, and that not near enough;—besides, their shot fell sometimes among our troops. It did some good, however! It broke the French lines, and raised our courage. Away it went. Helter-skelter! topsy-turvy! all struck dead, or forced into the water; the fellows were drowned the moment they tasted the water, while we Hollanders dashed in after them. Being amphibious, we were as much in our element as frogs, and hacked away at the enemy, and shot them down as if they had been ducks. The few who struggled through were struck dead in their flight by the peasant women, armed with hoes and pitchforks. His Gallic majesty was compelled at once to hold out his paw and make peace. And that peace you owe to us, to the great Egmont.

ALL.

Hurrah for the great Egmont! Hurrah! hurrah!

JETTER.

Had they but appointed him Regent, instead of Margaret of Parma!

SOEST.

Not so! Truth is truth! I'll not hear Margaret abused. Now it is my turn. Long live our gracious lady!

ALL.

Long life to her!

SOEST.

Truly, there are excellent women in that family. Long live the Regent!

JETTER.

Prudent is she, and moderate in all she does; if she would only not hold so fast and stiffly with the priests. It is partly her fault, too, that we have the fourteen new mitres in the land. Of what use are they, I should like to know? Why, that foreigners may be shoved into the good benefices, where formerly abbots were chosen out of the chapters! And we're to believe it's for the sake of religion. We know better. Three bishops were enough for us; things went on decently and reputably. Now each must busy himself as if he were needed; and this gives rise every moment to dissensions and ill-will. And the more you agitate the matter, so much the worse it grows.

[*They drink.*



SOEST.

But it was the will of the king; she cannot alter it, one way or another.

JETTER.

Then we may not even sing the new psalms; but ribald songs, as many as we please. And why? There is heresy in them, they say, and Heaven knows what. I have sung some of them, however; they are new, to be sure, but I see no harm in them.

BUYCK.

Ask their leave, forsooth! In our province we sing just what we please. That's because Count Egmont is our stadtholder, who does not trouble himself about such matters. In Ghent, Ypres, and throughout the whole of Flanders, anybody sings them that chooses. (*Aloud to Ruysum.*) There is nothing more harmless than a spiritual song—is there, father?

RUYSUM.

What, indeed! It is a godly work, and truly edifying.

JETTER.

They say, however, that they are not of the right sort, not of their sort, and, since it is dangerous, we had better leave them alone. The officers of the Inquisition are always lurking and spying about; many an honest fellow has already fallen into their clutches. They had not gone so far as to meddle with conscience! If they will not allow me to do what I like, they might at least let me think and sing as I please.

SOEST.

The Inquisition won't do here. We are not made like the Spaniards, to let our consciences be tyrannized over. The nobles must look to it, and clip its wings betimes.

JETTER.

It is a great bore. Whenever it comes into their worships' heads to break into my house, and I am sitting there at my work, humming a French psalm, thinking nothing about it, neither good nor bad—singing it just because it is in my throat;—forthwith I'm a heretic, and am clapped into prison. Or if I am passing through the country, and stand near a crowd listening to a new preacher, one of those who have come from Germany, instantly I'm called a rebel, and am in danger of losing my head! Have you ever heard one of these preachers?

SOEST.

Brave fellows! Not long ago I heard one of them preach in a field before thousands and thousands of people. A different sort of dish he gave us from that of our humdrum preachers, who, from the pulpit, choke their hearers with scraps of Latin. He spoke from his heart; told us how we had till now been led by the nose, how we had been kept in darkness, and how we might procure more light;—ay, and he proved it all out of the Bible.

JETTER.

There may be something in it. I always said as much, and have often pondered over the matter. It has long been running in my head.

BUYCK.

All the people run after them.

SOEST.

No wonder, since they hear both what is good and what is new.

JETTER.

And what is it all about? Surely they might let every one preach after his own fashion.

BUYCK.

Come, sirs! While you are talking, you forget the wine and the Prince of Orange.

JETTER.

We must not forget him. He's a very wall of defence. In thinking of him, one fancies that if one could only hide behind him, the devil himself could not get at one. Here's to William of Orange! Hurrah!

ALL.

Hurrah! hurrah!

SOEST.

Now, graybeard, let's have your toast.

RUYSUM.

Here's to old soldiers! To all soldiers! War forever!

BUYCK.

Bravo, old fellow. Here's to all soldiers. War forever!

JETTER.

War! war! Do ye know what ye are shouting about? That it should slip glibly from your tongue is natural enough; but what wretched work it is for us, I have not words to tell you. To be stunned the whole year round by the beating of the drum; to hear of nothing except how one troop marched here, and another there; how they came over this height, and halted near that mill; how many were left dead on this field, and how many on that; how they press forward, and how one wins, and another loses, without being able to comprehend what they are fighting about; how a town is taken, how the citizens are put to the sword, and how it fares with the poor women and innocent children. This is a grief and a trouble, and then one thinks every moment, "Here they come! It will be our turn next."

SOEST.

Therefore every citizen must be practised in the use of arms.

JETTER.

Fine talking, indeed, for him who has a wife and children. And yet I would rather hear of soldiers than see them.

BUYCK.

I might take offence at that.

JETTER.

It was not intended for you, countryman. When we got rid of the Spanish garrison, we breathed freely again.

SOEST.

Faith! They pressed on you heavily enough.

JETTER.

Mind your own business.

SOEST.

They came to sharp quarters with you.

JETTER.

Hold your tongue.

SOEST.

They drove him out of kitchen, cellar, chamber—and bed.

[They laugh.]

JETTER.

You are a blockhead.

BUYCK.

Peace, sirs! Must the soldier cry peace? Since you will not hear anything about us, let us have a toast of your own—a citizen's toast.

JETTER.

We're all ready for that! Safety and peace!

SOEST.

Order and freedom!

BUYCK.

Bravo! That will content us all.

[They ring their glasses together, and joyously repeat the words, but in such a manner that each utters a different sound, and it becomes a kind of chant. The old man listens, and at length joins in.]

ALL.

Safety and peace! Order and freedom!

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SCENE II.—

Palace Of The Regent.

Margaret of Parma(*in a hunting dress*).

Courtiers, Pages, Servants.

REGENT.

Put off the hunt, I shall not ride to-day. Bid Machiavel attend me.

[Exeunt all but the Regent.

The thought of these terrible events leaves me no repose! Nothing can amuse, nothing divert my mind. These images, these cares are always before me. The king will now say that these are the natural fruits of my kindness, of my clemency; yet my conscience assures me that I have adopted the wisest, the most prudent course. Ought I sooner to have kindled, and spread abroad these flames with the breath of wrath? My hope was to keep them in, to let them smoulder in their own ashes. Yes, my inward conviction, and my knowledge of the circumstances, justify my conduct in my own eyes; but in what light will it appear to my brother! For, can it be denied that the insolence of these foreign teachers waxes daily more audacious? They have desecrated our sanctuaries, unsettled the dull minds of the people, and conjured up amongst them a spirit of delusion. Impure spirits have mingled among the insurgents, horrible deeds have been perpetrated, which to think of makes one shudder, and of these a circumstantial account must be transmitted instantly to court. Prompt and minute must be my communication, lest rumor outrun my messenger, and the king suspect that some particulars have been purposely withheld. I can see no means, severe or mild, by which to stem the evil. Oh, what are we great ones on the waves of humanity? We think to control them, and are ourselves driven to and fro, hither and thither.



artist: c. häberlin.

EGMONT. ACT I, SCENE II.

margaret of parma and machiavel

Enter Machiavel.

REGENT.

Are the despatches to the king prepared?

MACHIAVEL.

In an hour they will be ready for your signature.

REGENT.

Have you made the report sufficiently circumstantial.

MACHIAVEL.

Full and circumstantial, as the king loves to have it. I relate how the rage of the iconoclasts first broke out at St. Omer; how a furious multitude, with staves, hatchets, hammers, ladders and cords, accompanied by a few armed men, first assailed the chapels, churches and convents, drove out the worshippers, forced the barred gates, threw everything into confusion, tore down the altars, destroyed the statues of the saints, defaced the pictures, and dashed to atoms, and trampled under foot, whatever came in their way that was consecrated and holy. How the crowd increased as it advanced, and how the inhabitants of Ypres opened their gates at its approach. How, with incredible rapidity, they demolished the cathedral, and burned the library of the bishop. How a vast multitude, possessed by the like frenzy, dispersed themselves through Menin, Comines, Verviers, Lille, and nowhere encountered opposition; and how, through almost the whole of Flanders, in a single moment, the monstrous conspiracy declared itself, and was accomplished.

REGENT.

Alas! Your recital rends my heart anew; and the fear that the evil will wax greater and greater, adds to my grief. Tell me your thoughts, Machiavel!

MACHIAVEL.

Pardon me, your Highness, my thoughts will appear to you but as idle fancies; and though you always seem well satisfied with my services, you have seldom felt inclined to follow my advice. How often have you said in jest: "You see too far, Machiavel! You should be an historian; he who acts must provide for the exigence of

the hour." And yet, have I not predicted this terrible history? Have I not foreseen it all?

REGENT.

I too foresee many things, without being able to avert them.

MACHIAVEL.

In one word, then:—you will not be able to suppress the new faith. Let it be recognized, separate its votaries from the true believers, give them churches of their own, include them within the pale of social order, subject them to the restraints of law,—do this, and you will at once tranquillize the insurgents. All other measures will prove abortive, and you will depopulate the country.

REGENT.

Have you forgotten with what aversion the mere suggestion of toleration was rejected by my brother? Know you not, how in every letter he urgently recommends to me the maintenance of the true faith? That he will not hear of tranquillity and order being restored at the expense of religion? Even in the provinces, does he not maintain spies, unknown to us, in order to ascertain who inclines to the new doctrines? Has he not, to our astonishment, named to us this or that individual residing in our very neighborhood, who, without its being known, was obnoxious to the charge of heresy? Does he not enjoin harshness and severity? and am I to be lenient? Am I to recommend for his adoption measures of indulgence and toleration? Should I not thus lose all credit with him, and at once forfeit his confidence?

MACHIAVEL.

I know it. The king commands and puts you in full possession of his intentions. You are to restore tranquillity and peace by measures which cannot fail still more to embitter men's minds, and which must inevitably kindle the flames of war from one extremity of the country to the other. Consider well what you are doing. The principal merchants are infected—nobles, citizens, soldiers. What avails persisting in our opinion, when everything is changing around us? Oh, that some good genius would suggest to Philip that it better becomes a monarch to govern burghers of two different creeds, than to excite them to mutual destruction!

REGENT.

Never let me hear such words again. Full well I know that the policy of statesmen rarely maintains truth and fidelity; that it excludes from the heart candor, charity, toleration. In secular affairs, this is, alas! only too true; but shall we trifle with God as we do with each other? Shall we be indifferent to our established faith, for the sake of which so many have sacrificed their lives? Shall we abandon it to these far-fetched, uncertain, and self-contradicting heresies?

MACHIAVEL.

Think not the worse of me for what I have uttered.

REGENT.

I know you and your fidelity. I know too that a man may be both honest and sagacious, and yet miss the best and nearest way to the salvation of his soul. There are others, Machiavel, men whom I esteem, yet whom I needs must blame.

MACHIAVEL.

To whom do you refer?

REGENT.

I must confess that Egmont caused me to-day deep and heartfelt annoyance.

MACHIAVEL.

How so?

REGENT.

By his accustomed demeanor, his usual indifference and levity. I received the fatal tidings as I was leaving church, attended by him and several others. I did not restrain my anguish, I broke forth into lamentations, loud and deep, and turning to him, exclaimed, "See what is going on in your province! Do you suffer it, Count, you, in whom the king confided so implicitly?"

MACHIAVEL.

And what was his reply?

REGENT.

As if it were a mere trifle, an affair of no moment, he answered: "Were the Netherlanders but satisfied as to their constitution! The rest would soon follow."

MACHIAVEL.

There was, perhaps, more truth than discretion or piety in his words. How can we hope to acquire and to maintain the confidence of the Netherlander, when he sees that we are more interested in appropriating his possessions than in promoting his welfare, temporal or spiritual? Does the number of souls saved by the new bishops exceed that of the fat benefices they have swallowed? And are they not for the most part foreigners? As yet, the office of stadtholder has been held by Netherlanders; but do

not the Spaniards betray their great and irresistible desire to possess themselves of these places? Will not people prefer being governed by their own countrymen, and according to their ancient customs, rather than by foreigners, who, from their first entrance into the land, endeavor to enrich themselves at the general expense, who measure everything by a foreign standard, and who exercise their authority without cordiality or sympathy?

REGENT.

You take part with our opponents?

MACHIAVEL.

Assuredly not in my heart. Would that with my understanding I could be wholly on our side!

REGENT.

If such your disposition, it were better I should resign the regency to them; for both Egmont and Orange entertained great hopes of occupying this position. Then they were adversaries, now they are leagued against me, and have become friends—inseparable friends.

MACHIAVEL.

A dangerous pair.

REGENT.

To speak candidly, I fear Orange.—I fear for Egmont.—Orange meditates some dangerous scheme, his thoughts are far-reaching, he is reserved, appears to accede to everything, never contradicts, and while maintaining the show of reverence, with clear foresight accomplishes his own designs.

MACHIAVEL.

Egmont, on the contrary, advances with a bold step, as if the world were all his own.

REGENT.

He bears his head as proudly as if the hand of majesty were not suspended over him.

MACHIAVEL.

The eyes of all the people are fixed upon him, and he is the idol of their hearts.

REGENT.

He has never assumed the least disguise, and carries himself as if no one had a right to call him to account. He still bears the name of Egmont. Count Egmont is the title by which he loves to hear himself addressed, as though he would fain be reminded that his ancestors were masters of Guelderland. Why does he not assume his proper title,—Prince of Gaure? What object has he in view? Would he again revive extinguished claims?

MACHIAVEL.

I hold him for a faithful servant of the king.

REGENT.

Were he so inclined, what important service could he not render to the government? Whereas now, without benefiting himself, he has caused us unspeakable vexation. His banquets and entertainments have done more to unite the nobles and to knit them together than the most dangerous secret associations. With his toasts, his guests have drunk in a permanent intoxication, a giddy frenzy, that never subsides. How often have his facetious jests stirred up the minds of the populace? and what an excitement was produced among the mob by the new liveries, and the extravagant devices of his followers!



Fr. Pecht del.

published by George Barrie

[Editor: illegible word]

Machiavel.

MACHIAVEL.

I am convinced he had no design.

REGENT.

Be that as it may, it is bad enough. As I said before, he injures us without benefiting himself. He treats as a jest matters of serious import; and, not to appear negligent and remiss, we are forced to treat seriously what he intended as a jest. Thus one urges on the other; and what we are endeavoring to avert is actually brought to pass. He is more dangerous than the acknowledged head of a conspiracy; and I am much mistaken if it is not all remembered against him at court. I cannot deny that scarcely a day passes in which he does not wound me—deeply wound me.

MACHIAVEL.

He appears to me to act on all occasions according to the dictates of his conscience.

REGENT.

His conscience has a convenient mirror. His demeanor is often offensive. He carries himself as if he felt he were the master here, and were withheld by courtesy alone from making us feel his supremacy; as if he would not exactly drive us out of the country; there'll be no need for that.

MACHIAVEL.

I entreat you, put not too harsh a construction upon his frank and joyous temper, which treats lightly matters of serious moment. You but injure yourself and him.

REGENT.

I interpret nothing. I speak only of inevitable consequences, and I know him. His patent of nobility and the Golden Fleece upon his breast strengthen his confidence, his audacity. Both can protect him against any sudden outbreak of royal displeasure. Consider the matter closely, and he is alone responsible for the whole mischief that has broken out in Flanders. From the first, he connived at the proceedings of the foreign teachers, avoided stringent measures, and perhaps rejoiced in secret that they gave us so much to do. Let me alone; on this occasion I will give utterance to that which weighs upon my heart; I will not shoot my arrow in vain. I know where he is vulnerable. For he is vulnerable.

MACHIAVEL.

Have you summoned the council? Will Orange attend?

REGENT.

I have sent for him to Antwerp. I will lay upon their shoulders the burden of responsibility; they shall either strenuously co-operate with me in quelling the evil, or at once declare themselves rebels. Let the letters be completed without delay, and

bring them for my signature. Then hasten to despatch the trusty Vasca to Madrid; he is faithful and indefatigable; let him use all diligence, that he may not be anticipated by common report, that my brother may receive the intelligence first through him. I will myself speak with him ere he departs.

MACHIAVEL.

Your orders shall be promptly and punctually obeyed.

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SCENE III.—

Citizen's House.

Clara, *her* Mother, Brackenburg.

CLARA.

Will you not hold the yarn for me, Brackenburg?

BRACKENBURG.

I entreat you, excuse me, Clara.

CLARA.

What ails you? Why refuse me this trifling service?

BRACKENBURG.

When I hold the yarn, I stand as it were spell-bound before you, and cannot escape your eyes.

CLARA.

Nonsense! Come and hold!

MOTHER.

(Knitting in her arm-chair.) Give us a song! Brackenburg sings so good a second. You used to be merry once, and I had always something to laugh at.

BRACKENBURG.

Once!

CLARA.

Well, let us sing.

BRACKENBURG.

As you please.

CLARA.

Merrily, then, and sing away!

'Tis a soldier's song, my favorite.

[She winds yarn, and sings with Brackenburg.]

The drum is resounding,
And shrill the fife plays;
My love, for the battle,
His brave troop arrays;
He lifts his lance high,
And the people he sways.
My blood it is boiling!
My heart throbs pit-pat!
Oh, had I a jacket,
With hose and with hat!
How boldly I'd follow,
And march through the gate;
Through all the wide province
I'd follow him straight.
The foe yield, we capture
Or shoot them! Ah, me!
What heart-thrilling rapture
A soldier to be!

[During the song, Brackenburg has frequently looked at Clara; at length his voice falters, his eyes fill with tears, he lets the skein fall and goes to the window. Clara finishes the song alone, her mother motions to her, half displeased, she rises, advances a few steps towards him, turns back, as if irresolute, and again sits down.]

MOTHER.

What is going on in the street, Brackenburg? I hear soldiers marching.

BRACKENBURG.

It is the Regent's bodyguard.

CLARA.

At this hour? What can it mean? *(She rises and joins Brackenburg at the window.)* That is not the daily guard; it is more numerous! almost all the troops! Oh, Brackenburg, go! Learn what it means. It must be something unusual. Go, good Brackenburg, do me this favor.

BRACKENBURG.

I am going! I will return immediately.

[He offers his hand to Clara, and she gives him hers. Exit Brackenburg.]

MOTHER.

Thou sendest him away so soon!

CLARA.

I am curious; and, besides—do not be angry, mother—his presence pains me. I never know how I ought to behave towards him. I have done him a wrong, and it goes to my very heart to see how deeply he feels it. Well, it can't be helped now!

MOTHER.

He is such a true-hearted fellow!

CLARA.

I cannot help it, I must treat him kindly. Often, without a thought, I return the gentle, loving pressure of his hand. I reproach myself that I am deceiving him, that I am nourishing in his heart a vain hope. I am in a sad plight! God knows, I do not willingly deceive him. I do not wish him to hope, yet I cannot let him despair!

MOTHER.

That is not as it should be.

CLARA.

I liked him once, and in my soul I like him still. I could have married him; yet I believe I was never really in love with him.

MOTHER.

Thou would'st always have been happy with him.

CLARA.

I should have been provided for, and have led a quiet life.

MOTHER.

And through thy fault it has all been trifled away.

CLARA.

I am in a strange position. When I think how it has come to pass, I know it, indeed, and I know it not. But I have only to look upon Egmont, and I understand it all; ay, and stranger things would seem natural then. Oh, what a man he is! All the provinces worship him. And in his arms, should I not be the happiest creature in the world?

MOTHER.

And how will it be in the future?

CLARA.

I only ask, does he love me?—does he love me?—as if there were any doubt about it.

MOTHER.

One has nothing but anxiety of heart with one's children. Always care and sorrow, whatever may be the end of it! It cannot come to good! Thou hast made thyself wretched! Thou hast made thy mother wretched too.

CLARA.

(Quietly.) Yet thou didst allow it in the beginning.

MOTHER.

Alas! I was too indulgent; I am always too indulgent.

CLARA.

When Egmont rode by, and I ran to the window, did you chide me then? Did you not come to the window yourself? When he looked up, smiled, nodded and greeted me, was it displeasing to you? Did you not feel yourself honored in your daughter?

MOTHER.

Go on with your reproaches.

CLARA.

(With emotion.) Then, when he passed more frequently, and we felt sure that it was on my account that he came this way, did you not remark it yourself with secret joy? Did you call me away when I stood behind the window-pane and awaited him?

MOTHER.

Could I imagine that it would go so far?

CLARA.

(With faltering voice and repressed tears.) And then, one evening, when, enveloped in his mantle, he surprised us as we sat at our lamp, who busied herself in receiving him, while I remained lost in astonishment, as if fastened to my chair?

MOTHER.

Could I imagine that the prudent Clara would so soon be carried away by this unhappy love? I must now endure that my daughter—

CLARA.

(Bursting into tears.) Mother! How can you? You take pleasure in tormenting me!



MOTHER.

(Weeping.) Ay, weep away! Make me yet more wretched by thy grief. Is it not misery enough that my only daughter is a castaway?

CLARA.

(Rising, and speaking coldly.) A castaway! The beloved of Egmont a castaway!—What princess would not envy the poor Clara a place in his heart? Oh, mother,—my own mother, you were not wont to speak thus! Dear mother, be kind!—Let the people think, let the neighbors whisper what they like—this chamber, this lowly house is a paradise, since Egmont's love dwelt here.

MOTHER.

One cannot help liking him, that is true. He is always so kind, frank and open-hearted.

CLARA.

There is not a drop of false blood in his veins. And then, mother, he is indeed the great Egmont; yet, when he comes to me, how tender he is, how kind! How he tries to conceal from me his rank, his bravery! How anxious he is about me! so entirely the man, the friend, the lover.

MOTHER.

Do you expect him to-day?

CLARA.

Have you not seen how often I go to the window? Have you not noticed how I listen to every noise at the door?—Though I know that he will not come before night, yet, from the time when I rise in the morning, I keep expecting him every moment. Were I but a boy, to follow him always, to the court and everywhere! Could I but carry his colors in the field!—

MOTHER.

You were always such a lively, restless creature—even as a little child, now wild, now thoughtful. Will you not dress yourself a little better?

CLARA.

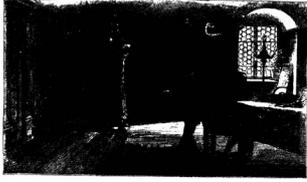
Perhaps, mother, if I want something to do.—Yesterday, some of his people went by, singing songs in his honor. At least his name was in the songs! The rest I could not understand. My heart leaped up into my throat,—I would fain have called them back if I had not felt ashamed.

MOTHER.

Take care! Thy impetuous nature will ruin all. Thou wilt betray thyself before the people; as, not long ago, at thy cousin's, when thou foundest out the woodcut with the description, and didst exclaim, with a cry: "Count Egmont?"—I grew as red as fire.

CLARA.

Could I help crying out? It was the battle of Gravelines, and I found in the picture the letter C, and then looked for it in the description below. There it stood, "Count Egmont, with his horse shot under him." I shuddered, and afterwards I could not help laughing at the woodcut figure of Egmont, as tall as the neighboring tower of Gravelines, and the English ships at the side.—When I remember how I used to conceive of a battle, and what an idea I had, as a girl, of Count Egmont; when I listened to descriptions of him, and of all the other earls and princes;—and think how it is with me now!



Enter Brackenburg.

CLARA.

Well, what is going on?

BRACKENBURG.

Nothing certain is known. It is rumored that an insurrection has lately broken out in Flanders; the Regent is afraid of its spreading here. The castle is strongly garrisoned, the burghers are crowding to the gates, and the streets are thronged with people. I will hasten at once to my old father. (*As if about to go.*)

CLARA.

Shall we see you to-morrow? I must change my dress a little. I am expecting my cousin, and I look too untidy. Come, mother, help me a moment. Take the book, Brackenburg, and bring me such another story.

MOTHER.

Farewell!

BRACKENBURG.

(*Extending his hand.*) Your hand!

CLARA.

(*Refusing hers.*) When you come next.

[*Exeunt* Mother and Daughter.

BRACKENBURG.

(*Alone.*) I had resolved to go away again at once; and yet, when she takes me at my word, and lets me leave her, I feel as if I could go mad.—Wretched man! Does the fate of thy fatherland, does the growing disturbance fail to move thee?—Are countryman and Spaniard the same to thee? and carest thou not who rules, and who is in the right?—I was a different sort of fellow as a school-boy! Then, when an exercise in oratory was given—“Brutus’ Speech for Liberty,” for instance,—Fritz was ever the

first, and the rector would say: "If it were only spoken more deliberately, the words not all huddled together."—Then my blood boiled, and longed for action.—Now I drag along, bound by the eyes of a maiden. I cannot leave her! yet she, alas, cannot love me!—ah—no—she—she cannot have entirely rejected me—not entirely—yet half love is no love!—I will endure it no longer!—Can it be true what a friend lately whispered in my ear, that she secretly admits a man into the house by night, when she always sends me away modestly before evening? No, it cannot be true! It is a lie! A base, slanderous lie! Clara is as innocent as I am wretched.—She has rejected me, has thrust me from her heart—and shall I live on thus? I cannot, I will not endure it. Already my native land is convulsed by internal strife, and do I perish abjectly amid the tumult? I will not endure it! When the trumpet sounds, when a shot falls, it thrills through my bone and marrow! But, alas, it does not rouse me! It does not summon me to join the onslaught, to rescue, to dare.—Wretched, degrading position! Better end it at once! Not long ago, I threw myself into the water; I sank—but nature in her agony was too strong for me; I felt that I could swim, and saved myself against my will. Could I but forget the time when she loved me, seemed to love me!—Why has this happiness penetrated my very bone and marrow? Why have these hopes, while disclosing to me a distant paradise, consumed all the enjoyment of life?—And that first, that only kiss!—Here (*laying his hand upon the table*), here we were alone,—she had always been kind and friendly towards me,—then she seemed to soften,—she looked at me,—my brain reeled,—I felt her lips on mine,—and—and now?—Die, wretch! Why dost thou hesitate? (*He draws a phial from his pocket.*) Thou healing poison, it shall not have been in vain that I stole thee from my brother's medicine chest! From this anxious fear, this dizziness, this death-agony, thou shalt deliver me at once.

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ACT II.



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SCENE I.—

Square In Brussels.

Jetter and a Master Carpenter (*meeting*).

CARPENTER.

Did I not tell you beforehand? Eight days ago, at the guild, I said there would be serious disturbances?

JETTER.

Is it then true that they have plundered the churches in Flanders?

CARPENTER.

They have utterly destroyed both churches and chapels. They have left nothing standing but the four bare walls. The lowest rabble! And this it is that damages our good cause. We ought rather to have laid our claims before the Regent, formally and decidedly, and then have stood by them. If we speak now, if we assemble now, it will be said that we are joining the insurgents.

JETTER.

Ay, so every one thinks at first. Why should you thrust your nose into the mess? The neck is closely connected with it.

CARPENTER.

I am always uneasy when tumults arise among the mob—among people who have nothing to lose. They use as a pretext that to which we also must appeal, and plunge the country in misery.

Enter Soest.

SOEST.

Good-day, sirs! What news? Is it true that the image-breakers are coming straight in this direction?

CARPENTER.

Here they shall touch nothing, at any rate.

SOEST.

A soldier came into my shop just now to buy tobacco; I questioned him about the matter. The Regent, though so brave and prudent a lady, has for once lost her presence of mind. Things must be bad indeed when she thus takes refuge behind her guards. The castle is strongly garrisoned. It is even rumored that she means to fly from the town.

CARPENTER.

Forth she shall not go! Her presence protects us, and we will insure her safety better than her mustachioed gentry. If she only maintains our rights and privileges, we will stand faithfully by her.

Enter a Soapboiler.

SOAPBOILER.

An ugly business this! a bad business! Troubles are beginning; all things are going wrong! Mind you keep quiet, or they'll take you also for rioters.

SOEST.

Here come the seven wise men of Greece.

SOAPBOILER.

I know there are many who in secret hold with the Calvinists, abuse the bishops, and care not for the king. But a loyal subject, a sincere Catholic!—

[By degrees others join the speakers, and listen.

Enter Vansen.

VANSEN.

God save you, sirs! What news?

CARPENTER.

Have nothing to do with him, he's a dangerous fellow.

JETTER.

Is he not secretary to Dr. Wiets?

CARPENTER.

He has already had several masters. First he was a clerk, and as one patron after another turned him off, on account of his roguish tricks, he now dabbles in the business of notary and advocate, and is a brandy-drinker to boot.

[More people gather round and stand in groups.]

VANSEN.

So here you are, putting your heads together. Well, it is worth talking about.

SOEST.

I think so too.

VANSEN.

Now if only one of you had heart and another head enough for the work, we might break the Spanish fetters at once.

SOEST.

Sirs! you must not talk thus. We have taken our oath to the king.

VANSEN.

And the king to us. Mark that!

JETTER.

There's sense in that! Tell us your opinion.

OTHERS.

Hearken to him; he's a clever fellow. He's sharp enough.

VANSEN.

I had an old master once, who possessed a collection of parchments, among which were charters of ancient constitutions, contracts and privileges. He set great store, too, by the rarest books. One of these contained our whole constitution; how, at first, we Netherlanders had princes of our own, who governed according to hereditary laws, rights and usages; how our ancestors paid due honor to their sovereign so long as he governed them equitably; and how they were immediately on their guard the moment he was for overstepping his bounds. The states were down upon him at once; for every province, however small, had its own chamber and representatives.

CARPENTER.

Hold your tongue! We knew that long ago! Every honest citizen learns as much about the constitution as he needs.

JETTER.

Let him speak; one may always learn something.

SOEST.

He is quite right.

SEVERAL CITIZENS.

Go on! go on! One does not hear this every day.

VANSEN.

You citizens, forsooth! You live only in the present; and as you tamely follow the trade inherited from your fathers, so you let the government do with you just as it pleases. You make no inquiry into the origin, the history, or the rights of a Regent; and in consequence of this negligence, the Spaniard has drawn the net over your ears.

SOEST.

Who cares for that, if one has only daily bread?

JETTER.

The devil! Why did not some one come forward and tell us this in time?

VANSEN.

I tell it you now. The King of Spain, whose good fortune it is to bear sway over these provinces, has no right to govern them otherwise than the petty princes, who formerly possessed them separately. Do you understand that?

JETTER.

Explain it to us.

VANSEN.

Why, it is as clear as the sun. Must you not be governed according to your provincial laws? How comes that?

A CITIZEN.

Certainly!

VANSEN.

Has not the burgher of Brussels a different law from the burgher of Antwerp? The burgher of Antwerp from the burgher of Ghent? How comes that?

ANOTHER CITIZEN.

By heaven!

VANSEN.

But if you let matters run on thus, they will soon tell you a different story. Fie on you! Philip, through a woman, now ventures to do what neither Charles the Bold, Frederick the Warrior, nor Charles the Fifth could accomplish.

SOEST.

Yes, yes! The old princes tried it also.

VANSEN.

Ay! But our ancestors kept a sharp lookout. If they thought themselves aggrieved by their sovereign, they would perhaps get his son and heir into their hands, detain him as a hostage, and surrender him only on the most favorable conditions. Our fathers were men! They knew their own interests! They knew how to lay hold on what they wanted, and to get it established! They were men of the right sort; and hence it is that our privileges are so clearly defined, our liberties so well secured.

SOEST.

What are you saying about our liberties?

ALL.

Our liberties! our privileges! Tell us about our privileges.

VANSEN.

All the provinces have their peculiar advantages, but we of Brabant are the most splendidly provided for. I have read it all.

SOEST.

Say on.

JETTER.

Let us hear.

A CITIZEN.

Pray do.

VANSEN.

First, it stands written: The Duke of Brabant shall be to us a good and faithful sovereign.

SOEST.

Good! Stands it so?

JETTER.

Faithful? Is that true?



VANSEN.

As I tell you. He is bound to us as we are to him. Secondly: In the exercise of his authority he shall neither exert arbitrary power, nor exhibit caprice himself, nor shall he, either directly or indirectly, sanction them in others.

JETTER.

Bravo! bravo! Not exert arbitrary power.

SOEST.

Nor exhibit caprice.

ANOTHER.

And not sanction them in others! That is the main point. Not sanction them, either directly or indirectly.

VANSEN.

In express words.

JETTER.

Get us the book.

A CITIZEN.

Yes, we must see it.

OTHERS.

The book! the book!

ANOTHER.

We will to the Regent with the book.

ANOTHER.

Sir doctor, you shall be spokesman.

SOAPBOILER.

Oh, the dolts!

OTHERS.

Something more out of the book!

SOAPBOILER.

I'll knock his teeth down his throat if he says another word.

PEOPLE.

We'll see who dares to lay hands upon him. Tell us about our privileges! Have we any more privileges?

VANSEN.

Many, very good and very wholesome ones too. Thus it stands: The sovereign shall neither benefit the clergy, nor increase their number, without the consent of the nobles and of the states. Mark that! Nor shall he alter the constitution of the country.

SOEST.

Stands it so?

VANSEN.

I'll show it you, as it was written down two or three centuries ago.

A CITIZEN.

And we tolerate the new bishops? The nobles must protect us, we will make a row else!

OTHERS.

And we suffer ourselves to be intimidated by the Inquisition?

VANSEN.

It is your own fault.

PEOPLE.

We have Egmont! We have Orange! They will protect our interests.

VANSEN.

Your brothers in Flanders are beginning the good work.

SOAPBOILER.

Dog!

[Strikes him.

Others oppose the Soapboiler, and exclaim,

Are you also a Spaniard?

ANOTHER.

What! This honorable man!

ANOTHER.

This learned man?

[They attack the Soapboiler.

CARPENTER.

For Heaven's sake, peace!

[Others mingle in the fray.

CARPENTER.

Citizens, what means this?

[Boys whistle, throw stones, set on dogs; citizens stand and gape, people come running up, others walk quietly to and fro, others play all sorts of pranks, shout and huzza.

OTHERS.

Freedom and privilege! Privilege and freedom!

Enter Egmont, with followers.

EGMONT.

Peace! peace! good people. What is the matter? Peace, I say! Separate them.

CARPENTER.

My good lord, you come like an angel from heaven. Hush! See you nothing? Count Egmont! Honor to Count Egmont!

EGMONT.

Here, too! What are you about? Burgher against burgher! Does not even the neighborhood of our royal mistress oppose a barrier to this frenzy? Disperse yourselves, and go about your business. 'Tis a bad sign when you thus keep holiday on working days. How did the disturbance begin?

[The tumult gradually subsides, and the people gather around Egmont.]

CARPENTER.

They are fighting about their privileges.

EGMONT.

Which they will forfeit through their own folly—and who are you? You seem honest people.

CARPENTER.

'Tis our wish to be so.

EGMONT.

Your calling?

CARPENTER.

A carpenter, and master of the guild.

EGMONT.

And you?

SOEST.

A shopkeeper.

EGMONT.

And you?

JETTER.

A tailor.

EGMONT.

I remember, you were employed upon the liveries of my people. Your name is Jetter.

JETTER.

To think of your grace remembering it!

EGMONT.

I do not easily forget any one whom I have seen or conversed with. Do what you can, good people, to keep the peace; you stand in bad repute enough already. Provoke not the king still farther. The power, after all, is in his hands. An honest burgher, who maintains himself industriously, has everywhere as much freedom as he wants.

CARPENTER.

That now is just our misfortune! With all due deference, your grace, 'tis the idle portion of the community, your drunkards and vagabonds, who quarrel for want of something to do, and clamor about privilege because they are hungry; they impose upon the curious and the credulous, and, in order to obtain a pot of beer, excite disturbances that will bring misery upon thousands. That is just what they want. We keep our houses and chests too well guarded; they would fain drive us away from them with firebrands.

EGMONT.

You shall have all needful assistance; measures have been taken to stem the evil by force. Make a firm stand against the new doctrines, and do not imagine that privileges are secured by sedition. Remain at home; suffer no crowds to assemble in the streets. Sensible people can accomplish much.

[In the meantime the crowd has for the most part dispersed.]

CARPENTER.

Thanks, your excellency—thanks for your good opinion! We will do what in us lies. (*Exit* Egmont.) A gracious lord! A true Netherlander! Nothing of the Spaniard about him.

JETTER.

If we had only him for a regent? 'Tis a pleasure to follow him.

SOEST.

The King won't hear of that. He takes care to appoint his own people to the place.

JETTER.

Did you notice his dress? It was of the newest fashion—after the Spanish cut.

CARPENTER.

A handsome gentleman.

JETTER.

His head now were a dainty morsel for a headsman.

SOEST.

Are you mad? What are you thinking about?



JETTER.

It is stupid enough that such an idea should come into one's head! But so it is. Whenever I see a fine long neck, I cannot help thinking how well it would suit the block. These cursed executions! One cannot get them out of one's head. When the lads are swimming, and I chance to see a naked back, I think forthwith of the dozens I have seen beaten with rods. If I meet a portly gentleman, I fancy I already see him roasting at the stake. At night, in my dreams, I am tortured in every limb; one cannot have a single hour's enjoyment; all merriment and fun have long been forgotten. These terrible images seem burnt in upon my brain.

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SCENE II.—

Egmont's *Residence*.

His Secretary (at a desk with papers. He rises impatiently).

SECRETARY.

Still he comes not! And I have been waiting already full two hours, pen in hand, the paper before me; and just to-day I was anxious to be out so early. The floor burns under my feet. I can with difficulty restrain my impatience. "Be punctual to the hour." Such was his parting injunction; now he comes not. There is so much business to get through, I shall not have finished before midnight. He overlooks one's faults, it is true; methinks it would be better though, were he more strict, so he dismissed one at the appointed time. One could then arrange one's plans. It is now full two hours since he left the Regent; who knows whom he may have chanced to meet by the way?

Enter Egmont.

EGMONT.

Well, how do matters look?

SECRETARY.

I am ready, and three couriers are waiting.

EGMONT.

I have detained you too long; you look somewhat out of humor.

SECRETARY.

In obedience to your command I have already been in attendance for some time. Here are the papers!

EGMONT.

Donna Elvira will be angry with me, when she learns that I have detained you.

SECRETARY.

You are pleased to jest.

EGMONT.

No, no. Be not ashamed. I admire your taste. She is pretty, and I have no objection that you should have a friend at the castle. What say the letters?

SECRETARY.

Much, my lord, but withal little that is satisfactory.

EGMONT.

'Tis well that we have pleasures at home, we have the less occasion to seek them from abroad. Is there much that requires attention?

SECRETARY.

Enough, my lord; three couriers are in attendance.

EGMONT.

Proceed! The most important.

SECRETARY.

All is important.

EGMONT.

One after the other; only be prompt.

SECRETARY.

Captain Breda sends an account of the occurrences that have further taken place in Ghent and the surrounding districts. The tumult is for the most part allayed.

EGMONT.

He doubtless reports individual acts of folly and temerity?

SECRETARY.

He does, my lord.

EGMONT.

Spare me the recital.

SECRETARY.

Six of the mob who tore down the image of the Virgin at Verviers have been arrested. He inquires whether they are to be hanged like the others.

EGMONT.

I am weary of hanging; let them be flogged and discharged.

SECRETARY.

There are two women among them; are they to be flogged also?

EGMONT.

He may admonish them and let them go.

SECRETARY.

Brink, of Breda's company, wants to marry; the captain hopes you will not allow it. There are so many women among the troops, he writes, that when on the march, they resemble a gang of gypsies rather than regular soldiers.

EGMONT.

We must overlook it in his case. He is a fine young fellow, and moreover entreated me so earnestly before I came away. This must be the last time, however; though it grieves me to refuse the poor fellows their best pastime; they have enough without that to torment them.

SECRETARY.

Two of your people, Seter and Hart, have ill-treated a damsel, the daughter of an innkeeper. They got her alone and she could not escape from them.

EGMONT.

If she be an honest maiden and they used violence, let them be flogged three days in succession; and if they have any property, let him retain as much of it as will portion the girl.

SECRETARY.

One of the foreign preachers has been discovered passing secretly through Comines. He swore that he was on the point of leaving for France. According to orders, he ought to be beheaded.

EGMONT.

Let him be conducted quietly to the frontier, and there admonished that the next time he will not escape so easily.

SECRETARY.

A letter from your steward. He writes that money comes in slowly, he can with difficulty send you the required sum within the week; the late disturbances have thrown everything into the greatest confusion.

EGMONT.

Money must be had! It is for him to look to the means.

SECRETARY.

He says he will do his utmost, and at length proposes to sue and imprison Raymond, who has been so long in your debt.

EGMONT.

But he has promised to pay!

SECRETARY.

The last time he fixed a fortnight himself.

EGMONT.

Well, grant him another fortnight; after that he may proceed against him.

SECRETARY.

You do well. His non-payment of the money proceeds not from inability, but from want of inclination. He will trifle no longer when he sees that you are in earnest. The steward further proposes to withhold, for half a month, the pensions which you allow to the old soldiers, widows and others. In the meantime some expedient may be devised; they must make their arrangements accordingly.

EGMONT.

But what arrangements can be made here? These poor people want the money more than I do. He must not think of it.

SECRETARY.

How then, my lord, is he to raise the required sum?

EGMONT.

It is his business to think of that. He was told so in a former letter.

SECRETARY.

And therefore he makes these proposals.

EGMONT.

They will never do;—he must think of something else. Let him suggest expedients that are admissible, and, before all, let him procure the money.

SECRETARY.

I have again before me the letter from Count Oliva. Pardon my recalling it to your remembrance. Before all others, the aged Count deserves a detailed reply. You proposed writing to him with your own hand. Doubtless, he loves you as a father.



EGMONT.

I cannot command the time;—and of all detestable things, writing is to me the most detestable. You imitate my hand so admirably, do you write in my name. I am expecting Orange. I cannot do it;—I wish, however, that something soothing should be written, to allay his fears.

SECRETARY.

Just give me a notion of what you wish to communicate; I will at once draw up the answer, and lay it before you. It shall be so written that it might pass for your hand in a court of justice.

EGMONT.

Give me the letter. (*After glancing over it.*) Dear, excellent, old man! Wert thou then so cautious in thy youth? Didst thou never mount a breach? Didst thou remain in the

rear of battle at the suggestion of prudence?—What affectionate solicitude! He has indeed my safety and happiness at heart, but considers not that he who lives but to save his life is already dead. Charge him not to be anxious on my account; I act as circumstances require, and shall be upon my guard. Let him use his influence at court in my favor, and be assured of my warmest thanks.

SECRETARY.

Is that all? He expects still more.

EGMONT.

What can I say? If you choose to write more fully, do so. The matter turns upon a single point; he would have me live as I cannot live. That I am joyous, live fast, take matters easily, is my good fortune; nor would I exchange it for the safety of a sepulchre. My blood rebels against the Spanish mode of life, nor have I the least inclination to regulate my movements by the new and cautious measures of the court. Do I live only to think of life? Am I to forego the enjoyment of the present moment in order to secure the next? And must that in its turn be consumed in anxieties and idle fears?

SECRETARY.

I entreat you, my lord, be not so harsh towards the venerable man. You are wont to be friendly towards every one. Say a kindly word to allay the anxiety of your noble friend. See how considerate he is, with what delicacy he warns you.

EGMONT.

Yet he harps continually on the same string. He knows of old how I detest these admonitions. They serve only to perplex and are of no avail. What if I were a somnambulist, and trod the giddy summit of a lofty house,—were it the part of friendship to call me by my name, to warn me of my danger, to waken, to kill me? Let each choose his own path, and provide for his own safety.

SECRETARY.

It may become you to be without a fear, but those who know and love you—

EGMONT.

(Looking over the letter.) Then he recalls the old story of our sayings and doings, one evening, in the wantonness of conviviality and wine; and what conclusions and inferences were thence drawn and circulated throughout the whole kingdom! Well, we had a cap and bells embroidered on the sleeves of our servants' liveries, and afterwards exchanged this senseless device for a bundle of arrows—a still more dangerous symbol for those who are bent upon discovering a meaning where nothing

is meant. These and similar follies were conceived and brought forth in a moment of merriment. It was at our suggestion that a noble troop, with beggars' wallets, and a self-chosen nickname, with mock humility recalled the King's duty to his remembrance. It was at our suggestion too—well, what does it signify? Is a carnival jest to be construed into high treason? Are we to be grudged the scanty, variegated rags, wherewith a youthful spirit and heated imagination would adorn the poor nakedness of life? Take life too seriously, and what is it worth? If the morning wake us to no new joys, if in the evening we have no pleasures to hope for, is it worth the trouble of dressing and undressing? Does the sun shine on me to-day, that I may reflect on what happened yesterday? That I may endeavor to foresee and control, what can neither be foreseen nor controlled,—the destiny of the morrow? Spare me these reflections; we will leave them to scholars and courtiers. Let them ponder and contrive, creep hither and thither, and surreptitiously achieve their ends. If you can make use of these suggestions without swelling your letter into a volume, it is well. Everything appears of exaggerated importance to the good old man. 'Tis thus the friend, who has long held our hand, grasps it more warmly ere he quits his hold.

SECRETARY.

Pardon me, the pedestrian grows dizzy when he beholds the charioteer drive past with whirling speed.

EGMONT.

Child! child! Forbear! As if goaded by invisible spirits, the sun-steeds of time bear onward the light car of our destiny; and nothing remains for us but, with calm self-possession, firmly to grasp the reins, and now right, now left, to steer the wheels, here from the precipice and there from the rock. Whither he is hasting, who knows? Does any one consider whence he came?

SECRETARY.

My lord! my lord!

EGMONT.

I stand high, but I can and must rise yet higher. Courage, strength, and hope possess my soul. Not yet have I attained the height of my ambition; that once achieved, I will stand firmly and without fear. Should I fall, should a thunder-clap, a storm-blast, ay, a false step of my own, precipitate me into the abyss, so be it! I shall lie there with thousands of others. I have never disdained, even for a trifling stake, to throw the bloody die with my gallant comrades; and shall I hesitate now, when all that is most precious in life is set upon the cast?

SECRETARY.

Oh, my lord! you know not what you say! May Heaven protect you!

EGMONT.

Collect your papers. Orange is coming. Despatch what is most urgent, that the couriers may set forth before the gates are closed. The rest may wait. Leave the Count's letter till to-morrow. Fail not to visit Elvira, and greet her from me. Inform yourself concerning the Regent's health. She cannot be well, though she would fain conceal it.

[Exit Secretary.

Enter Orange.

EGMONT.

Welcome, Orange; you appear somewhat disturbed.

ORANGE.

What say you to our conference with the Regent?

EGMONT.

I found nothing extraordinary in her manner of receiving us. I have often seen her thus before. She appeared to me to be somewhat indisposed.

ORANGE.

Marked you not that she was more reserved than usual? She began by cautiously approving our conduct during the late insurrection; glanced at the false light in which, nevertheless, it might be viewed: and finally turned the discourse to her favorite topic—that her gracious demeanor, her friendship for us Netherlanders, had never been sufficiently recognized, never appreciated as it deserved; that nothing came to a prosperous issue; that for her part she was beginning to grow weary of it; that the King must at last resolve upon other measures. Did you hear that?

EGMONT.

Not all; I was thinking at the time of something else. She is a woman, good Orange, and all women expect that every one shall submit passively to their gentle yoke; that every Hercules shall lay aside his lion's skin, assume the distaff, and swell their train; and, because they are themselves peaceably inclined, imagine forsooth, that the ferment which seizes a nation, the storm which powerful rivals excite against one another, may be allayed by one soothing word, and the most discordant elements be brought to unite in tranquil harmony at their feet. 'Tis thus with her; and since she cannot accomplish her object, why she has no resource left but to lose her temper, to menace us with direful prospects for the future, and to threaten to take her departure.

ORANGE.

Think you not that this time she will fulfil her threat?

EGMONT.

Never! How often have I seen her actually prepared for the journey? Whither should she go? Being here a stadtholder, a queen, think you that she could endure to spend her days in insignificance at her brother's court, or to repair to Italy, and there drag on her existence among her old family connections?

ORANGE.

She is held incapable of this determination, because you have already seen her hesitate and draw back; nevertheless, it lies in her to take this step; new circumstances may impel her to the long-delayed resolve. What if she were to depart, and the King to send another?

EGMONT.

Why, he would come, and he also would have business enough upon his hands. He would arrive with vast projects and schemes, to reduce all things to order, to subjugate and combine; and to-day he would be occupied with this trifle, to-morrow with that, and the day following have to deal with some unexpected hindrance. He would spend one month in forming plans, another in mortification at their failure, and half a year would be consumed in cares for a single province. With him also time would pass, his head grow dizzy, and things hold on their ordinary course, till instead of sailing into the open sea, according to the plan which he had previously marked out, he might thank God if, amid the tempest, he were able to keep his vessel off the rocks.

ORANGE.

What if the King were advised to try an experiment?

EGMONT.

Which should be—?

ORANGE.

To try how the body would get on without the head.

EGMONT.

How?

ORANGE.

Egmont, our interests have for years weighed upon my heart; I ever stand as over a chess-board, and regard no move of my adversary as insignificant; and as men of science carefully investigate the secrets of nature, so I hold it to be the duty, ay, the very vocation of a prince, to acquaint himself with the dispositions and intentions of all parties. I have reason to fear an outbreak. The King has long acted according to certain principles; he finds that they do not lead to a prosperous issue; what more probable than that he should seek it some other way?

EGMONT.

I do not believe it. When a man grows old, has attempted much, and finds that the world cannot be made to move according to his will, he must needs grow weary of it at last.

ORANGE.

One thing he has not yet attempted.

EGMONT.

What?

ORANGE.

To spare the people, and to put an end to the princes.

EGMONT.

How many have long been haunted by this dread? There is no cause for such anxiety.

ORANGE.

Once I felt anxious; gradually I became suspicious; suspicion has at length grown into certainty.

EGMONT.

Has the King more faithful servants than ourselves?

ORANGE.

We serve him after our own fashion; and, between ourselves, it must be confessed that we understand pretty well how to make the interests of the King square with our own.

EGMONT.

And who does not? He has our duty and submission, in so far as they are his due.

ORANGE.

But what if he should arrogate still more, and regard as disloyalty what we esteem the maintenance of our just rights?

EGMONT.

We shall know in that case how to defend ourselves. Let him assemble the Knights of the Golden Fleece; we will submit ourselves to their decision.

ORANGE.

What if the sentence were to precede the trial? punishment, the sentence?

EGMONT.

It were an injustice of which Philip is incapable; a folly which I cannot impute either to him or to his counsellors.

ORANGE.

And how if they were both unjust and foolish?

EGMONT.

No, Orange, it is impossible. Who would venture to lay hands on us? The attempt to capture us were a vain and fruitless enterprise. No, they dare not raise the standard of tyranny so high. The breeze that should waft these tidings over the land would kindle a mighty conflagration. And what object would they have in view? The King alone has no power either to judge or to condemn us; and would they attempt our lives by assassination? They cannot intend it. A terrible league would unite the entire people. Direful hate and eternal separation from the crown of Spain would, on the instant, be forcibly declared.



Fr. Pecht del.

published by George Barrie

[Editor: illegible word]

William of Orange.

ORANGE.

The flames would then rage over our grave, and the blood of our enemies flow, a vain oblation. Let us consider, Egmont.

EGMONT.

But how could they effect this purpose?

ORANGE.

Alva is on the way.

EGMONT.

I do not believe it.

ORANGE.

I know it.

EGMONT.

The Regent appeared to know nothing of it.

ORANGE.

And, therefore, the stronger is my conviction. The Regent will give place to him. I know his bloodthirsty disposition, and he brings an army with him.

EGMONT.

To harass the provinces anew? The people will be exasperated to the last degree.

ORANGE.

Their leaders will be secured.

EGMONT.

No! no!

ORANGE.

Let us retire, each to his province. There we can strengthen ourselves; the Duke will not begin with open violence.

EGMONT.

Must we not greet him when he comes?

ORANGE.

We will delay.

EGMONT.

What if, on his arrival, he should summon us in the King's name?

ORANGE.

We will answer evasively.

EGMONT.

And if he is urgent?

ORANGE.

We will excuse ourselves.

EGMONT.

And if he insist?

ORANGE.

We shall be the less disposed to come.

EGMONT.

Then war is declared; and we are rebels. Do not suffer prudence to mislead you, Orange. I know it is not fear that makes you yield. Consider this step.

ORANGE.

I have considered it.

EGMONT.

Consider for what you are answerable if you are wrong. For the most fatal war that ever yet desolated a country. Your refusal is the signal that at once summons the provinces to arms, that justifies every cruelty for which Spain has hitherto so anxiously sought a pretext. With a single nod you will excite to the direst confusion what, with patient effort, we have so long kept in abeyance. Think of the towns, the nobles, the people; think of commerce, agriculture, trade! Realize the murder, the desolation! Calmly the soldier beholds his comrade fall beside him in the battlefield. But towards you, carried downwards by the stream, shall float the corpses of citizens, of children, of maidens, till, aghast with horror, you shall no longer know whose cause you are defending, since you shall see those for whose liberty you drew the sword perishing around you. And what will be your emotions when conscience whispers, "It was for my own safety that I drew it?"

ORANGE.

We are not ordinary men, Egmont. If it becomes us to sacrifice ourselves for thousands, it becomes us no less to spare ourselves for thousands.

EGMONT.

He who spares himself becomes an object of suspicion ever to himself.

ORANGE.

He who is sure of his own motives can, with confidence, advance or retreat.

EGMONT.

Your own act will render certain the evil that you dread.

ORANGE.

Wisdom and courage alike prompt us to meet an inevitable evil.

EGMONT.

When the danger is imminent the faintest hope should be taken into account.

ORANGE.

We have not the smallest footing left; we are on the very brink of the precipice.

EGMONT.

Is the King's favor on ground so narrow?

ORANGE.

Not narrow, perhaps, but slippery.

EGMONT.

By heavens! he is belied. I cannot endure that he should be so meanly thought of! He is Charles's son, and incapable of meanness.

ORANGE.

Kings of course do nothing mean.

EGMONT.

He should be better known.

ORANGE.

Our knowledge counsels us not to await the result of a dangerous experiment.

EGMONT.

No experiment is dangerous, the result of which we have the courage to meet.

ORANGE.

You are irritated, Egmont.

EGMONT.

I must see with my own eyes.

ORANGE.

Oh, that for once you saw with mine! My friend, because your eyes are open, you imagine that you see. I go! Await Alva's arrival, and God be with you! My refusal to do so may perhaps save you. The dragon may deem the prey not worth seizing, if he cannot swallow us both. Perhaps he may delay, in order more surely to execute his purpose; in the meantime you may see matters in their true light. But then, be prompt! Lose not a moment! Save,—oh, save yourself! Farewell!—Let nothing escape your vigilance:—how many troops he brings with him; how he garrisons the town; what force the Regent retains; how your friends are prepared. Send me tidings—Egmont—

EGMONT.

What would you?

ORANGE

(grasping his hand). Be persuaded! Go with me!

EGMONT.

How! Tears, Orange!

ORANGE.

To weep for a lost friend is not unmanly.

EGMONT.

You deem me lost?

ORANGE.

You are lost! Consider! Only a brief respite is left you. Farewell. [*Exit.*]

EGMONT.

(Alone.) Strange that the thoughts of other men should exert such an influence over us. These fears would never have entered my mind; and this man infects me with his solicitude. Away! 'Tis a foreign drop in my blood! Kind nature, cast it forth! And to erase the furrowed lines from my brow there yet remains indeed a friendly means.



Fr. Pecht del.

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[Editor: illegible word]

Margaret of Parma.

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ACT III.



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SCENE I.—

Palace Of The Regent.

Margaret of Parma.

REGENT.

I might have expected it. Ha! when we live immersed in anxiety and toil, we imagine that we achieve the utmost that is possible; while he who from a distance looks on and commands believes that he requires only the possible. O ye kings! I had not thought it could have galled me thus. It is so sweet to reign!—and to abdicate? I know not how my father could do so; but I will also.

Machiavel appears in the background.

REGENT.

Approach, Machiavel. I am thinking over this letter from my brother.

MACHIAVEL.

May I know what it contains?

REGENT.

As much tender consideration for me as anxiety for his states. He extols the firmness, the industry, the fidelity, with which I have hitherto watched over the interests of his Majesty in these provinces. He condoles with me that the unbridled people occasion me so much trouble. He is so thoroughly convinced of the depth of my views, so extraordinarily satisfied with the prudence of my conduct, that I must almost say the letter is too politely written for a king—certainly for a brother.

MACHIAVEL.

It is not the first time that he has testified to you his just satisfaction.

REGENT.

But the first time that it is a mere rhetorical figure.

MACHIAVEL.

I do not understand you.

REGENT.

You soon will. For after this preamble he is of opinion that without soldiers, without a small army indeed, I shall always cut a sorry figure here! We did wrong, he says, to withdraw our troops from the provinces at the remonstrance of the inhabitants; a garrison, he thinks, which shall press upon the neck of the burgher, will prevent him, by its weight, from making any lofty spring.

MACHIAVEL.

It would irritate the public mind to the last degree.

REGENT.

The King thinks, however, do you hear?—he thinks that a clever general, one who never listens to reason, will be able to deal promptly with all parties—people and nobles, citizens and peasants; he therefore sends, with a powerful army, the Duke of Alva.

MACHIAVEL.

Alva?

REGENT.

You are surprised.

MACHIAVEL.

You say he sends; he asks doubtless whether he should send.

REGENT.

The King asks not—he sends.

MACHIAVEL.

You will then have an experienced warrior in your service.

REGENT.

In my service? Speak out, Machiavel.

MACHIAVEL.

I would not anticipate you.

REGENT.

And I would I could dissimulate. It wounds me—wounds me to the quick. I had rather my brother would speak his mind than attach his signature to formal epistles drawn up by a secretary of state.

MACHIAVEL.

Can they not comprehend?—

REGENT.

I know them both within and without. They would fain make a clean sweep; and since they cannot set about it themselves, they give their confidence to any one who comes with a besom in his hand. Oh, it seems to me as if I saw the king and his council worked upon this tapestry!

MACHIAVEL.

So distinctly!

REGENT.

No feature is wanting. There are good men among them. The honest Roderigo, so experienced and so moderate, who does not aim too high, yet lets nothing sink too low; the upright Alonzo, the diligent Freneda, the steadfast Las Vargas, and others who join them when the good party are in power. But there sits the hollow-eyed Toledan, with brazen front and deep fire-glance, muttering between his teeth about womanish softness, ill-timed concession, and that women can ride trained steeds well enough, but are themselves bad masters of the horse, and the like pleasantries, which in former times I have been compelled to hear from political gentlemen.

MACHIAVEL.

You have chosen good colors for your picture.

REGENT.

Confess, Machiavel, among the tints from which I might select, there is no hue so livid, so jaundice-like, as Alva's complexion, and the color he is wont to paint with. He regards every one as a blasphemer or traitor; for under this head they can all be racked, impaled, quartered and burned at pleasure. The good I have accomplished here appears as nothing seen from a distance, just because it is good. Then he dwells on every outbreak that is past, recalls every disturbance that is quieted, and brings before the king such a picture of mutiny, sedition and audacity, that we appear to him to be actually devouring one another, when with us the transient explosion of a rude people has long been forgotten. Thus he conceives a cordial hatred for the poor

people; he views them with horror, as beasts and monsters; looks around for fire and sword, and imagines that by such means human beings are subdued.

MACHIAVEL.

You appear to me too vehement; you take the matter too seriously. Do you not remain Regent?

REGENT.

I am aware of that. He will bring his instructions. I am old enough in state affairs to understand how people can be supplanted, without being actually deprived of office. First, he will produce a commission, couched in terms somewhat obscure and equivocal; he will stretch his authority, for the power is in his hands; if I complain, he will hint at secret instructions; if I desire to see them, he will answer evasively; if I insist, he will produce a paper of totally different import; and if this fail to satisfy me, he will go on precisely as if I had never interfered. Meanwhile he will have accomplished what I dread, and have frustrated my most cherished schemes.

MACHIAVEL.

I wish I could contradict you.

REGENT.

His harshness and cruelty will again arouse the turbulent spirit which, with unspeakable patience, I have succeeded in quelling; I shall see my work destroyed before my eyes, and have besides to bear the blame of his wrong-doing.

MACHIAVEL.

Await it, your Highness.

REGENT.

I have sufficient self-command to remain quiet. Let him come; I will make way for him with the best grace ere he pushes me aside.

MACHIAVEL.

So important a step thus suddenly?

REGENT.

'Tis harder than you imagine. He who is accustomed to rule, to hold daily in his hand the destiny of thousands, descends from the throne as into the grave. Better thus,

however, than linger a spectre among the living, and with hollow aspect endeavor to maintain a place which another has inherited, and already possesses and enjoys.

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SCENE II.—

Clara's *Dwelling*.

Clara and her Mother.

MOTHER.

Such a love as Brackenburg's I have never seen; I thought it was to be found only in romance books.

CLARA.

(Walking up and down the room, humming a song.)

With love's thrilling rapture
What joy can compare!

MOTHER.

He suspects thy attachment to Egmont; and yet, if thou would'st but treat him a little kindly, I do believe he would marry thee still, if thou would'st have him.



artist: c. haberlin.

EGMONT. ACT III, SCENE II.

egmont and clara.

CLARA

(sings).

Blissful
And tearful,
With thought-teeming brain;
Hoping
And fearing
In passionate pain;
Now shouting in triumph,

Now sunk in despair;—
With love's thrilling rapture
What joy can compare!

MOTHER.

Have done with such baby-nonsense!

CLARA.

Nay, do not abuse it; 'tis a song of marvellous virtue. Many a time have I lulled a grown child to sleep with it.

MOTHER.

Ay! Thou canst think of nothing but thy love: If it only did not put everything else out of thy head. Thou should'st have more regard for Brackenburg, I tell thee. He may make thee happy yet some day.

CLARA.

He?

MOTHER.

Oh, yes! A time will come! You children live only in the present, and give no ear to our experience. Youth and happy love, all has an end; and there comes a time when one thanks God if one has any corner to creep into.

CLARA.

(Shudders, and after a pause stands up.) Mother, let that time come—like death. To think of it beforehand is horrible! And if it come! If we must—then—we will bear ourselves as we may. Live without thee, Egmont! *(Weeping.)* No! It is impossible.

Enter Egmont (enveloped in a horseman's cloak, his hat drawn over his face).

EGMONT.

Clara!

CLARA.

(Utters a cry and starts back.) Egmont! *(She hastens towards him.)* Egmont! *(She embraces and leans upon him.)* O thou good, kind, sweet Egmont! Art thou come? Art thou here indeed!

EGMONT.

Good-evening, mother!

MOTHER.

God save you, noble sir! My daughter has well-nigh pined to death because you have stayed away so long; she talks and sings about you the livelong day.

EGMONT.

You will give me some supper?

MOTHER.

You do us too much honor. If we only had anything—

CLARA.

Certainly! Be quiet, mother; I have provided everything; there is something prepared. Do not betray me, mother.

MOTHER.

There's little enough.

CLARA.

Never mind! And then I think when he is with me I am never hungry; so he cannot, I should think, have any great appetite when I am with him.

EGMONT.

Do you think so? (*Clarastamps with her foot and turns pettishly away.*)

What ails you?

CLARA.

How cold you are to-day! You have not yet offered me a kiss. Why do you keep your arms enveloped in your mantle, like a new-born babe? It becomes neither a soldier nor a lover to keep his arms muffled up.

EGMONT.

Sometimes, dearest, sometimes. When the soldier stands in ambush and would delude the foe, he collects his thoughts, gathers his mantle around him, and matures his plan; and a lover—

MOTHER.

Will you not take a seat, and make yourself comfortable? I must to the kitchen. Clara thinks of nothing when you are here. You must put up with what we have.

EGMONT.

Your good-will is the best seasoning.

[*Exit* Mother.

CLARA.

And what then is my love?

EGMONT.

Just what thou wilt.

CLARA.

Liken it to anything, if you have the heart.

EGMONT.

But first. (*He flings aside his mantle, and appears arrayed in a magnificent dress.*)

CLARA.

Oh, heavens!

EGMONT.

Now my arms are free!

[*Embraces her.*

CLARA.

Don't! You will spoil your dress. (*She steps back.*) How magnificent! I dare not touch you.

EGMONT.

Art thou satisfied? I promised to come once arrayed in Spanish fashion.

CLARA.

I had ceased to remind you of it; I thought you did not like it—ah, and the Golden Fleece!

EGMONT.

Thou seest it now.

CLARA.

And did the Emperor really hang it round thy neck!

EGMONT.

He did, my child! And this chain and Order invest the wearer with the noblest privileges. On earth I acknowledge no judge over my actions, except the grand master of the Order, with the assembled chapter of knights.

CLARA.

Oh, thou mightest let the whole world sit in judgment over thee. The velvet is too splendid! and the braiding! and the embroidery! One knows not where to begin.

EGMONT.

There, look thy fill.

CLARA.

And the Golden Fleece! You told me its history, and said it is the symbol of everything great and precious, of everything that can be merited and won by diligence and toil. It is very precious—I may liken it to thy love;—even so I wear it next my heart;—and then—

EGMONT.

What wilt thou say?

CLARA.

And then again it is not like.

EGMONT.

How so?

CLARA.

I have not won it by diligence and toil; I have not deserved it.

EGMONT.

It is otherwise in love. Thou dost deserve it because thou hast not sought it—and, for the most part, those only obtain love who seek it not.

CLARA.

Is it from thine own experience that thou hast learned this? Didst thou make that proud remark in reference to thyself? Thou, whom all the people love?

EGMONT.

Would that I had done something for them! That I could do anything for them! It is their own good pleasure to love me.

CLARA.

Thou hast doubtless been with the Regent to-day?

EGMONT.

I have.

CLARA.

Art thou upon good terms with her?

EGMONT.

So it would appear. We are kind and serviceable to each other.

CLARA.

And in thy heart?

EGMONT.

I like her. True, we have each our own views; but that is nothing to the purpose. She is an excellent woman, knows with whom she has to deal, and would be penetrating

enough were she not quite so suspicious. I give her plenty of employment, because she is always suspecting some secret motive in my conduct when, in fact, I have none.

CLARA.

Really none?

EGMONT.

Well, with one little exception, perhaps. All wine deposits lees in the cask in the course of time. Orange furnishes her still better entertainment, and is a perpetual riddle. He has got the credit of harboring some secret design; and she studies his brow to discover his thoughts, and his steps, to learn in what direction they are bent.

CLARA.

Does she dissemble?

EGMONT.

She is Regent—and do you ask?

CLARA.

Pardon me; I meant to say, is she false?

EGMONT.

Neither more nor less than everyone who has his own objects to attain.

CLARA.

I should never feel at home in the world. But she has a masculine spirit, and is another sort of woman from us housewives and sempstresses. She is great, steadfast, resolute.

EGMONT.

Yes, when matters are not too much involved. For once, however, she is a little disconcerted.

CLARA.

How so?

EGMONT.

She has a moustache, too, on her upper lip, and occasionally an attack of the gout—a regular Amazon.

CLARA.

A majestic woman! I should dread to appear before her.

EGMONT.

Yet thou art not wont to be timid! It would not be fear, only maidenly bashfulness.

[Clara casts down her eyes, takes his hand and leans upon him.]

EGMONT.

I understand thee, dearest! Thou may'st raise thine eyes.

[He kisses her eyes.]

CLARA.

Let me be silent! Let me embrace thee! Let me look into thine eyes, and find there everything—hope and comfort, joy and sorrow! *(She embraces and gazes on him.)* Tell me! Oh, tell me! It seems so strange—art thou indeed Egmont! Count Egmont! The great Egmont, who makes so much noise in the world, who figures in the newspapers, who is the support and stay of the provinces?

EGMONT.

No, Clara, I am not he.

CLARA.

How?

EGMONT.

Seest thou, Clara? Let me sit down! *(He seats himself, she kneels on a footstool before him, rests her arms on his knees and looks up in his face.)* That Egmont is a morose, cold, unbending Egmont, obliged to be upon his guard, to assume now this appearance and now that; harassed, misapprehended and perplexed, when the crowd esteem him light-hearted and gay; beloved by a people who do not know their own minds; honored and extolled by the intractable multitude; surrounded by friends in whom he dares not confide; observed by men who are on the watch to supplant him; toiling and striving, often without an object, generally without a reward. Oh, let me

conceal how it fares with him, let me not speak of his feelings! But this Egmont, Clara, is calm, unreserved, happy, beloved and known by the best of hearts, which is also thoroughly known to him, and which he presses to his own with unbounded confidence and love. (*He embraces her.*) This is thy Egmont.

CLARA.

So let me die! The world has no joy after this!

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ACT IV.



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SCENE I.—

A Street.

Jetter, Carpenter.

JETTER.

Hist! neighbor,—a word!

CARPENTER.

Go your way and be quiet.

JETTER.

Only one word. Is there nothing new?

CARPENTER.

Nothing, except that we are anew forbidden to speak.

JETTER.

How?

CARPENTER.

Step here, close to this house. Take heed! Immediately on his arrival, the Duke of Alva published a decree, by which two or three found conversing together in the streets are, without trial, declared guilty of high treason.

JETTER.

Alas!

CARPENTER.

To speak of state affairs is prohibited on pain of perpetual imprisonment.

JETTER.

Alas for our liberty!

CARPENTER.

And no one, on pain of death, shall censure the measures of government.

JETTER.

Alas for our heads!

CARPENTER.

And fathers, mothers, children, kindred, friends and servants are invited, by the promise of large rewards, to disclose what passes in the privacy of our homes, before an expressly appointed tribunal.

JETTER.

Let us go home.

CARPENTER.

And the obedient are promised that they shall suffer no injury, either in person or estate.

JETTER.

How gracious!—I felt ill at ease the moment the Duke entered the town. Since then it has seemed to me as though the heavens were covered with black crape, which hangs so low that one must stoop down to avoid knocking one's head against it.

CARPENTER.

And how do you like his soldiers! They are a different sort of crabs from those we have been used to.

JETTER.

Faugh! It gives one the cramp at one's heart to see such a troop march down the street. As straight as tapers, with fixed look, only one step, however many there may be; and when they stand sentinel, and you pass one of them, it seems as though he would look you through and through; and he looks so stiff and morose that you fancy you see a taskmaster at every corner. They offend my sight. Our militia were merry fellows; they took liberties, stood their legs astride, their hats over their ears, they lived and let live; these fellows are like machines with a devil inside them.

CARPENTER.

Were such an one to cry "Halt!" and to level his musket, think you one would stand?

JETTER.

I should fall dead upon the spot.

CARPENTER.

Let us go home!

JETTER.

No good can come of it. Farewell.

Enter Soest.

SOEST.

Friends! Neighbors!

CARPENTER.

Hush! Let us go.

SOEST.

Have you heard?

JETTER.

Only too much!

SOEST.

The Regent is gone.

JETTER.

Then Heaven help us.

CARPENTER.

She was some stay to us.

SOEST.

Her departure was sudden and secret. She could not agree with the Duke; she has sent word to the nobles that she intends to return. No one believes it, however.

CARPENTER.

God pardon the nobles for letting this new yoke be laid upon our necks. They might have prevented it. Our privileges are gone.

JETTER.

For Heaven's sake not a word about privileges. I already scent an execution; the sun will not come forth; the fogs are rank.

SOEST.

Orange, too, is gone.

CARPENTER.

Then are we quite deserted!

SOEST.

Count Egmont is still here.

JETTER.

God be thanked! Strengthen him, all ye saints, to do his utmost; he is the only one who can help us.

Enter Vansen.

VANSEN.

Have I at length found a few brave citizens who have not crept out of sight?

JETTER.

Do us the favor to pass on.

VANSEN.

You are not civil.

JETTER.

This is no time for compliments. Does your back itch again? are your wounds already healed?

VANSEN.

Ask a soldier about his wounds! Had I cared for blows, nothing good would have come of me.

JETTER.

Matters may grow more serious.

VANSEN.

You feel from the gathering storm a pitiful weakness in your limbs, it seems.

CARPENTER.

Your limbs will soon be in motion elsewhere, if you do not keep quiet.

VANSEN.

Poor mice! The master of the house procures a new cat, and ye are straight in despair! The difference is very trifling; we shall get on as we did before, only be quiet.

CARPENTER.

You are an insolent knave.

VANSEN.

Gossip! Let the Duke alone. The old cat looks as though he had swallowed devils, instead of mice, and could not now digest them. Let him alone, I say; he must eat, drink and sleep, like other men. I am not afraid if we only watch our opportunity. At first he makes quick work of it; by-and-by, however, he too will find that it is pleasanter to live in the larder, among fitches of bacon, and to rest by night, than to entrap a few solitary mice in the granary. Go to! I know the stadtholders.

CARPENTER.

What such a fellow can say with impunity! Had I said such a thing, I should not hold myself safe a moment.

VANSEN.

Do not make yourselves uneasy! God in heaven does not trouble himself about you, poor worms, much less the Regent.

JETTER.

Slanderer!

VANSEN.

I know some for whom it would be better if, instead of their own high spirits, they had a little tailor's blood in their veins.

CARPENTER.

What mean you by that?

VANSEN.

Hum! I mean the Count.

JETTER.

Egmont! What has he to fear?

VANSEN.

I'm a poor devil, and could live a whole year round on what he loses in a single night; yet he would do well to give me his revenue for a twelvemonth, to have my head upon his shoulders for one quarter of an hour.

JETTER.

You think yourself very clever; yet there is more sense in the hairs of Egmont's head, than in your brains.

VANSEN.

Perhaps so! Not more shrewdness, however. These gentry are the most apt to deceive themselves. He should be more chary of his confidence.

JETTER.

How his tongue wags! Such a gentleman!

VANSEN.

Just because he is not a tailor.

JETTER.

You audacious scoundrel!

VANSEN.

I only wish he had your courage in his limbs for an hour to make him uneasy, and plague and torment him, till he were compelled to leave the town.

JETTER.

What nonsense you talk! why, he's as safe as a star in heaven.

VANSEN.

Have you ever seen one snuff itself out? Off it went!

CARPENTER.

Who would dare to meddle with him?

VANSEN.

Will you interfere to prevent it? Will you stir up an insurrection if he is arrested?

JETTER.

Ah!

VANSEN.

Will you risk your ribs for his sake?



SOEST.

Eh!

VANSEN.

(Mimicking them.) Eh! Oh! Ah! Run through the alphabet in your wonderment. So it is, and so it will remain. Heaven help him!

JETTER.

Confound your impudence! Can such a noble, upright man have anything to fear?

VANSEN.

In this world the rogue has everywhere the advantage. At the bar, he makes a fool of the judge; on the bench, he takes pleasure in convicting the accused. I have had to copy out a protocol, where the commissary was handsomely rewarded by the court, both with praise and money, because through his cross-examination, an honest devil, against whom they had a grudge, was made out to be a rogue.

CARPENTER.

Why, that again is a down-right lie. What can they want to get out of a man if he is innocent?

VANSEN.

Oh, you blockhead! When nothing can be worked out of a man by cross-examination, they work it into him. Honesty is rash and withal somewhat presumptuous. At first they question quietly enough, and the prisoner, proud of his innocence, as they call it, comes out with much that a sensible man would keep back; then, from these answers the inquisitor proceeds to put new questions, and is on the watch for the slightest contradiction; there he fastens his line; and let the poor devil lose his self-possession, say too much here, or too little there, or, Heaven knows from what whim or other, let him withhold some trifling circumstance, or at any moment give way to fear—then we're on the right track, and, I assure you, no beggar-woman seeks for rags among the rubbish with more care than such a fabricator of rogues, from trifling, crooked, disjointed, misplaced, misprinted and concealed facts and information, acknowledged or denied; endeavors at length to patch up a scarecrow, by means of which he may at least hang his victim in effigy; and the poor devil may thank Heaven if he is in a condition to see himself hanged.

JETTER.

He has a ready tongue of his own.

CARPENTER.

This may serve well enough with flies. Wasps laugh at your cunning web.

VANSEN.

According to the kind of spider. The tall Duke, now, has just the look of your garden-spider; not the large-bellied kind—they are less dangerous—but your long-footed,

meagre-bodied gentleman, that does not fatten on his diet, and whose threads are slender indeed, but not the less tenacious.

JETTER.

Egmont is knight of the Golden Fleece—who dare lay hands on him? He can be tried only by his peers, by the assembled knights of his order. Your own foul tongue and evil conscience betray you into this nonsense.

VANSEN.

Think you that I wish him ill? I would you were in the right. He is an excellent gentleman. He once let off, with a sound drubbing, some good friends of mine, who would else have been hanged. Now take yourselves off! begone, I advise you! yonder I see the patrol again commencing their round. They do not look as if they would be willing to fraternize with us over a glass. We must wait, and bide our time. I have a couple of nieces and a gossip of a tapster; if after enjoying themselves in their company, they are not tamed, they are regular wolves.

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SCENE II.—

The Palace Of Eulenberg, Residence Of The Duke Of Alva.

Silva and Gomez (meeting).

SILVA.

Have you executed the Duke's commands?

GOMEZ.

Punctually. All the day-patrols have received orders to assemble at the appointed time, at the various points that I have indicated. Meanwhile, they march as usual through the town to maintain order. Each is ignorant respecting the movements of the rest, and imagines the command to have reference to himself alone; thus in a moment the cordon can be formed, and all the avenues to the palace occupied. Know you the reason of this command?

SILVA.

I am accustomed blindly to obey; and to whom can one more easily render obedience than to the Duke, since the event always proves the wisdom of his commands?



GOMEZ.

Well! well! I am not surprised that you are become as reserved and monosyllabic as the Duke, since you are obliged to be always about his person; to me, however, who am accustomed to the lighter service of Italy, it seems strange enough. In loyalty and obedience I am the same old soldier as ever; but I am wont to indulge in gossip and discussion; here, you are all silent, and seem as though you knew not how to enjoy yourselves. The Duke, methinks, is like a brazen tower without gates, the garrison of which must be furnished with wings. Not long ago I heard him say at the table of a gay, jovial fellow, that he was like a bad spirit-shop, with a brandy sign displayed, to allure idlers, vagabonds and thieves.

SILVA.

And has he not brought us hither in silence?

GOMEZ.

Nothing can be said against that. Of a truth, we, who witnessed the address with which he led the troops hither out of Italy, have seen something. How he advanced warily through friends and foes; through the French, both royalists and heretics; through the Swiss and their confederates; maintained the strictest discipline, and accomplished with ease, and without the slightest hindrance, a march that was esteemed so perilous. We have seen and learned something.

SILVA.

Here too! Is not everything as still and quiet as though there had been no disturbance?

GOMEZ.

Why, as for that, it was tolerably quiet when we arrived.

SILVA.

The provinces have become much more tranquil; if there is any movement now, it is only among those who wish to escape; and to them, methinks, the Duke will speedily close every outlet.

GOMEZ.

This service cannot fail to win for him the favor of the King.

SILVA.

And nothing is more expedient for us than to retain his. Should the King come hither, the Duke doubtless and all whom he recommends will not go without their reward.

GOMEZ.

Do you really believe then that the King will come?

SILVA.

So many preparations are being made, that the report appears highly probable.

GOMEZ.

I am not convinced, however.

SILVA.

Keep your thoughts to yourself then. For if it should not be the King's intention to come, it is at least certain that he wishes the rumor to be believed.

Enter Ferdinand.

FERDINAND.

Is my father not yet abroad?

SILVA.

We are waiting to receive his commands.

FERDINAND.

The princes will soon be here.

GOMEZ.

Are they expected to-day?

FERDINAND.

Orange and Egmont.

GOMEZ.

(Aside to Silva.) A light breaks in upon me.

SILVA.

Well, then, say nothing about it.

Enter the Duke of Alva (as he advances the rest draw back).

ALVA.

Gomez.

GOMEZ.

(Steps forward.) My lord.

ALVA.

You have distributed the guards and given them their instructions?

GOMEZ.

Most accurately. The day-patrols—

ALVA.

Enough. Attend in the gallery. Silva will announce to you the moment when you are to draw them together, and to occupy the avenues leading to the palace. The rest you know.

GOMEZ.

I do, my lord.

[*Exit.*

ALVA.

Silva.

SILVA.

Here, my lord.

ALVA.

I shall require you to manifest to-day all the qualities which I have hitherto prized in you: courage, resolve, unswerving execution.

SILVA.

I thank you for affording me an opportunity of showing that your old servant is unchanged.

ALVA.

The moment the princes enter my cabinet, hasten to arrest Egmont's private secretary. You have made all needful preparations for securing the others who are specified?



SILVA.

Rely upon us. Their doom, like a well-calculated eclipse, will overtake them with terrible certainty.

ALVA.

Have you had them all narrowly watched?

SILVA.

All. Egmont especially. He is the only one whose demeanor, since your arrival, remains unchanged. The livelong day he is now on one horse and now on another; he invites guests as usual, is merry and entertaining at table, plays at dice, shoots, and at night steals to his mistress. The others, on the contrary, have made a manifest pause in their mode of life; they remain at home, and, from the outward aspect of their houses, you would imagine that there was a sick man within.

ALVA.

To work then, ere they recover in spite of us.

SILVA.

I shall bring them without fail. In obedience to your commands we load them with officious honors; they are alarmed; cautiously, yet anxiously, they tender us their thanks, feel that flight would be the most prudent course, yet none venture to adopt it; they hesitate, are unable to work together, while the bond which unites them prevents their acting boldly as individuals. They are anxious to withdraw themselves from suspicion, and thus only render themselves more obnoxious to it. I already contemplate with joy the successful realization of your scheme.

ALVA.

I rejoice only over what is accomplished, and not lightly over that; for there ever remains ground for serious and anxious thought. Fortune is capricious; the common, the worthless, she oftentimes ennobles, while she dishonors with a contemptible issue the most maturely-considered schemes. Await the arrival of the princes, then order Gomez to occupy the streets, and hasten yourself to arrest Egmont's secretary, and the others who are specified. This done, return, and announce to my son that he may bring me the tidings in the council.

SILVA.

I trust this evening I shall dare to appear in your presence. (*Alva approaches his son, who has hitherto been standing in the gallery.*) I dare not whisper it even to myself; but my mind misgives me. The event will, I fear, be different from what he anticipates. I see before me spirits, who, still and thoughtful, weigh in ebon scales the doom of princes and of many thousands. Slowly the beam moves up and down; deeply the judges appear to ponder; at length one scale sinks, the other rises, breathed on by the caprice of destiny, and all is decided.

[*Exit.*

ALVA.

(*Advancing with his son.*) How did you find the town?

FERDINAND.

All is again quiet. I rode as for pastime, from street to street. Your well-distributed patrols hold Fear so tightly yoked, that she does not venture even to whisper. The town resembles a plain when the lightning's glare announces the impending storm: no bird, no beast is to be seen, that is not stealing to a place of shelter.

ALVA.

Has nothing further occurred?

FERDINAND.

Egmont, with a few companions, rode into the market-place; we exchanged greetings; he was mounted on an unbroken charger, which excited my admiration, "Let us hasten to break in our steeds," he exclaimed; "we shall need them ere long!" He said that he should see me again to-day; he is coming here, at your desire, to deliberate with you.

ALVA.

He will see you again.

FERDINAND.

Among all the knights whom I know here, he pleases me the best. I think we shall be friends.

ALVA.

You are always rash and inconsiderate. I recognize in you the levity of your mother, which threw her unconditionally into my arms. Appearances have already allured you precipitately into many dangerous connections.

FERDINAND.

You will find me ever submissive.

ALVA.

I pardon this inconsiderate kindness, this heedless gayety, in consideration of your youthful blood. Only forget not on what mission I am sent, and what part in it I would assign to you.

FERDINAND.

Admonish me, and spare me not, when you deem it needful.

ALVA.

(After a pause.) My son!

FERDINAND.

My father!

ALVA.

The princes will be here anon—Orange and Egmont. It is not mistrust that has withheld me till now from disclosing to you what is about to take place. They will not depart hence.

FERDINAND.

What do you purpose?

ALVA.

It has been resolved to arrest them. You are astonished! Learn what you have to do; the reasons you shall know when all is accomplished. Time fails now to unfold them. With you alone I wish to deliberate on the weightiest, the most secret matters; a powerful bond holds us linked together; you are dear and precious to me; on you I would bestow everything. Not the habit of obedience alone would I impress upon you; I desire also to implant within your mind the power to realize, to command, to execute; to you I would bequeath a vast inheritance, to the King a most useful servant;

I would endow you with the noblest of my possessions, that you may not be ashamed to appear among your brethren.

FERDINAND.

How deeply am I indebted to you for this love, which you manifest for me alone, while a whole kingdom trembles before you!

ALVA.

Now hear what is to be done. As soon as the princes have entered, every avenue to the palace will be guarded. This duty is confided to Gomez. Silva will hasten to arrest Egmont's secretary, together with those whom we hold most in suspicion. You, meanwhile, will take the command of the guards stationed at the gates and in the courts. Before all, take care to occupy the adjoining apartment with the trustiest soldiers. Wait in the gallery till Silva returns, then bring me any unimportant paper, as a signal that his commission is executed. Remain in the ante-chamber till Orange retires; follow him; I will detain Egmont here as though I had some further communication to make to him. At the end of the gallery demand Orange's sword, summon the guards, secure promptly the most dangerous man; I meanwhile will seize Egmont here.

FERDINAND.

I obey, my father—for the first time with a heavy and an anxious heart.

ALVA.

I pardon you; this is the first great day of your life.

Enter Silva.

SILVA.

A courier from Antwerp. Here is Orange's letter. He does not come.

ALVA.

Says the messenger so?

SILVA.

No, my own heart tells me.

ALVA.

In thee speaks my evil genius. (*After reading the letter, he makes a sign to the two, and they retire to the gallery. Alvare remains alone in front of the stage.*) He comes not! Till the last moment he delays declaring himself. He ventures not to come! So then, the cautious man, contrary to all expectation, is for once cautious enough to lay aside his wonted caution. The hour moves one! Let the finger travel but a short space over the dial, and a great work is done or lost—irrevocably lost; for the opportunity can never be retrieved, nor can our intention remain concealed. Long had I maturely weighed everything, foreseen even this contingency, and firmly resolved in my own mind what, in that case, was to be done; and now, when I am called upon to act, I can with difficulty guard my mind from being again distracted by conflicting doubts. Is it expedient to seize the others if he escape me? Shall I delay, and suffer Egmont to elude my grasp, together with his friends, and so many others who now, and perhaps for to-day only, are in my hands? How! Does destiny control even thee—the uncontrollable? How long matured! How well prepared! How great, how admirable the plan! How nearly had hope attained the goal? And now, at the decisive moment, thou art placed between two evils; as in a lottery, thou dost grasp in the dark future; what thou hast drawn remains still unrolled, to thee unknown whether it is a prize or a blank! (*He becomes attentive, like one who hears a noise, and steps to the window.*) 'Tis he! Egmont! Did thy steed bear thee hither so lightly, and started not at the scent of blood, at the spirit with the naked sword who received thee at the gate? Dismount! Lo, now thou hast one foot in the grave! And now both! Ay, caress him, and for the last time stroke his neck for the gallant service he has rendered thee. And for me no choice is left. The delusion, in which Egmont ventures here to-day, cannot a second time deliver him into my hands! Hark! (*Ferdinand and Silva enter hastily.*) Obey my orders! I swerve not from my purpose. I shall detain Egmont here as best I may, till you bring me tidings from Silva. Then remain at hand. Thee, too, fate has robbed of the proud honor of arresting with thine own hand the King's greatest enemy. (*To Silva.*) Be prompt! (*To Ferdinand.*) Advance to meet him.

[*Alvare remains some moments alone, pacing the chamber in silence.*]

Enter Egmont.

EGMONT.

I come to learn the King's commands; to hear what service he demands from our loyalty, which remains eternally devoted to him.

ALVA.

He desires, before all, to hear your counsel.

EGMONT.

Upon what subject? Does Orange come also? I thought to find him here.

ALVA.

I regret that he fails us at this important crisis. The King desires your counsel, your opinion as to the best means of tranquillizing these states. He trusts indeed that you will zealously co-operate with him in quelling these disturbances, and in securing to these provinces the benefit of complete and permanent order.

EGMONT.

You, my lord, should know better than I, that tranquillity is already sufficiently restored, and was still more so, till the appearance of fresh troops again agitated the public mind, and filled it anew with anxiety and alarm.

ALVA.

You seem to intimate that it would have been more advisable if the King had not placed me in a position to interrogate you.

EGMONT.

Pardon me! It is not for me to determine whether the King acted advisedly in sending the army hither, whether the might of his royal presence alone would not have operated more powerfully. The army is here, the King is not. But we should be most ungrateful were we to forget what we owe to the Regent. Let it be acknowledged! By her prudence and valor, by her judicious use of authority and force, of persuasion and finesse, she pacified the insurgents, and, to the astonishment of the world, succeeded, in the course of a few months, in bringing a rebellious people back to their duty.

ALVA.

I deny it not. The insurrection is quelled; and the people appear to be already forced back within the bounds of obedience. But does it not depend upon their caprice alone to overstep these bounds? Who shall prevent them from again breaking loose? Where is the power capable of restraining them? Who will be answerable to us for their future loyalty and submission? Their own good-will is the sole pledge we have.

EGMONT.

And is not the good-will of a people the surest, the noblest pledge? By Heaven! when can a monarch hold himself more secure, ay, both against foreign and domestic foes, than when all can stand for one, and one for all?

ALVA.

You would not have us believe, however, that such is the case here at present?

EGMONT.

Let the King proclaim a general pardon; he will thus tranquillize the public mind; and it will be seen how speedily loyalty and affection will return, when confidence is restored.

ALVA.

How! And suffer those who have insulted the majesty of the King, who have violated the sanctuaries of our religion, to go abroad unchallenged! living witnesses that enormous crimes may be perpetrated with impunity!

EGMONT.

And ought not a crime of frenzy, of intoxication, to be excused, rather than horribly chastised? Especially when there is the sure hope, nay, more, where there is positive certainty that the evil will never again recur? Would not sovereigns thus be more secure? Are not those monarchs most extolled by the world and by posterity who can pardon, pity, despise an offence against their dignity? Are they not on that account likened to God himself, who is far too exalted to be assailed by every idle blasphemy?

ALVA.

And therefore, should the King contend for the honor of God and of religion, we for the authority of the King. What the supreme power disdains to avert, it is our duty to avenge. Were I to counsel, no guilty person should live to rejoice in his impunity.

EGMONT.

Think you that you will be able to reach them all? Do we not daily hear that fear is driving them to and fro, and forcing them out of the land? The more wealthy will escape to other countries with their property, their children and their friends; while the poor will carry their industrious hands to our neighbors.

ALVA.

They will, if they cannot be prevented. It is on this account that the King desires counsel and aid from every prince, zealous co-operation from every stadtholder; not merely a description of the present posture of affairs, or conjectures as to what might take place were events suffered to hold on their course without interruption. To contemplate a mighty evil, to flatter one's self with hope, to trust to time, to strike a blow, like the clown in a play, so as to make a noise and appear to do something, when in fact one would fain do nothing; is not such conduct calculated to awaken a suspicion that those who act thus contemplate with satisfaction a rebellion, which they would not indeed excite, but which they are by no means unwilling to encourage?

EGMONT.

(About to break forth, restrains himself, and after a brief pause, speaks with composure.) Not every design is obvious, and many a man's design is misconstrued. It is widely rumored, however, that the object which the King has in view is not so much to govern the provinces according to uniform and clearly defined laws, to maintain the majesty of religion and to give his people universal peace, as unconditionally to subjugate them, to rob them of their ancient rights, to appropriate their possessions, to curtail the fair privileges of the nobles, for whose sake alone they are ready to serve him with life and limb. Religion, it is said, is merely a splendid device, behind which every dangerous design may be contrived with the greater ease; the prostrate crowds adore the sacred symbols pictured there, while behind lurks the fowler ready to ensnare them.

ALVA.

This must I hear from you?

EGMONT.

I speak not my own sentiments! I but repeat what is loudly rumored, and uttered now here and now there by great and by humble, by wise men and fools. The Netherlanders fear a double yoke, and who will be surety to them for their liberty?

ALVA.

Liberty! A fair word when rightly understood. What liberty would they have? What is the freedom of the most free? To do right! And in that the monarch will not hinder them. No! no! They imagine themselves enslaved, when they have not the power to injure themselves and others. Would it not be better to abdicate at once, rather than rule such a people? When the country is threatened by foreign invaders, the burghers, occupied only with their immediate interests, bestow no thought upon the advancing foe, and when the King requires their aid, they quarrel among themselves, and thus, as it were, conspire with the enemy. Far better is it to circumscribe their power, to control and guide them for their good, as children are controlled and guided. Trust me, a people grows neither old nor wise; a people remains always in its infancy.

EGMONT.

How rarely does a king attain wisdom! And is it not fit that the many should confide their interests to the many rather than to the one? And not even to the one, but to the few servants of the one, men who have grown old under the eyes of their master. To grow wise, it seems, is the exclusive privilege of these favored individuals.

ALVA.

Perhaps for the very reason that they are not left to themselves.

EGMONT.

And therefore they would fain leave no one else to his own guidance. Let them do what they like, however; I have replied to your questions, and I repeat, the measures you propose will never succeed! They cannot succeed! I know my countrymen. They are men worthy to tread God's earth; each complete in himself, a little king, steadfast, active, capable, loyal, attached to ancient customs. It may be difficult to win their confidence, but it is easy to retain it. Firm and unbending! They may be crushed, but not subdued.

ALVA.

(Who during this speech has looked round several times.) Would you venture to repeat what you have uttered, in the King's presence?

EGMONT.

It were the worse, if in his presence I were restrained by fear! The better for him and for his people, if he inspired me with confidence, if he encouraged me to give yet freer utterance to my thoughts.

ALVA.

What is profitable, I can listen to as well as he.

EGMONT.

I would say to him—'Tis easy for the shepherd to drive before him a flock of sheep; the ox draws the plough without opposition; but if you would ride the noble steed, you must study his thoughts, you must require nothing unreasonable, nor unreasonably, from him. The burgher desires to retain his ancient constitution; to be governed by his own countrymen; and why? Because he knows in that case how he shall be ruled, because he can rely upon their disinterestedness, upon their sympathy with his fate.

ALVA.

And ought not the Regent to be empowered to alter these ancient usages? Should not this constitute his fairest privilege? What is permanent in this world? And shall the constitution of a state alone remain unchanged? Must not every relation alter in the course of time, and on that very account, an ancient constitution become the source of a thousand evils, because not adapted to the present condition of the people? These ancient rights afford, doubtless, convenient loopholes, through which the crafty and the powerful may creep, and wherein they may lie concealed, to the injury of the people and of the entire community; and it is on this account, I fear, that they are held in such high esteem.

EGMONT.

And these arbitrary changes, these unlimited encroachments of the supreme power, are they not indications that one will permit himself to do what is forbidden to thousands? The monarch would alone be free, that he may have it in his power to gratify his every wish, to realize his every thought. And though we should confide in him as a good and virtuous sovereign, will he be answerable to us for his successors? That none who come after him shall rule without consideration, without forbearance! And who would deliver us from absolute caprice, should he send hither his servants, his minions, who, without knowledge of the country and its requirements, should govern according to their own good pleasure, meet with no opposition, and know themselves exempt from all responsibility?

ALVA.

(Who has meanwhile again looked round.) There is nothing more natural than that a king should choose to retain the power in his own hands, and that he should select as the instruments of his authority those who best understand him, who desire to understand him, and who will unconditionally execute his will.

EGMONT.

And just as natural is it that the burgher should prefer being governed by one born and reared in the same land, whose notions of right and wrong are in harmony with his own, and whom he can regard as his brother.

ALVA.

And yet the noble, methinks, has shared rather unequally with these brethren of his.

EGMONT.

That took place centuries ago, and is now submitted to without envy. But should new men, whose presence is not needed in the country, be sent, to enrich themselves a second time, at the cost of the nation; should the people see themselves exposed to their bold, unscrupulous rapacity, it would excite a ferment that would not soon be quelled.

ALVA.

You utter words to which I ought not to listen;—I, too, am a foreigner.

EGMONT.

That they are spoken in your presence is a sufficient proof that they have no reference to you.

ALVA.

Be that as it may, I would rather not hear them from you. The King sent me here in the hope that I should obtain the support of the nobles. The King wills, and will have his will obeyed. After profound deliberation, the King at length discerns what course will best promote the welfare of the people; matters cannot be permitted to go on as heretofore; it is the King's intention to limit their power for their own good; if necessary, to force upon them their salvation; to sacrifice the more dangerous burghers in order that the rest may find repose, and enjoy in peace the blessing of a wise government. This is his resolve; this I am commissioned to announce to the nobles; and in his name I require from them advice, not as to the course to be pursued—on that he is resolved—but as to the best means of carrying his purpose into effect.



EGMONT.

Your words, alas, justify the fears of the people, the universal fear! The King has then resolved as no sovereign ought to resolve. In order to govern his subjects more easily, he would crush, subvert, nay, ruthlessly destroy, their strength, their spirit and their self-respect! He would violate the inmost core of their individuality, doubtless with the view of promoting their happiness. He would annihilate them, that they may assume a new, a different form. Oh! if his purpose be good, he is fatally misguided! It is not the King whom we resist;—we but place ourselves in the way of the monarch, who, unhappily, is about to take the first rash step in a wrong direction.



artist: c. häberlin.

EGMONT. ACT IV, SCENE II.

the arrest of count egmont

ALVA.

Such being your sentiments, it were a vain attempt for us to endeavor to agree. You must indeed think poorly of the King, and contemptibly of his counsellors, if you imagine that everything has not already been thought of and maturely weighed. I have

no commission a second time to balance conflicting arguments. From the people I demand submission;—and from you, their leaders and princes, I demand counsel and support, as pledges of this unconditional duty.

EGMONT.

Demand our heads, and your object is attained; to a noble soul it must be indifferent whether he stoop his neck to such a yoke, or lay it upon the block. I have spoken much to little purpose. I have agitated the air, but accomplished nothing.

Enter Ferdinand.

FERDINAND.

Pardon my intrusion. Here is a letter, the bearer of which urgently demands an answer.

ALVA.

Allow me to peruse its contents. (*Steps aside.*)

FERDINAND.

(*To Egmont.*) 'Tis a noble steed that your people have brought to carry you away.

EGMONT.

I have seen worse. I have had him some time; I think of parting with him. If he pleases you we shall probably soon agree as to the price.

FERDINAND.

We will think about it.

[*Alva motions to his son, who retires to the background.*

EGMONT.

Farewell! Allow me to retire; for, by Heaven, I know not what more I can say.

ALVA.

Fortunately for you, chance prevents you from making a fuller disclosure of your sentiments. You incautiously lay bare the recesses of your heart, and your own lips furnish evidence against you, more fatal than could be produced by your bitterest adversary.

EGMONT.

This reproach disturbs me not. I know my own heart; I know with what honest zeal I am devoted to the King; I know that my allegiance is more true than that of many who, in his service, seek only to serve themselves. I regret that our discussion should terminate so unsatisfactorily, and trust that in spite of our opposing views, the service of the King, our master, and the welfare of our country, may speedily unite us; another conference, the presence of the princes who to-day are absent, may, perchance, in a more propitious moment, accomplish what at present appears impossible. In this hope I take my leave.

ALVA.

(Who at the same time makes a sign to Ferdinand.) Hold, Egmont!—Your sword!—*(The centre door opens and discloses the gallery, which is occupied with guards, who remain motionless.)*

EGMONT.

(After a pause of astonishment.) This was the intention? For this thou hast summoned me? *(Grasping his sword as if to defend himself.)* Am I then weaponless?

ALVA.

The King commands thou art my prisoner. *(At the same time guards enter from both sides.)*

EGMONT.

(After a pause.) The King?—Orange! Orange! *(After a pause, resigning his sword.)* Take it! It has been employed far oftener in defending the cause of my King than in protecting this breast.

[He retires by the centre door, followed by the guard and Alva'sson. Alva remains standing while the curtain falls.]

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ACT V.



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SCENE I.—

A Street. Twilight.

Clara, Brackenburg, Burghers.

BRACKENBURG.

Dearest, for Heaven's sake, what would'st thou do?

CLARA.

Come with me, Brackenburg! Thou canst not know the people; we are certain to rescue him; for what can equal their love for him? Each feels, I could swear it, the burning desire to deliver him, to avert danger from a life so precious, and to restore freedom to the most free. Come! A voice only is wanting to call them together. In their souls the memory is still fresh of all they owe him, and well they know that his mighty arm alone shields them from destruction. For his sake, for their own sake, they must peril everything. And what do we peril? At most, our lives, which, if he perish, are not worth preserving.

BRACKENBURG.

Unhappy girl! Thou seest not the power that holds us fettered as with bands of iron.

CLARA.

To me it does not appear invincible. Let us not lose time in idle words. Here come some of our old, honest, valiant burghers! Hark ye, friends! Neighbors! Hark!—Say, how fares it with Egmont?

CARPENTER.

What does the girl want? Tell her to hold her peace.

CLARA.

Step nearer, that we may speak low, till we are united and more strong. Not a moment is to be lost! Audacious tyranny, that dared to fetter him, already lifts the dagger against his life. Oh, my friends! With the advancing twilight my anxiety grows more intense. I dread this night. Come! Let us disperse; let us hasten from quarter to quarter, and call out the burghers. Let every one grasp his ancient weapons. In the marketplace we meet again, and every one will be carried onward by our gathering stream. The enemy will see themselves surrounded, overwhelmed, and be compelled

to yield. How can a handful of slaves resist us? And he will return among us, he will see himself rescued, and can for once thank us—us, who are already so deeply in his debt. He will behold, perchance, ay doubtless, he will again behold the morn's red dawn in the free heavens.

CARPENTER.

What ails thee, maiden?

CLARA.

Can ye misunderstand me? I speak of the Count! I speak of Egmont.

JETTER.

Speak not the name! 'tis deadly.

CLARA.

Not speak his name? How? Not Egmont's name? Is it not on every tongue? Where stands it not inscribed? Often have I read it emblazoned with all its letters among these stars. Not utter it? What mean ye? Friends! good, kind neighbors, ye are dreaming; collect yourselves. Gaze not upon me with those fixed and anxious looks! Cast not such timid glances on every side! I but give utterance to the wish of all. Is not my voice the voice of your own hearts? Who, in this fearful night, ere he seeks his restless couch, but on bended knee will, in earnest prayer, seek to wrest his life as a cherished boon from heaven? Ask each other! Let each ask his own heart! And who but exclaims with me,—“Egmont's liberty, or death!”

JETTER.

God help us! This is a sad business.

CLARA.

Stay! stay! Shrink not away at the sound of his name, to meet whom ye were wont to press forward so joyously!—When rumor announced his approach, when the cry arose, “Egmont comes! He comes from Ghent!”—then happy indeed were those citizens who dwelt in the streets through which he was to pass. And when the neighing of his steed was heard, did not every one throw aside his work, while a ray of hope and joy, like a sunbeam from his countenance, stole over the toil-worn faces that peered from every window. Then, as ye stood in the doorways, ye would lift up your children in your arms, and pointing to him, exclaim: “See, that is Egmont, he who towers above the rest! 'Tis from him that ye must look for better times than those your poor fathers have known.” Let not your children inquire at some future day, “Where is he? Where are the better times ye promised us?”—Thus we waste the time in idle words! do nothing,—betray him.

SOEST.

Shame on thee, Brackenburg! Let her not run on thus! Prevent the mischief!

BRACKENBURG.

Dear Clara! Let us go! What will your mother say? Perchance—

CLARA.

Thinkest thou I am a child, or frantic? What avails perchance?—With no vain hope canst thou hide from me this dreadful certainty . . . Ye shall hear me and ye will: for I see it, ye are overwhelmed, ye cannot hearken to the voice of your own hearts. Through the present peril cast but one glance into the past,—the recent past. Send your thoughts forward into the future. Could ye live, would ye live, were he to perish? With him expires the last breath of freedom. What was he not to you? For whose sake did he expose himself to the direst perils? His blood flowed, his wounds were healed for you alone. The mighty spirit, that upheld you all, a dungeon now confines, while the horrors of secret murder are hovering around. Perhaps he thinks of you—perhaps he hopes in you,—he who has been accustomed only to grant favors to others and to fulfil their prayers.

CARPENTER.

Come, gossip.

CLARA.

I have neither the arms, nor the vigor of a man; but I have that which ye all lack—courage and contempt of danger. Oh that my breath could kindle your souls! That, pressing you to this bosom, I could arouse and animate you! Come! I will march in your midst!—As a waving banner, though weaponless, leads on a gallant army of warriors, so shall my spirit hover, like a flame, over your ranks, while love and courage shall unite the dispersed and wavering multitude into a terrible host.

JETTER.

Take her away; I pity her, poor thing!

[*Exeunt* Burghers.

BRACKENBURG.

Clara! Seest thou not where we are?

CLARA.

Where? Under the dome of heaven, which has so often seemed to arch itself more gloriously as the noble Egmont passed beneath it. From these windows I have seen them look forth, four or five heads one above the other; at these doors the cowards have stood, bowing and scraping, if he but chanced to look down upon them! Oh, how dear they were to me, when they honored him. Had he been a tyrant they might have turned with indifference from his fall! But they loved him! O ye hands, so prompt to wave caps in his honor, can ye not grasp a sword? Brackenburg, and we?—do we chide them? These arms that have so often embraced him, what do they for him now? Stratagem has accomplished so much in the world. Thou knowest the ancient castle, every passage, every secret way.—Nothing is impossible,—suggest some plan—

BRACKENBURG.

That we might go home!

CLARA.

Well.

BRACKENBURG.

There at the corner I see Alva's guard; let the voice of reason penetrate to thy heart! Dost thou deem me a coward? Dost thou doubt that for thy sake I would peril my life? Here we are both mad, I as well as thou. Dost thou not perceive that thy scheme is impracticable? Oh, be calm! Thou art beside thyself.

CLARA.

Beside myself! Horrible. You, Brackenburg, are beside yourself. When you hailed the hero with loud acclaim, called him your friend your hope, your refuge, shouted vivats as he passed—then I stood in my corner, half opened the window, concealed myself while I listened, and my heart beat higher than yours who greeted him so loudly. Now it again beats higher! In the hour of peril you conceal yourselves, deny him, and feel not, that if he perish, you are lost.

BRACKENBURG.

Come home.

CLARA.

Home?

BRACKENBURG.

Recollect thyself! Look around thee! These are the streets in which thou wert wont to appear only on the Sabbathday, when thou didst walk modestly to church; where, over-decorous perhaps, thou wert displeased if I but joined thee with a kindly greeting. And now thou dost stand, speak and act before the eyes of the whole world. Recollect thyself, love! How can this avail us?

CLARA.

Home! Yes, I remember. Come, Brackenburg, let us go home! Knowest thou where my home lies?

[*Exeunt.*

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SCENE II.

A Prison.

Lighted by a lamp, a couch in the background.

EGMONT.

(Alone.) Old friend! Ever faithful sleep, dost thou too forsake me, like my other friends? How wert thou wont of yore to descend unsought upon my free brow, cooling my temples as with a myrtle wreath of love! Amidst the din of battle, on the waves of life, I rested in thine arms, breathing lightly as a growing boy. When tempests whistled through the leaves and boughs, when the summits of the lofty trees swung creaking in the blast, the inmost core of my heart remained unmoved. What agitates thee now? What shakes thy firm and steadfast mind? I feel it, 'tis the sound of the murderous axe, gnawing at thy root. Yet I stand erect, but an inward shudder runs through my frame. Yes, it prevails, this treacherous power; it undermines the firm, the lofty stem, and ere the bark withers, thy verdant crown falls crashing to the earth.

Yet wherefore now, thou who hast so often chased the weightiest cares like bubbles from thy brow, wherefore canst thou not dissipate this dire foreboding which incessantly haunts thee in a thousand different shapes? Since when hast thou trembled at the approach of death, amid whose varying forms thou wert wont calmly to dwell, as with the other shapes of this familiar earth. But 'tis not he, the sudden foe, to encounter whom the sound bosom emulously pants;—'tis the dungeon, emblem of the grave, revolting alike to the hero and the coward. How intolerable I used to feel it, in the stately hall, girt round by gloomy walls, when, seated on my cushioned chair, in the solemn assembly of the princes, questions, which scarcely required deliberation, were overlaid with endless discussions, while the rafters of the ceiling seemed to stifle and oppress me. Then I would hurry forth as soon as possible, fling myself upon my horse with deep-drawn breath, and away to the wide champaign, man's natural element, where, exhaling from the earth, nature's richest treasures are poured forth around us, while, from the wide heavens, the stars shed down their blessings through the still air; where, like earth-born giants, we spring aloft, invigorated by our mother's touch; where our entire humanity and our human desires throb in every vein; where the desire to press forward, to vanquish, to snatch, to use his clenched fist, to possess, to conquer, glows through the soul of the young hunter; where the warrior, with rapid stride, assumes his inborn right to dominion over the world; and, with terrible liberty, sweeps like a desolating hailstorm over field and grove, knowing no boundaries traced by the hand of man.

Thou art but a shadow, a dream of the happiness I so long possessed. Where has treacherous fate conducted thee? Did she deny thee to meet the rapid stroke of never-shunned death, in the open face of day, only to prepare for thee a foretaste of the grave, in the midst of this loathsome corruption? How revoltingly its rank odor

exhales from these damp stones! Life stagnates, and my foot shrinks from the couch as from the grave.



Oh, care, care! Thou who dost begin prematurely the work of murder,—forbear.—Since when has Egmont been alone, so utterly alone in the world? 'Tis doubt renders thee insensible, not happiness. The justice of the King, in which, through life thou hast confided, the friendship of the Regent, which, thou may'st confess it, was akin to love,—have these suddenly vanished, like a meteor of the night, and left thee alone upon thy gloomy path? Will not Orange, at the head of thy friends, contrive some daring scheme? Will not the people assemble, and with gathering might, attempt the rescue of their faithful friend?

Ye walls, which thus gird me round, separate me not from the well-intentioned zeal of so many kindly souls. And may the courage with which my glance was wont to inspire them, now return again from their hearts to mine. Yes! they assemble in thousands! they come! they stand beside me! their pious wish rises urgently to heaven, and implores a miracle; and if no angel stoops for my deliverance, I see them grasp eagerly their lance and sword. The gates are forced, the bolts are riven, the walls fall beneath their conquering hands, and Egmont advances joyously, to hail the freedom of the rising morn. How many well-known faces receive me with loud acclaim! Oh, Clara! wert thou a man, I should see thee here the very first, and thank thee for that which it is galling to owe even to a king—liberty.

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SCENE III.—

Clara's *House*.

CLARA.

(Enters from her chamber with a lamp and a glass of water; she places the glass upon the table and steps to the window.) Brackenburg, is it you? What noise was that? No one yet? No one! I will set the lamp in the window, that he may see that I am still awake, that I still watch for him. He promised me tidings. Tidings? horrible certainty!—Egmont condemned!—what tribunal has the right to summon him?—And they dare to condemn him!—Does the King condemn him, or the Duke? And the Regent withdraws herself! Orange hesitates, and all his friends!—Is this the world of whose fickleness and treachery I have heard so much, and as yet experienced nothing? Is this the world?—Who could be so base as to bear malice against one so dear? Could villainy itself be audacious enough to overwhelm with sudden destruction the object of a nation's homage? Yet so it is—it is. O Egmont, I held thee safe before God and man, safe as in my arms! What was I to thee? Thou hast called me thine, my whole being was devoted to thee? What am I now? In vain I stretch out my hand to the toils that environ thee. Thou helpless and I free!—Here is the key that unlocks my chamber door. My going out and my coming in depend upon my own caprice; yet, alas, to aid thee I am powerless!—Oh, bind me that I may not despair; hurl me into the deepest dungeon, that I may dash my head against the damp walls, groan for freedom, and dream how I would rescue him if fetters did not hold me bound. Now I am free, and in freedom lies the anguish of impotence. Conscious of my own existence, yet unable to stir a limb in his behalf, alas! even this insignificant portion of thy being, thy Clara, is, like thee, a captive, and, separated from thee, consumes her expiring energies in the agonies of death. I hear a stealthy step,—a cough—Brackenburg,—'tis he!—Kind, unhappy man, thy destiny remains ever the same; thy love opens to thee the door at night, alas! to what a doleful meeting. *(Enter Brackenburg.)* Thou com'st so pale, so terrified! Brackenburg! What is it?

BRACKENBURG.

I have sought thee through perils and circuitous paths. The principal streets are occupied with troops;—through lanes and by-ways have I stolen to thee!

CLARA.

Tell me, how is it?

BRACKENBURG.

(Seating himself.) O Clara, let me weep. I loved him not. He was the rich man who lured to better pasture the poor man's solitary lamb. I have never cursed him. God has

created me with a true and tender heart. My life was consumed in anguish, and each day I hoped would end my misery.

CLARA.

Let that be forgotten, Brackenburg! Forget thyself. Speak to me of him! Is it true? Is he condemned?

BRACKENBURG.

He is! I know it.

CLARA.

And still lives?

BRACKENBURG.

Yes, he still lives.

CLARA.

How canst thou be sure of that? Tyranny murders the hero in the night! His blood flows concealed from every eye. The people stunned and bewildered, lie buried in sleep, dream of deliverance, dream of the fulfilment of their impotent wishes, while, indignant at our supineness, his spirit abandons the world. He is no more! Deceive me not; deceive not thyself!

BRACKENBURG.

No,—he lives! and the Spaniards, alas, are preparing for the people, on whom they are about to trample, a terrible spectacle, in order to crush forever, by a violent blow, each heart that yet pants for freedom.



artist: c. haberlin.

EGMONT. ACT V, SCENE III.

clara and brackenburg.

CLARA.

Proceed! Calmly pronounce my death-warrant also! Near and more near I approach that blessed land, and already from those realms of peace I feel the breath of consolation. Say on!

BRACKENBURG.

From casual words, dropped here and there by the guards, I learned that secretly in the market-place they were preparing some terrible spectacle. Through byways and familiar lanes I stole to my cousin's house, and from a back window looked out upon the market-place. Torches waved to and fro, in the hands of a wide circle of Spanish soldiers. I sharpened my unaccustomed sight, and out of the darkness there arose before me a scaffold, black, spacious and lofty! The sight filled me with horror. Several persons were employed in covering with black cloth such portions of the woodwork as yet remained white and visible. The steps were covered last, also with black;—I saw it all. They seemed preparing for the celebration of some horrible sacrifice. A white crucifix, that shone like silver through the night, was raised on one side. As I gazed, the terrible conviction strengthened in my mind. Scattered torches still gleamed here and there; gradually they flickered and went out. Suddenly the hideous birth of night returned into its mother's womb.

CLARA.

Hush, Brackenburg! Be still! Let this veil rest upon my soul. The spectres are vanished; and thou, gentle night, lend thy mantle to the inwardly fermenting earth; she will no longer endure the loathsome burden; shuddering, she rends open her yawning chasms, and with a crash swallows the murderous scaffold. And that God, whom in their rage they have insulted, sends down His angel from on high; at the hallowed touch of the messenger bolts and bars fly back; he pours around our friend a mild radiance, and leads him gently through the night to liberty. My path leads also through the darkness to meet him.

BRACKENBURG.

(Detaining her.) My child, whither would'st thou go? What would'st thou do?

CLARA.

Softly, my friend, lest some one should awake! Lest we should awake ourselves! Know'st thou this phial, Brackenburg? I took it from thee once in jest, when thou, as was thy wont, didst threaten, in thy impatience, to end thy days.—And now, my friend—

BRACKENBURG.

In the name of all the saints!

CLARA.

Thou canst not hinder me. Death is my portion! Grudge me not the quiet and easy death which thou hadst prepared for thyself. Give me thine hand!—At the moment when I uncloset that dismal portal through which there is no return, I may tell thee, with this pressure of the hand, how sincerely I have loved, how deeply I have pitied thee. My brother died young; I chose thee to fill his place; thy heart rebelled, thou didst torment thyself and me, demanding with ever increasing fervor that which fate had not destined for thee. Forgive me and farewell! Let me call thee brother! 'Tis a name that embraces many names. Receive, with a true heart, the last fair token of the departing spirit—take this kiss. Death unites all, Brackenburg—us too it will unite!

BRACKENBURG.

Let me then die with thee! Share it! oh, share it! There is enough to extinguish two lives.

CLARA.

Hold! Thou must live, thou canst live.—Support my mother, who, without thee, would be a prey to want. Be to her what I can no longer be, live together, and weep for me. Weep for our fatherland, and for him who could alone have upheld it. The present generation must still endure this bitter woe; vengeance itself could not obliterate it. Poor souls, live on, through this gap in time, which is time no longer. To-day the world suddenly stands still, its course is arrested, and my pulse will beat but for a few minutes longer. Farewell.

BRACKENBURG.

Oh, live with us, as we live only for thy sake! In taking thine own life, thou wilt take ours also; still live and suffer. We will stand by thee, nothing shall sever us from thy side, and love, with ever-watchful solicitude, shall prepare for thee the sweetest consolation in its loving arms. Be ours! Ours! I dare not say, mine.

CLARA.

Hush, Brackenburg! Thou feelest not what chord thou touchest. Where hope appears to thee, I see only despair.

BRACKENBURG.

Share hope with the living! Pause on the brink of the precipice, cast one glance into the gulf below, and then look back on us.

CLARA.

I have conquered; call me not back to the struggle.

BRACKENBURG.

Thou art stunned; enveloped in night, thou seekest the abyss. Every light is not yet extinguished, yet many days!—

CLARA.

Alas! alas! Cruelly thou dost rend the veil from before mine eyes. Yes, the day will dawn! Despite its misty shroud it needs must dawn. Timidly the burgher gazes from his window, night leaves behind an ebon speck; he looks, and the scaffold looms fearfully in the morning light. With re-awakened anguish the desecrated image of the Saviour lifts to the Father its imploring eyes. The sun veils his beams, he will not mark the hero's death-hour. Slowly the fingers go their round—one hour strikes after another—hold! Now is the time. The thought of the morning scares me into the grave.

[She goes to the window as if to look out, and drinks secretly.]

BRACKENBURG.

Clara! Clara!

CLARA.

(Goes to the table, and drinks water.) Here is the remainder. I invite thee not to follow me. Do as thou wilt; farewell. Extinguish this lamp silently and without delay; I am going to rest. Steal quietly away, close the door after thee. Be still! Wake not my mother! Go, save thyself, if thou would'st not be taken for my murderer.

[Exit.]

BRACKENBURG.

She leaves me for the last time as she has ever done. What human soul could conceive how cruelly she lacerates the heart that loves her. She leaves me to myself, leaves me to choose between life and death, and both are alike hateful to me. To die alone! Weep, ye tender souls! Fate has no sadder doom than mine. She shares with me the death-potion, yet sends me from her side! She draws me after her, yet thrusts me back into life! Oh, Egmont, how enviable a lot falls to thee! She goes before thee! The crown of victory from her hand is thine; she brings all heaven to meet thee!—And shall I follow? Again to stand aloof? To carry this inextinguishable jealousy even to yon distant realms? Earth is no longer a tarrying place for me, and hell and heaven offer equal torture. Now welcome to the wretched the dread hand of annihilation!

[Exit.]

[The scene remains some time unchanged. Music sounds, indicating Clara's death; the lamp, which Brackenburg had forgotten to extinguish, flares up once or twice, and then suddenly expires. The scene changes.]



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SCENE IV.—

A Prison.

[Egmont is discovered sleeping on a couch. A rustling of keys is heard; the door opens; servants enter with torches; Ferdinand and Silva follow, accompanied by soldiers. Egmont starts from his sleep.]

EGMONT.

Who are ye that thus rudely banish slumber from my eyes? What mean these vague and insolent glances? Why this fearful procession? With what dream of horror come ye to delude my half-awakened soul?

SILVA.

The Duke sends us to announce your sentence.

EGMONT.

Do ye also bring the headsman who is to execute it?

SILVA.

Listen, and you will know the doom that awaits you.

EGMONT.

It is in keeping with the rest of your infamous proceedings. Hatched in night and in night achieved, so would this audacious act of injustice shroud itself from observation!—Step boldly forth, thou who dost bear the sword concealed beneath thy mantle; here is my head, the freest ever severed by tyranny from the trunk.

SILVA.

You err! The righteous judges who have condemned you will not conceal their sentence from the light of day.

EGMONT.

Then does their audacity exceed all imagination and belief.

SILVA.

(Takes the sentence from an attendant, unfolds it, and reads:) “In the King’s name, invested by his Majesty with authority to judge all his subjects of whatever rank, not excepting knights of the Golden Fleece, we declare—”

EGMONT.

Can the King transfer that authority?

SILVA.

“We declare, after a strict and legal investigation, thee, Henry, Count Egmont, Prince of Gaure, guilty of high treason, and pronounce thy sentence: That at early dawn thou be led from this prison to the market-place, and that there, in sight of the people, and as a warning to all traitors, thou with the sword be brought from life to death. Given at Brussels.” *(Date and year so indistinctly read as to be imperfectly heard by the audience.)* “Ferdinand, Duke of Alva, President of the Tribunal of Twelve.” Thou knowest now thy doom. Brief time remains for thee to prepare for the impending stroke, to arrange thy affairs and take leave of thy friends.

[ExitSilvawith followers.Ferdinandremains with two torch-bearers. The stage is dimly lighted.]

EGMONT.

(Stands for a time as if buried in thought, and allowsSilvato retire without looking round. He imagines himself alone, and, on raising his eyes, beholdsAlva'sson.) Thou tarriest here? Would'st thou by thy presence augment my amazement, my horror? Would'st thou carry to thy father the welcome tidings that in unmanly fashion I despair? Go! tell him that he deceives neither the world nor me. At first it will be whispered cautiously behind his back, then spoken more and more loudly, and when at some future day the ambitious man descends from his proud eminence, a thousand voices will proclaim—that 'twas not the welfare of the state, not the honor of the King, not the tranquillity of the provinces, that brought him hither. For his own selfish ends he, the warrior, has counselled war, that in war the value of his services might be enhanced. He has excited this monstrous insurrection that his presence might be deemed necessary in order to quell it. And I fall a victim to his mean hatred, his contemptible envy. Yes, I know it, dying and mortally wounded I may utter it; long has the proud man envied me, long has he meditated and planned my ruin.

Even then, when still young, we played at dice together, and the heaps of gold, one after the other, passed rapidly from his side to mine; he would look on with affected composure, while inwardly consumed with rage, more at my success than at his own loss. Well do I remember the fiery glance, the treacherous pallor that overspread his features when, at a public festival, we shot for a wager before assembled thousands. He challenged me, and both nations stood by; Spaniards and Netherlanders wagered on either side; I was the victor; his ball missed, mine hit the mark, and the air was rent

by acclamations from my friends. His shot now hits me. Tell him that I know this, that I know him, that the world despises every trophy that a paltry spirit erects for itself by base and surreptitious arts. And thou! If it be possible for a son to swerve from the manners of his father, practise shame betimes, while thou art compelled to feel shame for him whom thou would'st fain revere with thy whole heart.

FERDINAND.

I listen without interrupting thee! Thy reproaches fall like blows upon a helmet. I feel the shock, but I am armed. They strike, they wound me not; I am sensible only to the anguish that lacerates my heart. Alas! alas! Have I lived to witness such a scene? Am I sent hither to behold a spectacle like this?



EGMONT.

Dost thou break out into lamentations? What moves, what agitates thee thus? Is it a late remorse at having lent thyself to this infamous conspiracy? Thou art so young, thy exterior is so prepossessing. Thy demeanor towards me was so friendly, so unreserved! So long as I beheld thee, I was reconciled with thy father; and crafty, ay, more crafty than he, thou hast lured me into the toils. Thou art the wretch! The monster! Whoso confides in him, does so at his own peril; but who could apprehend danger in trusting thee? Go! go! rob me not of the few moments that are left to me! Go, that I may collect my thoughts, the world forget, and first of all thyself!

FERDINAND.

What can I say? I stand and gaze on thee, yet see thee not; I am scarcely conscious of my own existence. Shall I seek to excuse myself? Shall I assure thee that it was not till the last moment that I was made aware of my father's intentions? that I acted as a constrained, a passive instrument of his will? What signifies now the opinion thou may'st entertain of me? Thou art lost; and I, miserable wretch, stand here only to assure thee of it, only to lament thy doom.

EGMONT.

What strange voice, what unexpected consolation comes thus to cheer my passage to the grave? Thou, the son of my first, of almost my only enemy, thou dost pity me, thou art not associated with my murderers? Speak! In what light must I regard thee?

FERDINAND.

Cruel father! Yes, I recognize thy nature in this command. Thou didst know my heart, my disposition, which thou hast so often censured as the inheritance of a tender-hearted mother. To mould me into thine own likeness thou hast sent me hither. Thou dost compel me to behold this man on the verge of the yawning grave, in the grasp of an arbitrary doom, that I may experience the profoundest anguish; that thus, rendered callous to every fate, I may henceforth meet every event with a heart unmoved.

EGMONT.

I am amazed! Be calm! Act, speak like a man.

FERDINAND.

Oh, that I were a woman! That they might say: What moves, what agitates thee? Tell me of a greater, a more monstrous crime, make me the spectator of a more direful deed; I will thank thee, I will say, This was nothing.

EGMONT.

Thou dost forget thyself. Consider where thou art!

FERDINAND.

Let this passion rage, let me give vent to my anguish! I will not seem composed when my whole inner being is convulsed. Thee must I behold here? Thee? It is horrible! Thou understandest me not! How should'st thou understand me? Egmont! Egmont!

[Falling on his neck.]

EGMONT.

Explain this mystery.

FERDINAND.

It is no mystery.

EGMONT.

How can the fate of a mere stranger thus deeply move thee?

FERDINAND.

Not a stranger! Thou art no stranger to me. Thy name it was that, even from my boyhood, shone before me like a star in heaven! How often have I made inquiries concerning thee, and listened to the story of thy deeds! The youth is the hope of the boy, the man of the youth. Thus didst thou walk before me, ever before me; I saw thee without envy, and followed after, step by step; at length I hoped to see thee—I saw thee, and my heart flew to thy embrace. I had destined thee for myself, and when I beheld thee, I made choice of thee anew. I hoped now to know thee, to live with thee, to be thy friend,—thy—'tis over now and I see thee here!

EGMONT.

My friend, if it can be any comfort to thee, be assured that the very moment we met my heart was drawn towards thee. Now listen! Let us exchange a few quiet words. Tell me: is it the stern, the settled purpose of thy father to take my life?

FERDINAND.

It is.

EGMONT.

This sentence is not a mere empty scarecrow, designed to terrify me, to punish me through fear and intimidation, to humiliate me, that he may then raise me again by the royal favor?

FERDINAND.

Alas, no! At first I flattered myself with this delusive hope; and even then my heart was filled with grief and anguish to behold thee thus. Thy doom is real!—is certain! No, I cannot command myself. Who will counsel, who will aid me, to meet the inevitable?

EGMONT.

Hearken then to me! If thy heart is impelled so powerfully in my favor, if thou dost abhor the tyranny that holds me fettered, then deliver me! The moments are precious. Thou art the son of the all-powerful, and thou hast power thyself. Let us fly! I know the roads; the means of effecting our escape cannot be unknown to thee. These walls, a few short miles, alone separate me from my friends. Loosen these fetters, conduct me to them; be ours. The King, on some future day, will doubtless thank my deliverer. Now he is taken by surprise, or perchance he is ignorant of the whole proceeding. Thy

father ventures on this daring step, and majesty, though horror-struck at the deed, must needs sanction the irrevocable. Thou dost deliberate? Oh, contrive for me the way to freedom! Speak: nourish hope in a living soul.

FERDINAND.

Cease! Oh, cease! Every word deepens my despair. There is here no outlet, no counsel, no escape.—'Tis this thought that tortures me, that seizes my heart, and rends it as with talons. I have myself spread the net; I know its firm, inextricable knots; I know that every avenue is barred alike to courage and to stratagem. I feel that I too, like thyself, like all the rest, am fettered. Think'st thou that I should give way to lamentation if any means of safety remained untried? I have thrown myself at his feet, remonstrated, implored. He has sent me hither in order to blast, in this fatal moment, every remnant of joy and happiness that yet survived within my heart.

EGMONT.

And is there no deliverance?

FERDINAND.

None!

EGMONT.

(Stamping his foot.) No deliverance!—Sweet life! Sweet, pleasant habitude of existence and of activity! from thee must I part! So calmly part! Not in the tumult of battle, amid the din of arms, the excitement of the fray, dost thou send me a hasty farewell; thine is no hurried leave; thou dost not abridge the moment of separation. Once more let me clasp thy hand, gaze once more into thine eyes, feel with keen emotion thy beauty and thy worth, then resolutely tear myself away, and say—depart!

FERDINAND.

Must I stand by, and look passively on, unable to save thee, or to give thee aid! What voice avails for lamentation! What heart but must break under the pressure of such anguish?

EGMONT.

Be calm!

FERDINAND.

Thou canst be calm, thou canst renounce, led on by necessity, thou canst advance to the direful struggle, with the courage of a hero. What can I do? What ought I to do? Thou dost conquer thyself and us; thou art the victor; I survive both myself and thee. I

have lost my light at the banquet, my banner on the field. The future lies before me, dark, desolate, perplexed.

EGMONT.

Young friend, whom by a strange fatality, at the same moment, I both win and lose, who dost feel for me, who dost suffer for me the agonies of death,—look on me;—thou wilt not lose me. If my life was a mirror in which thou didst love to contemplate thyself, so be also my death. Men are not together only when in each other's presence;—the distant, the departed, also live for us. I shall live for thee, and for myself I have lived long enough. I have enjoyed each day; each day, I have performed, with prompt activity, the duties enjoined by my conscience. Now my life ends, as it might have ended, long, long, ago, on the sands of Gravelines. I shall cease to live; but I have lived. My friend, follow in my steps, lead a cheerful and a joyous life, and dread not the approach of death.

FERDINAND.

Thou should'st have saved thyself for us, thou could'st have saved thyself. Thou art the cause of thine own destruction. Often have I listened when able men discoursed concerning thee; foes and friends, they would dispute long as to thy worth; but on one point they were agreed, none ventured to deny, every one confessed, that thou wert treading a dangerous path. How often have I longed to warn thee! Hadst thou then no friends?

EGMONT.

I was warned.

FERDINAND.

And when I found all these allegations, point for point, in the indictment, together with thy answers, containing much that might serve to palliate thy conduct, but no evidence weighty enough fully to exculpate thee—

EGMONT.

No more of this. Man imagines that he directs his life, that he governs his actions, when in fact his existence is irresistibly controlled by his destiny. Let us not dwell upon this subject; these reflections I can dismiss with ease—not so my apprehensions for these provinces; yet they too will be cared for. Could my blood flow for many, bring peace to my people, how freely should it flow! Alas! This may not be. Yet it ill becomes a man idly to speculate, when the power to act is no longer his. If thou canst restrain or guide the fatal power of thy father; do so. Alas, who can?—Farewell!

FERDINAND.

I cannot leave thee.

EGMONT.

Let me urgently recommend my followers to thy care! I have worthy men in my service; let them not be dispersed, let them not become destitute! How fares it with Richard, my secretary?

FERDINAND.

He is gone before thee. They have beheaded him, as thy accomplice in high treason.

EGMONT.

Poor soul!—Yet one word, and then farewell, I can no more. However powerfully the spirit may be stirred, nature at length irresistibly asserts her rights; and like a child, who, enveloped in a serpent's folds, enjoys refreshing slumber, so the weary one lays himself down to rest before the gates of death, and sleeps soundly, as though a toilsome journey yet lay before him.—One word more,—I know a maiden; thou wilt not despise her because she was mine. Since I can recommend her to thy care, I shall die in peace. Thy soul is noble; in such a man, a woman is sure to find a protector. Lives my old Adolphus? Is he free?



FERDINAND.

The active old man, who always attended thee on horseback?

EGMONT.

The same.

FERDINAND.

He lives, he is free.

EGMONT.

He knows her dwelling; let him guide thy steps thither, and reward him to his dying day, for having shown thee the way to this jewel.—Farewell!

FERDINAND.

I cannot leave thee.

EGMONT.

(Urging him towards the door.) Farewell!

FERDINAND.

Oh, let me linger yet a moment!

EGMONT.

No leave-taking, my friend.

[He accompanies Ferdinand to the door, and then tears himself away; Ferdinand, overwhelmed with grief, hastily retires.]

Egmont *(alone)*.

EGMONT.

Cruel man! Thou didst not think to render me this service through thy son. He has been the means of relieving my mind from the pressure of care and sorrow, from fear and every anxious feeling. Gently, yet urgently, nature claims her final tribute. 'Tis past!—'Tis resolved! And the reflections which, in the suspense of last night, kept me wakeful on my couch, now with resistless certainty lull my senses to repose.

[He seats himself upon the couch; music.]

Sweet sleep! Like the purest happiness, thou comest most willingly, uninvited, unsought. Thou dost loosen the knots of earnest thoughts, dost mingle all images of joy and of sorrow, unimpeded the circle of inner harmony flows on, and wrapped in fond delusion, we sink into oblivion, and cease to be.

[He sleeps; music accompanies his slumber. Behind his couch the wall appears to open and discovers a brilliant apparition. Freedom, in a celestial garb, surrounded by a glory, reposes on a cloud. Her features are those of Clara and she inclines towards the sleeping hero. Her countenance betokens compassion, she seems to lament his fate. Quickly she recovers herself and with an encouraging gesture exhibits the symbols of freedom, the bundle of arrows, with the staff and cap. She encourages him to be of good cheer, and while she signifies to him that his death will secure the

freedom of the provinces, she hails him as a conqueror, and extends to him a laurel crown. As the wreath approaches his head Egmont moves like one asleep, and reclines with his face towards her. She holds the wreath suspended over his head;—martial music is heard in the distance, at the first sound the vision disappears. The music grows louder and louder. Egmont awakes. The prison is dimly illuminated by the dawn.—His first impulse is to lift his hand to his head; he stands up, and gazes round, his hand still upraised.

The crown is vanished! Beautiful vision, the light of day has frightened thee! Yes, they revealed themselves to my sight uniting in one radiant form the two sweetest joys of my heart. Divine Liberty borrowed the mien of my beloved one; the lovely maiden arrayed herself in the celestial garb of my friend. In a solemn moment they appeared united, with aspect more earnest than tender. With blood-stained feet the vision approached, the waving folds of her robe also were tinged with blood. It was my blood, and the blood of many brave hearts. No! It shall not be shed in vain! Forward! Brave people! The goddess of liberty leads you on! And as the sea breaks through and destroys the barriers that would oppose its fury, so do ye overwhelm the bulwark of tyranny, and with your impetuous flood sweep it away from the land which it usurps.

[Drums.

Hark! hark! How often has this sound summoned my joyous steps to the field of battle and of victory! How bravely did I tread, with my gallant comrades, the dangerous path of fame! And now, from this dungeon I shall go forth, to meet a glorious death; I die for freedom, for whose cause I have lived and fought, and for whom I now offer myself up a sorrowing sacrifice.

[The background is occupied by Spanish soldiers with halberds.

Yes, lead them on! Close your ranks; ye terrify me not. I am accustomed to stand amid the serried ranks of war, and environed by the threatening forms of death, to feel, with double zest, the energy of life.

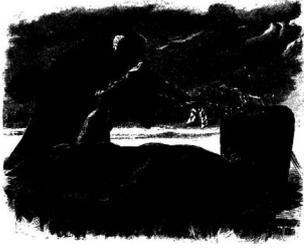
[Drums.

The foe closes round on every side! Swords are flashing! Courage, friends! Behind are your parents, your wives, your children!

[Pointing to the guard.

And these are impelled by the word of their leader, not by their own free will. Protect your homes! And to save those who are most dear to you, be ready to follow my example, and to fall with joy.

[Drums. As he advances through the guards towards the door in the background, the curtain falls. The music joins in, and the scene closes with a symphony of victory.



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THE NATURAL DAUGHTER A TRAGEDY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.



King.

Duke.

Count.

Eugenie.

Governess.

Secretary.

Secular Priest.

Counsellor.

Governor.

Abbess.

Monk.



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ACT I.



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SCENE I.—

Thick Wood.

King. Duke.

KING.

Our fleeting goal attracting dogs and man
To follow swift along the winding course—
The noble stag has led us far astray
O'er vales and mountains, till I needs must own
That I myself, although so country-wise,
Am quite at loss. Where are we, uncle? Duke,
Pray tell me what these hills are that we cross'd!

DUKE.

The brook that babbles past us, Sire, arises
Upon thy servant's near domain, for which
He has to thank the generous grace bestow'd
By thee and by thy royal ancestors
Upon him, as first vassal of the realm.
Beyond the rocks of yonder eminence
A pleasant house stands hid by veils of green,
Not built at all for housing royalty,
But ready to receive thee, if thou wilt.

KING.

Nay! let the lofty arches of these trees

Give shelter for the moment that we rest,
And let the gentle stirring of the breeze
Weave round us, while the joy of peaceful scenes
Succeeds the joy of dashing o'er the course.

DUKE.

The pleasure that thou feelest here, O King,
Behind this lovely screen of Nature's work,
In absolute seclusion, I also feel.
Here comes not nigh the voice of discontent,
Nor yet the hand of shameless violence.
Here in the freedom born of loneliness
Thou seest not the ungrateful slink away.
The restless world, which ever makes demand
And never lends its aid, is vanish'd now.

KING.

If I shall e'er forget what once oppress'd me
Then let no word recall me to its trials.
Ye echoes of the distant world's commotion,
Little by little vanish from my ears!
Yea, prithee, uncle, suit thy fair discourse
To circumstances fitter for this spot.
Here wife and husband, hand-in-hand, should roam,
Rejoicing in the sight of comely children,
The highest reach of joy; here friend with friend
Draw nigh, disclosing every secret pleasure.

And didst not thou erewhile drop gentle hints
That when a quiet moment could be ours
Thou hadst some weighty secret to confess,
Some contemplated favor to demand,
Which, granted, would rejoice your faithful heart?

DUKE.

O Sire, no greater kindness could'st thou show me
Than setting free the fountain of my speech.
And what I fain would tell who else could hear
More fitly than my King, among whose treasures
None shine with such a lustre as his children,—
Who, I am sure, will give his sympathy
In all the father's joy his servant feels?

KING.

Of father's joy thou speakest! Know'st thou then
Its heavenly rapture? Has thy only son
Not torn thy loving heart by lawless actions,
By disobedience, by unfilial scorn,
Until thy sadden'd life reach'd bitter age?
Has he then lately chang'd his evil ways?

DUKE.

From him I have no hope of happier days,
His idle mind gives birth to clouds alone
Which ever gloom the horizon of my life.
A different star it is that sheds its light

Upon me. As in cheerless caverns shine,
Mysterious with their wonder-working rays,
Bright precious stones (so fairy legends say),
And gleam across the murky night which reigns,
So in my gloomy life a magic gift
Was granted, blessing me beyond all words—
A gift I cherish more than lands and gold
Inherited or won by deeds of war,
Yea, more than sight, more than the light of life,
And guard with joy and fear, with pain and pleasure.

KING.

Speak not so darkly of the mystery dark.

DUKE.

'Twould not be easy to confess our faults
In ears of royalty, were royalty
Alone not able to convert their harm
To fair results of right and good report.

KING.

The treasure guarded with such watchful love?

DUKE.

That treasure is a daughter.

KING.

What! a daughter?

And like the gods in fable, uncle, stole

In secret hither to earth's lower circles
To take delight in earthly love and bliss?

DUKE.

Small things as well as great compell'd us, Sire,
To hide our actions from the world's dispraise.
The lady, bound to me by wondrous Fate
In secret union, stood so high in rank:—
And even now thy court wears mourning garb
And secret sorrow gnaws my heart for her.

KING.

The Princess? She who lately died
So honor'd and so mourn'd?

DUKE.

She was the mother.
But let me speak of her alone—my child,
Who, living better than her parents liv'd,
Rejoices in the noble joys of life—
And all the rest leave buried in the grave
Of her the gifted, lofty-minded woman.
Her death at last unseals my lips. I dare
Before my King to name my daughter now—
I dare demand of him to lift her up
Upon a level with me and her peers,
To recognize her right to princely birth
Before his court, his kingdom and the world,

So sure am I of favor in his heart!

KING.

If all the virtues of her noble parents
Are found united in this niece whom thou
Preparest to present me ready grown,
Then must the court, then must our royal house,
From which a brilliant star set all too soon,
Give welcome to the new star rising fair.

DUKE.

Oh, learn to know her ere thou judgest her
With prejudice. Let not a father's pride
Pervert thee. Much has Nature done for her
Which I with rarest pleasure contemplate.
And all the culture which our rank demands
Has, since her babyhood, been warmly foster'd.
Her steps were guided from her earliest days
By a skilful governess, a wise professor.
With what light-heartedness and pleasant wit
She makes the present serve her ready mind,
While poet Fancy paints with flattering hues
The fortune which she waits with eager joy!
Her gentle heart clings to her loving father,
Although her spirit willingly gives heed
To wise discourse of noble-thinking men,
Leading her slowly up the hill of learning.

And all the exercise of princely virtues
Is manifest in her fair graceful form.
Sire! thou thyself hast seen her unbeknown,
While round thee whirl'd the tumult of the chase.
To-day a daughter of the Amazons
She first upon the traces of the stag
Dash'd gallantly across the swelling stream.

KING.

We trembled when we saw the noble maid.
I am rejoic'd to know she is my kin.

DUKE.

And not to-day alone I learn'd to know
How pride and apprehension, joy and trouble
Commingle in a father's yearning breast.

KING.

With mighty force and panting strove the steed
To land his rider on the farther shore,
Where thick-grown bushes hide the dusky hill,
And thus she vanish'd from my sight.

DUKE.

Once more
My eyes beheld her ere the labyrinth
Of bosky forest led us thus astray.
Who knows what distant field she now explores
With heart on fire because she miss'd the goal,

Where now alone it is permitted her
To approach the presence of her King revered,
And humbly wait until with royal favor
She is acknowledg'd as his kith and kin—
The latest blossom of his ancient line.

KING.

But what is yonder tumult that I see?
What means the running towards the precipice?

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SCENE II.—

The Same.

Count.

KING.

Why are the people gathering with such haste?

COUNT.

The eager huntress whom we all admir'd
Has fallen headlong from yon rocky height.

DUKE.

My God!

KING.

And are her wounds severe?

COUNT.

In haste

They sent away to call thy surgeon, Sire.

DUKE.

Why do I linger? If she's dead, then naught

Remains for me to live for in the world.

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SCENE III.

King. Count.

KING.

What was it caus'd the accident, Sir Count?

COUNT.

It happen'd right before my very eyes:
A band of many riders found themselves
By fortune separated from the hunt,
And, led by that fair lady, prick'd their way
Upon the wood-crown'd summit of yon height.
They hear, they see below them in the valley
That all is over, see the noble stag
Succumb before the pack of yelping hounds,
And quickly then the company disbands,
Each seeking by the path where each may best,—
One here, one there,—a prosperous exit down.
But she alone no instant hesitates,
But spurs her steed from crag to crag sheer down;
We marvel at the luck of recklessness.
Bravely it goes with her awhile; at last
When she has reach'd the ultimate descent,
A steep bold cliff, the horse mistakes his steps
So insecure, and down he goes with her.

Thus much I saw and then the hurrying throng
Hid her from sight. I heard them call the surgeon;
And so I now am here to tell thee, Sire.

KING.

Oh, that she may be spar'd him! Dangerous
Is that man who has nothing more to lose.

COUNT.

Has then this sudden fright compell'd the secret,
Which, until now, he strove so hard to hide?

KING.

His confidence was freely given ere now.

COUNT.

The Princess's death remov'd the seal of silence
From lips which tell a history long disclos'd—
An open secret unto court and city.

It is a curious and absurd conceit
That we through silence can annihilate
For others or ourselves the deeds we do.

KING.

Oh, leave to man this noble touch of pride!
He can, he must do many, many things
Which are not suitable to put in words.

COUNT.

They bring her hither, lifeless I'm afraid.

KING.

Oh, what an unexpected, sad event!

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SCENE IV.—

The Same.

Eugenielaid apparently dead on woven boughs of pine.

Duke. Surgeon. Attendants.

DUKE.

(To the Surgeon.) Oh, if thy art and skill have any power,

Experienc'd sir, to whom our monarch's life,

A priceless treasure, is entrusted, let

Her bright eyes once more open to the day,

That hope may shine upon me in her glance,

That from the depths of grief I may be sav'd,

If only for a fleeting moment now.

And then if nothing more, if thou canst keep her

Only a fleeting moment for me, then,

Oh, let me haste and pass away before her,

That in the very article of death

I still may say, consol'd, "My daughter lives."

KING.

Pray, leave us, uncle! Let me undertake

The faithful service of a father's love.

This worthy man will nothing leave undone;

As though myself lay wounded sore, he will—

Doubt not—exert his skill upon thy daughter.

DUKE.

She moves!

KING.

Art thou assur'd of it?

DUKE.

She moves!

Her eyes are open wide; she glances round!

She lives! She lives!

KING.

(Stepping back a little.) Redouble your exertions!

DUKE.

She lives! She lives! Again the light of day

Her eyes behold. Yes! soon she'll recognize

Her loving father and her friends once more!

My darling child, gaze not so wild around

As though uncertain: towards me turn thy face,

Oh, turn thy face upon thy father first.

Dost thou not know me? Let thy father's voice

Be first to reach thy ear, as thou returnest

From gloomy shades of everlasting night!

EUGENIE.

(Who little by little has returned to consciousness and sits up.) Where am I? What has happen'd to me?

DUKE.

First,

Oh, speak to me! Dost thou not know me?

EUGENIE.

Father!

DUKE.

Yes, 'tis thy father whom with these sweet tones

Thou savest from the arms of grim despair!

EUGENIE.

Who brought me here among these trees?

DUKE.

(To whom the surgeon has handed a white handkerchief.) Be calm,

My daughter! Take this strengthening draught,

Take it with confidence, with quiet soul.

EUGENIE.

(Takes the handkerchief from her father as he holds it in his hands, and buries her face in it; then suddenly gets to her feet, taking the handkerchief from her face.)

There! I'm myself again! Now I remember!

On yonder height I rein'd my horse and dar'd

Ride down, sheer down the rocky side. Forgive me—

I stumbled, did I not? Canst thou forgive me?

They took me up for dead? My darling father!

And canst thou ever love thy child again,

Who caus'd such bitter anguish to thy heart?

DUKE.

I thought I knew how precious was the treasure

God granted when he gave me thee, my daughter!

But now the loss I fear'd has caused my gain

To rise to estimation infinite.

KING.

(Who till now has remained in the background conversing with the Surgeon and the Count—to the others.)

Let all withdraw! I wish to speak with them.

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SCENE V.

King. Duke. Eugenie.

KING.

(Approaching.) And is the gallant huntress quite recover'd?

Has she escap'd unharm'd?

DUKE.

Yes! quite, my King!

And all the sad remains of fright and woe,

Thou, Sire, dispellest by thy gentle glance,

And by the magic of thy tender tones.

KING.

Pray tell me who the lovely maiden is.

DUKE.

(After a pause.) Since thou art pleas'd to ask, I will confess—

Since thou demandest, I will solve my pledge,

And introduce my daughter.

KING.

What! thy daughter?

Then, uncle, Fortune has been kinder to thee,

Yea, infinitely kinder than the law.

EUGENIE.

Am I indeed brought back to life again?

Has that strange deathlike faintness pass'd away?

And is this scene no fiction of a dream?

My father in the presence of his King

Declares his daughter! Nay! I do not dream.

The uncle of a monarch recognizes

That I'm his child. So then am I the niece—

The niece of the great King! Oh, pardon me,

Your Majesty, if brought so suddenly

From out the mystery of my dark retreat,

Expos'd to all the blinding light of day,

I totter, and cannot control myself.

[She throws herself at the feet of the King.]

KING.

May reverence mark thy life from youth to age.

The reverence symboliz'd before me now!

And sweet humility whose narrow duties

Thou, fully conscious of thy lofty birth,

Hast practis'd many a year far from the world.

[He raises her and presses her gently to his heart.]



artist: otto seitz

THE NATURAL DAUGHTER. ACT I, SCENE IV.

eugenia recognizes her father.

And now if from before my feet I lift thee

And take thee to my heart, if on thy brow

I print the fond kiss of paternal love,

Let this be also as a seal, a symbol:

Thee my relation do I recognize;

And soon what I have done in secret here,

Before my courtiers' eyes will I repeat.

DUKE.

Such splendid grace demands a life of thanks,

Of undivided boundless loyalty.

EUGENIE.

From noble teachers many things I've learn'd,

And much instruction from my heart have gain'd,

Yet when it comes to speaking to my King

I find the preparation sadly lacking.

Yet if I cannot speak as I would wish,

Expressing all my duty, still thy presence

Forbids me awkwardly to stand in silence.

What could I give thee? What return devise?

The abundance ever flowing to thy hands,

For good of others streams away again.

Here thousands stand to give their lives for thine,

Here thousands work obedient to thy orders,

And if a single subject freely offers

His heart and soul, his arm and life for thee,

Among such numbers he is lost from sight,

Forgot by thee and by himself forgot.

KING.

If unto thee the masses seem o'erwhelming,
Thou lovely child, it is not strange indeed.
They are o'erwhelming, yet the noble few,
By Nature made to stand above the masses
Through skill and culture and the power to rule,
Are more imposing. If the King thereto
Was call'd by birth, then are his next of kin
Born counsellors, who, closely knit to him,
Are bound to guard the realm and foster it.
Oh, never let dissension mask'd come in,
With dark insidious working, to these regions
Where stand this band of patriotic watchmen.
To thee, my noble cousin, I give a father
By virtue of our royal power supreme.
Preserve him to me, use thy winsome ways
To keep my kinsman's heart and voice in faith,
For many enemies oppose a prince;
Oh, let him stand aloof from treacherous paths.

DUKE.

Why dost thou pain my heart with such reproaches?

EUGENIE.

Incomprehensible are these thy words!

KING.

May fortune keep thee long from comprehending!

The portals of our royal house I open,

Inviting thee to enter. By the hand

I lead thee in o'er slippery marble pavements.

Thou art amaz'd; thyself and all thou seest

Are strange to thee. Thou thinkest here within

To find sure worth and perfect peace united—

Thou art deceiv'd! Thou comest at a time

Not mark'd by joyous bright festivities,

E'en though the King invite thee to partake

In welcoming the day that gave him birth.

Yet shall the day for thy sake have its joy;

There shall I see thee in the merry throng,

The cynosure of every wondering eye.

Right royally has Nature fashion'd thee;

And that thy jewels meet thy princely rank

Thy father and thy monarch will provide.

EUGENIE.

How could the sudden cry of pleas'd surprise,

The eager gesture's quick significance,

Express the language of the beating heart,

Rejoic'd by such high generosity?

Sire, let me kneel in silence at thy feet!

[She offers to kneel.]

KING.

Thou must not kneel!

EUGENIE.

Oh, let me here enjoy

The pleasant fortune of complete submission!

If we in tense and sudden moments stand

Erect upon our feet and boldly wage

To bear the earnest of our own support,

We seem the owners of the earth and heaven.

Yet what in moments of keen ravishment

Causes the knee to bend is also joy.

And all of sweet thanksgiving, love unmeasur'd,

Which we might bring as purest offering

To father, monarch, God. is best express'd

In such an humble attitude as this.

[Again kneeling before the King.]

DUKE.

Renew'd allegiance would I offer thee!

EUGENIE.

As ever-faithful vassals look upon us!

KING.

Up! then! arise and take thy place beside me,

Within the circle of those trusty few

Sworn to defend the right and reasonable!

Oh, fearful are the portents of these days.

The dregs boil up, the high-born sink below
As though each in the other's place might find
Fulfilment of his unrestrain'd desires,
As though enjoyment only were in store
When class distinctions were all wash'd away,
And when we all commingl'd in one stream
Were hurl'd unnotic'd to the boundless ocean.
Oh, let us fight against it, let us boldly
With new-united double might hold fast
To what may hold us and the people fast.
And lastly let us heal the ancient strife
That stirs the great against the great, within
The ship of State makes weak the walls protecting
The battling crew against the angry waves without.

EUGENIE.

What clear beneficent rays enlighten me
And stir to deeds instead of blinding me!
What! does our King so highly honor us
That he confesses that he needs our aid?
We are not only kinsfolk to him, we
Are rais'd to loftiest station by his trust.
And if the nobles of his kingdom press
Around him to protect his royal breast,
Of us he asks a nobler service yet.
The highest duty of the well dispos'd

Is ever to uphold the monarch's heart.

For if he flinch, then flinches all the State,

And if he fall, then all things fall with him.

Youth, people say, has too much confidence

In its own strength, and in its will to do,

Yet all this will, this strength, and their endeavor

Is dedicate to thee, O King, forever.

DUKE.

The child's assurance, Highness, thou wilt honor,

And thou wilt pardon for its kind intent.

And if her father, taught by many years,

Appreciates and treasures the full worth

Of this day's gift and of the future promise,

Then art thou sure of his recognizance.

KING.

'Twill not be long before we meet again.



Upon my birthday when my faithful friends

Unite to celebrate the festal season,

That day, O noble maid, I will present thee

Before the wondering world, the court, thy father,

Myself. The glory of the throne will shield thee.

But till that hour let both of you keep counsel,
Let no one know the history of this day.
Distrustful jealousy is lurking round.
Wave follows wave; storm treads the heel of storm.
Our journey trends along the jagged shore
Where e'en the helmsman scarcely knows the course.
Close secrecy alone secures our acts.
A plan disclos'd has pass'd beyond thy power.
This very moment chance makes sport of will.
E'en he who can command must work in secret.
Yea! with the best will in the world we fail
Accomplishment, a thousand crossing ours.
Oh, if my honest wishes had the aid
Of perfect power for but a little time,
The meanest hearthstone in my kingdom's bounds
Should feel a father's warm solicitude,
Content should dwell beneath the humblest roof,
Content should dwell in ev'ry stately palace,
And when I once had tasted this delight,
I'd gladly yield my crown, renounce the world.

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SCENE VI.

Duke. Eugenie.

EUGENIE.

Oh, what a day of jubilant surprises!

DUKE.

Oh, might I live from day to day like this!

EUGENIE.

What wealth of fortune has the King bestow'd!

DUKE.

Take pure delight in his unlook'd-for favor.

EUGENIE.

He seems unhappy, and he is so good.

DUKE.

Goodness itself oft rouses opposition.

EUGENIE.

Who is so hateful as to set against him?

DUKE.

The advantage of the whole needs strenuous vigor.

EUGENIE.

The mildness of the King should breed like mildness.

DUKE.

The mildness of the King breeds insolence.

EUGENIE.

With what nobility has Nature form'd him!

DUKE.

Yet far too high in station has she plac'd him.

EUGENIE.

With what consummate virtues rich endow'd!

DUKE.

Domestic virtues not the gift of ruling.

EUGENIE.

The blossom of an ancient stock of heroes!

DUKE.

Perchance the vigor fails in later scions.

EUGENIE.

It is our duty to defend all weakness.

DUKE.

Unless our greater strength he should suspect.

EUGENIE.

(Aside.) His subtle reasoning fills me with suspicion.

DUKE.

What are thy thoughts? Hide not thy heart from me!

EUGENIE.

(After a pause.) Thou art then one of those whom he distrusts.

DUKE.

Let him distrust those worthy of distrust.

EUGENIE.

Shall we see secret foes invest his throne?

DUKE.

He who conceals a danger is a foe.

But whither do our counsels lead us, daughter?

How has the most extraordinary fortune

Brought us, short cut, upon the goal desir'd.

I build without foundation, filling thy mind

With wild confusion when I should enlighten.

Yet must thy rapturous joy of childhood vanish

When once thou steppest foot within the world.

Not long the intoxicating sweets of peace

Could'st thou delight in mid its blinding scenes.

The goal is thine, but its false crown has torn

Thy tender hand with cruel hidden spines.

Beloved child, I would it were not so!

Far better were it, as I fondly hop'd,

To wot thee by degrees to all its trials,

To teach thee by degrees the bitter lesson

That dearest hopes must fade, fond wishes fail.

But now a sudden change has come upon thee!

As though thy fall from yonder crag were symbol,

Down thou hast plung'd where cares and danger dwell.

The very air is poison'd with suspicion,

And Envy keeps the feverish blood astir,

And gives its victims to Anxiety.

Alas! for aye the wall of Paradise,

Which safely held thee, has been torn away.

The holy lesson of thy innocence

No longer shields me from the world's temptations.

Forth must thou with me till the net surround us—

Perplex'd, sore wounded, needing pity, both!

EUGENIE.

Not so, my father! If until to-day

Inactive, kept aloof, immur'd alone,

A childish cypher, yet by very force

Of lacking individuality

I caus'd thee consolation, comfort, pleasure,

How vastly more then should thy daughter be

Now that her fate is woven into thine,

And all its threads in varied glory shine!

Part will I take in ev'ry noble deed,

In ev'ry great transaction which will bring

My father dearer to the State and King.

My eager mind, the force of youth and health

Inspiring me, will give thee freshen'd zeal,

Will drive away those visions of despair

Which rise when on the laboring breast of man

The monstrous burden of the world is laid.

If once, a child, in moments of depression

I offer'd thee good-will however helpless,
Love poor in deeds, and idle fond caresses,
So now I hope to win a daughter's birthright
By faithful service, having learn'd thy wishes,
Initiated in the secrets of thy plans.



DUKE.

What thou through this important step wilt lose
Seems worthless to thee and without reward.
What thou expectest thou dost prize too high.

EUGENIE.

To share with highly-gifted, fortunate men
The use of power, the wealth of influence!
For generous souls what more attractive prize!

DUKE.

'Tis true! Forgive me if thou findest me
At this hour weaker than becomes a man.
Most wonderful is this exchange of duties,
I ought to lead thee and thou art my leader.

EUGENIE.

Well, then, my father, let us boldly climb

Up to those regions where before my ken

A new sun rises with enkindling rays.

And at this happy moment only smile,

If I disclose to thee in turn the cares

That burden me.

DUKE.

Yea, tell me what they are.

EUGENIE.

A host of weighty moments fill men's lives,

Besieging now with joy and now with sorrow

Their hearts. The man may in such circumstances

Forget his outward show before the world;

Not so the woman; she desires to shine

By fair appropriate habit and adornment,—

An envied object in the eyes of others.

This have I often heard and often notic'd.

And now the crowning moment of my life

Has come, and I am willing to confess

That I am guilty of this woman's weakness.

DUKE.

What canst thou wish for that will not be thine?

EUGENIE.

Thou art inclin'd, I know, to grant me all.

And yet the all-important day is nigh—

Too nigh to make the fitting preparation.

And all the silks, embroideries and laces,
And all the jewelry needful for adornment,
How can they be provided, how completed?

DUKE.

A long-desir'd good fortune has surpris'd us,
Yet not quite unprepar'd may we receive it;
All that thou now desirest is at hand.
This very day gifts that thou didst not dream of
Lie waiting for thee in a worthy coffer.
But one slight trial must I put upon thee—
The foretaste of severer ones to come!
Here is the key; take watchful care of it,
And curb thy longing. Open not the box
Which holds this treasure till I give thee leave.
Share trust with no one, be it who it may.
Wisdom advises and the King demands it.

EUGENIE.

Thou layest a heavy burden on a maiden,
Yet I will bear it, father, take my oath.

DUKE.

My wild unworthy son is on the watch
To spy the quiet paths where thou art led.
The little portion of my substance treasur'd
For thy protection he already covets.
And if he knew that thou by royal favor

Wert lifted to a higher station where
Thy right and his were on an equal level,
How he would rage! And would he not exert
All spiteful wiles to block our pleasant plan?

EUGENIE.

Then let us quietly await that day!
And when the deed is done that justifies me
In calling him my brother, be it mine,
By gentle words, by courteous behavior,
To win him back to reverence and affection.
He is thy son, and should he not, like thee,
Be fashion'd in the mould of love and reason?

DUKE.

No miracle would be too great for thee.
But work them for the advantage of my house.
And now farewell! Yet now—alas! in parting
I feel once more the pangs of cruel fear.
Here in my arms I held thee lying dead!
And here Despair with tiger clutches tore me.
Who will dispel the vision from my eyes?
I saw thee dead! Thus wilt thou oft appear
Before me in the watches of the night,
In visions of the day. Away from thee
Have I not ever been distraught by fear?
No longer will it be the mind's distemper;

It is a real irradicable vision:

My child, Eugenie, of my life the life,

Wan, prostrate, breathless, lifeless there.

EUGENIE.

Oh, call not back what thou should'st now forget.

My fall and my escape should rather seem

The earnest of my wonderful good fortune.

Living, thou seest me before thy eyes.

[Embracing him.

And living, on thy heart thou feelest me.

So let me ever, ever thus return!

And with the touch of glowing, loving life

Blot out the loathsome sight of hated Death.

DUKE.

How can a child appreciate the pangs

A father feels at thought of threaten'd loss?

I will confess that oftentimes thy courage,

Almost o'erweening, when, upon the steed

Seeming a part of thee, and full of fire,

More like a Centaur with its doubled vigor,

Thou hast o'er vale and mountain boldly dash'd,

Through stream and gully flashing like a bird,

Has fill'd my heart with greater fear than joy.

Henceforth I pray thy gallant course conform

More moderately to knighthood's joyous practice.

EUGENIE.

Before the careless, Danger yields the palm;

She often takes the careful by surprise.

Oh, feel once more that limitless keen joy

Which thou didst feel when, as a little child,

I boldly waged to do the deeds of prowess

Taught by thy knightly pride of fatherhood.

DUKE.

My fault has found me out, and now a life

Of ceaseless worryment must punish me.

Does not the courting of the dangerous

Invite the danger that it holds in store?

EUGENIE.

'Tis Luck not Carefulness that conquers danger.

Farewell, my father; follow now thy King,

And be, if only for thy daughter's sake,

His blameless vassal and his faithful friend.

Farewell!

DUKE.

Oh, do not go! Remain with me,

Yet standing in this place alive, erect,

As when thou cam'st to life again, rejoicing

With healing balm my sadly riven heart.

Let not this hour of bliss remain unfruitful.

This spot I dedicate to be a lasting

Memorial. Here shall rise a splendid temple
To keep the record of thy fortunate healing.
Thy hand shall here create a fairy kingdom.
A labyrinth of gentle ways shall join
The savage forest and the bristling jungle;
The steep crag shall become accessible;
This brook shall fall in musical cascades,
And loiter with its sparkling waters pure.
The stranger wandering through this novel scene
Shall deem that he has found a Paradise.
Here, while I live, no gun shall loudly echo,
No bird shall miss her mate, no antler'd stag
Fly frighten'd, wounded, shatter'd, from his haunt.
And hither, when my eyes have lost their sight,
My limbs their strength, with thee, my child, for guide,
My steps will gladly turn in pilgrimage.
Ever shall gratitude my bosom fill.
And now farewell! But stay. Why dost thou weep?

EUGENIE.

Oh, if my father tremblingly forebodes
The losing of his daughter, how shall I
Not likewise feel (how can I say it, think it?)
The pain of separation which must come?
Fathers bereav'd might draw an angel's pity;
But sadder is the lot of children orphan'd.

And I, most miserable, should stand alone

Within the desert of this wild, fierce world!

How could I bear to lose my sole protector?

DUKE.

As thou hast given me strength, I now return it.

Take comfort! let us boldly onward press.

Life is the pledge of life! Upon itself

It builds and for itself alone must answer.

So let us quickly make our last adieu,

And may a joyous meeting recompense

The sorrow and the weakness of this parting!

[They hastily embrace and separate: from a distance they turn and wave a last greeting with outstretched hand and exit.]

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ACT II.



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SCENE I.—

Eugenie's *Apartment In Gothic Style.*

Governess. Secretary.

SECRETARY.

Do I deserve that thou should'st flee me thus

The moment that I bring thee wish'd-for tidings?

Pray listen first to what I have to say.

GOVERNESS.

The burden of thy importunity

Too well I ween. Oh, let my eyes from seeing

The well-known glances, let my ears from hearing

The well-known accents ever turn away.

Let me escape the devastating power

Which through the influence of love and friendship

Beside me like a gloomy spectre stands.

SECRETARY.

When I before thee suddenly would pour,

After long hope deferr'd, the golden horn

Of fortune, when the morning-glow begins

That marks the dawning of the blissful day

That shall unite our lives forevermore,

Then seemest thou embarrass'd and reluctant

To meet thy bridegroom's tenderest advances.

GOVERNESS.

Therein thou showest me one side alone:

It glows and glistens like the world in sunshine.

But black night's horror threatens nigh: I feel it.

SECRETARY.

Then let us first see but the lovely side.

Desirest thou a dwelling in the city,

Spacious and handsome, furnish'd splendidly,

Such as one wishes for himself, for guests?

'Tis waiting for thee: when next winter comes

'Twill find thee settl'd nobly, if thou wilt.

In Springtime dost thou yearn to see the country,

There too a house is ours, a lovely garden,

A fertile field. And all the keen enjoyment

In forest, moors, in meadows, brooks and ponds

That fancy e'en in visions might imagine

Shall we possess, in part our own estate,

In part as common property. And thus,

Since nothing goes for rent, by careful saving

We shall be able to secure our future.

GOVERNESS.

The picture that thou paintest with such hues

Before my eyes is wrapp'd in gloomy clouds.

For not desirable but hideous seems

The abundance offer'd by the worldly gods.

What is the sacrifice they ask? To ruin
My gentle pupil's happiness and fortune!
And whatso'er a crime like that might bring me,
Could I enjoy it with a quiet mind?
Eugenie! thou whose pure and gentle nature
From earliest youth entrusted to my guidance
With rich fruition has develop'd nobly.
How can I now distinguish in thee what
Is thine and what thou hast to thank me for?
Thee whom I love as my own handiwork
Must I then pluck out from my heart and ruin?
Of what base stuff are ye compos'd, ye monsters,
To dare demand a deed like this for lucre!

SECRETARY.

A good and honest heart preserves from youth
A store of precious treasures which in time
More costly grow and worthier of our love
To serve withal the Godhead of the temple.
Yet, when the mighty power that governs us
Demands a costly sacrifice, we yield it
At last although our hearts bleed at the duty.
Two worlds there be, my darling, which, conflicting
With awful violence, crush us between them.

GOVERNESS.

Thy steps appear to wander in a world

To me entirely foreign, since thou schemest
A treacherous stroke against thy noble patron,
The Duke, preparing days of sorrow for him
By holding to his son. If the Almighty
Appears at times to give assent to crime
We call it accident. But man who chooses
With due reflection such unlawful paths,
He is a puzzle. But—and am not I
A puzzle to myself that I should cling
With such affection to thee when thou strivest
To drag me with thee o'er the precipice?
Oh, why did Nature cast thee in her mould,
So pleasing, lovely, irresistible,
And plant within thy bosom a cold heart,
A heart destructive of the peace of others?

SECRETARY.

Dost thou distrust the warmth of my affection?

GOVERNESS.

This hand should slay me if I only dar'd.
Oh, why, alas! with this detested plot
Again assault my heart? Didst thou not swear
To hide the horror in everlasting night?

SECRETARY.

Alas! it rose with more impellent might!
This step is forc'd upon the Prince's son.

An insignificant, inoffensive child

Eugenie was, for many peaceful years.

Commencing with her very earliest days,

Shrin'd in this ancient hall thou wert her guardian,

Few came to see her, and those secretly.

Yet how a father's love deceiv'd itself.

The Duke, proud of his daughter's excellence,

Relax'd his care and by degrees allow'd her

To show herself in public openly:

On horseback, driving, she is seen. All ask,

And all at last know, who the maiden is.

Her mother now is dead. The haughty dame,

To whom the child was an abomination,

A keen reminder of her fatal passion,

Had never recogniz'd her, scarcely seen her.

By her decease the Duke at last feels freed,

Devises secret plans, once more attends

At court, forgets the ancient grudge he owed

And seeks the King in reconciliation,

Demanding only that he grant this child

Her birthright as a princess of his race.

GOVERNESS.

And do you then begrudge this lovely creature

The joy of feeling that the right was hers?

SECRETARY.

Belov'd! dearest! ah, thou speakest lightly,
Thus wall'd and separated from the world,
In cloister-wise, of riches of the earth!
Turn hence thine eyes! A treasure such as this
Is valu'd there more truly at its worth.
The father grudges it his son, the son
Reckons his father's years, and deadly discord
Parts brothers, through this right intangible.
And e'en the priest forgets his sacred goal
And strives for riches. Is it then surprising
That, when the Prince has always call'd himself
The only child, he should decline to welcome
This sister who with insolent intrusion
Diminishes his fair inheritance?
What, if in his place, would'st thou do thyself?

GOVERNESS.

Already is he not a wealthy Prince?
And at his father's death will he not be
Superfluously rich? If he should spend
A part of his possessions would he waste them
In winning by them such a lovely sister?

SECRETARY.

To act with arbitrary will delights
The man of fortune. Nature's claims he scorns;

He scorns the authority of law and reason,
And spends his substance on the throw of chance.
Merely to have sufficient is to starve.
Give all or nothing. Measureless possessions
For endless squandering are what he wishes.
Advice is not desir'd; think not to turn us.
If thou wilt not work with us, give us up.

GOVERNESS.

What is the deed ye plan? Long ye have threaten'd,
Holding aloof, to blast the lovely child.
What have ye now in monstrous crime devis'd
To spoil her chance of fortune. Do ye ask
That I should blindly cling to what ye plan?

SECRETARY.

By no means. Thou shalt be initiated.
The first step lies with thee. Our scheme demands
That thou abduct Eugenie. She must vanish
So utterly from knowledge of the world
That we can confidently mourn her death.
The secret of her fate must be conceal'd
Forever, like the secret of the dead.

GOVERNESS.

Ye doom her to a living grave, O villains,
And think to send me with her as companion.
Me too ye doom. I am with her to share—

I the betrayer chain'd to the betray'd—

The awful fate of death, a living death!

SECRETARY.

Thou shalt return when thou hast done the deed.

GOVERNESS.

Is it a cloister where her days will end?

SECRETARY.

Not in a cloister! Such a costly pledge

We could not give the clergy, who might use it

Against us as a most convenient tool.

GOVERNESS.

Then is it to the Islands? Tell me plainly!

SECRETARY.

Thy destination shall be known. Be patient!

GOVERNESS.

How can I be before the fear and danger

That threat my lov'd one's happiness and mine?

SECRETARY.

Thy lov'd one in her new life joy will find.

And joy and rapture will await thee here.

GOVERNESS.

Oh, flatter not yourselves with such a hope!

What good is there in holding such temptations

Before me—forcing me, enticing me?

The noble child herself will block your scheme.

Think not to drag her off a willing victim

And helpless. Nay, the spirit that fills her heart

With courage, and the power inherited,

Will go with her where'er she goes, and break

The evil net which you have cast around her.

SECRETARY.

Thy part will be to make the meshes strong.

Wilt thou persuade me that a simple child,

Till now protected by the arm of Fortune,

Will show, when unexpected chance arises,

Forethought and power, sagacity and wisdom?

Her mind is cultur'd but to think, not act.

And if her thoughts are right, her speech delightful,

Yet much is lacking in her will to do.

The lofty boundless courage of ignorance

Sinks easily to cowardice and despair

When stern Necessity presents itself.

What we have plann'd see that thou carry out.

Small will the harm be, splendid the reward.

GOVERNESS.

Then give me time to ponder and decide.

SECRETARY.

The moment for the action is at hand.

The Duke knows well that the next holiday

The King will grant the favor long desired,
And recognize his daughter's princely birth.
For clothes and costly jewels are provided
Already, laid in splendid cabinets,
The keys of which he guards with jealous care,
And thinks he keeps a perfect mystery.
But we are in his secret and prepar'd.
What we have schem'd must quickly now be done.
This evening thou'lt hear more. Till then farewell.

GOVERNESS.

On dubious paths ye work, on mischief bent,
And think ye see a profit in your plans.
Has no suspicion ever cross'd your mind
That over guilt and innocence there hovers
A Being from whose essence streams avenging
A light divine that rescues the oppress'd?

SECRETARY.

Who dares gainsay the ruling Providence
That shapes conformably to his own will
The outcome of our deeds whate'er they be?
Yet who presumes to make himself an arbiter
In God's high councils? Who can know
The rule and law by which his fiat works?
We have our reason, and in stature grown
We walk erect upon the face of earth,

And our advantage is our highest right.

GOVERNESS.

Thus are ye traitors to the godlike
If ye despise the dictates of the heart!
It calls me boldly to ward off the danger
That hangs with horrid threat'ning o'er my darling;
It bids me arm myself against my lover,
Against the base designs that strong men harbor!
No glittering promise and no threats shall force me
To leave my rightful place beside my pupil:
Thus do I stand devoted to protect her.

SECRETARY.

Ah! sweetest, thou alone canst give her safety,
And thou alone the danger canst avert
And at the selfsame time assist our plan.
Lay hold upon her swiftly; take the maiden
As far as possible away, conceal her
That no one know her habitation! Else—
(Thou tremblest—for thou knowest well
The words upon my lips!) Since thou hast forc'd me
Let the alternative at last be said:—
Removal with her is the mildest measure—
If thou refusest to co-operate,
If thou art minded secretly to check us,
And if thou darest, out of friendly purpose,

To drop the slightest hint of what I tell thee,
Then dead she lies upon thy bosom! What
Would fill my heart with sorrow must be done!

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SCENE II.



GOVERNESS.

His angry threat brings no surprise for me!
'Tis long that I have seen this smouldering fire,
And now it bursts in flames of fury out.
If I would save thee, must I, darling child,
Dispel the lovely dream that beckons thee?
One hope alone diminishes my sorrow—
It vanishes before I fairly hold it.
Eugenie! if thou only could'st renounce
The splendid fortune, which appears so boundless,
Before thy footsteps cross the fatal threshold
Where danger, death, or banishment awaits thee!
Oh, if I only dared enlighten thee,
Dared point the secret hiding-place where lurk
The evil conclave of thy persecutors!
Ah, I must keep dark counsel! Only hints
Can shrive my soul before thee! In the tumult

Of eager pleasure wilt thou understand?

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SCENE III.

Eugenie. Governess.

EUGENIE.

Welcome a thousand times, friend of my heart,
Who showest a mother's fondness for me, welcome!

GOVERNESS.

With joy, dear child, I press thee to my bosom,
And share the rapture which thy buoyant life
So richly yields thee. How thy dear eyes sparkle!
O'er cheek and brow what lovely color mantles.
What joyous fortune swells thy youthful breast?

EUGENIE.

A great misfortune has befallen me:
The horse fell headlong from the crag with me.

GOVERNESS.

My God!

EUGENIE.

Be calm! thou seest me again
Unharm'd and fortunate, though great the fall!

GOVERNESS.

How was it? Tell me!

EUGENIE.

Thou shalt hear how fortune

Resulted splendidly from my disaster.

GOVERNESS.

Alas! from fortune often pain develops.

EUGENIE.

Let words of evil import not be spoken,
And fright me not with evil thoughts of sorrow!

GOVERNESS.

Ah, would that thou could'st trust me absolutely!

EUGENIE.

Above all others thee! Yet leave me now,
Beloved, to myself! I wish, alone,
To wont myself to feelings new and strange.
Thou knowest what delight my father takes
Whene'er a little poem comes to greet him
Not look'd for, as the favor of the Muses
Grants power to give expression to my thoughts.
So leave me! Even now the inspiration
Is on me; I must seize it ere it fail me.

GOVERNESS.

When shall we hold again the precious hours
Of sweet discourse and gentle confidences?
When shall we once again like happy maidens,
Who tireless show each other their adornments,
Unlock the secret chambers of our hearts,

Comparing all our changeable possessions?

EUGENIE.

Those pleasant moments will return again

Whose peaceful joys one gladly recollects,

Sharing with confidence our confidences.

Yet leave me in full loneliness to-day

To find the need of trustful days like those.

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SCENE IV.

EUGENIE.

Later Governess without.

EUGENIE.

(Getting out a portfolio.)

Now quick to work with parchment and with pen!

'Tis wholly mine and soon it shall be written;

The tribute flowing from my thankful heart,

Which to the King, upon that festal day

When, new-born by his all-compelling word,

I enter life, shall now be dedicated.

[She copies out what she slowly recites.

With what a wondrous prospect am I greeted!

Canst thou, O master of the realm elysian,

Forgive the novice for her indecision?

Blinded by Majesty I sink defeated!

Yet soon encourag'd by the judgment meted,

I lift to thee my eyes in raptur'd vision,

Confess'd thy kin, receiv'd without derision,

And all my young hopes are at last completed!

Thus let the boundless spring of grace flow ever!

Here will my faithful heart, ecstatic, tarry,

Sway'd by the majesty of love's emotion.

My all hangs by a thread a touch might sever!

Methinks the life thou gavest I should carry
And lay before thy throne in sweet devotion.
[Contemplating her writing with satisfaction.]
Long has it been, O agitated heart,
Since thou hast spoken in the words of verse.
How happy are we when our inmost feelings
Can take the impress of infinity!
Yet is it quite enough? Here streams it forth,
Here streams it up! Great day, thou drawest nigh,
Which gives the King to us and which shall give
For measureless delight me to the King,
Me to my father, me unto myself.
May this high festival exalt my song!
The wings of Fancy are already spread.
It bears me up before the throne, presents me,
And gives me to the circle rare—

GOVERNESS.

Eugenie!

EUGENIE.

Hark! What is that?

GOVERNESS.

'Tis I! Open the door!

EUGENIE.

Vexatious interruption! I am busy.

GOVERNESS.

Word from thy father!

EUGENIE.

What! my father? Hold!

Then I will open!

GOVERNESS.

Yes, thy father sends

Great gifts to thee

EUGENIE.

One moment!

GOVERNESS.

Dost thou hear?

EUGENIE.

One moment! Where shall I conceal this paper?

Too clearly it betrays the hopes I feel.

No nook affords concealment! and with me

There is no safety even in my desk.

For treacherous and faithless are my servants.

When I have slept my papers have been rummag'd,

And many of my treasures have been stolen.

This mystery, the greatest of my life,

Where, where shall I bestow it?

[She approaches the wall.]

Ah, yes! here,

Where thou, in days past, wainscot cabinet,

Didst hide the innocent secrets of my childhood!

Discover'd by my restless energy,

Investigating, born of idleness

And childish natural curiosity,

Thou, known to no one save myself, springest open!

[She presses on an invisible spring and a little door flies open.]

Thus as I once conceal'd forbidden sweets

For sly enjoyment in thy secret chamber,

So now, transported, timid, I entrust thee

A little space with my life's happiness.

[She lays the parchment in the cupboard and closes it.]

The days press on and full of expectation

Bring joy and sadness with them in their train.

[She opens the door.]

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SCENE V.

Eugenie. Governess. Servants*bringing a magnificent dressing-case.*

GOVERNESS.

If I disturb thee, still I bring with me

What in thy eyes should give me absolution.

EUGENIE.

This from my father! This resplendent gift!

What content does a shrine like that portend?

(To the Servants.)

Ho! tarry yet a moment!

[She hands them a purse.

Take this trifle

As foretaste of reward for service! richer follows!

[Exit Servants.

No letter and no key! 'Tis passing strange!

Must such a treasure wait me unexplor'd?

O curiosity! O eager longing!

Suspectest thou what mean these gifts to me?

GOVERNESS.

I doubt not thou thyself hast solv'd the riddle.

It signifies a coming elevation.

The finery of a princess is allow'd thee

Because the King will soon declare thy rank.

EUGENIE.

What makes thee think so?

GOVERNESS.

Oh, I know it well!

The secrets of the great are never kept.

EUGENIE.

Well, if thou knowest, why should I dissemble?

Shall I restrain before thee without reason

My curiosity to see this gift? The key

Is here! I know my father did forbid it.

Yet what did he forbid? To tell the secret

Before the time. Yet thou already knowest

The weighty news: what more is there to tell

Than thou hast heard, and through thy love for me

Hast kept in guard beneath the seal of silence?

Why then delay? Come, let us open! come!

So that the glory of the gifts may charm us!

GOVERNESS.

Nay! touch it not! Remember his forbiddance.

Who knows the reason of the Duke's command?

EUGENIE.

He had a purpose for his prohibition,

That purpose now is render'd nugatory;

Thou knowest all. Thou lovest me, thou art

A faithful friend that can preserve a secret.

So let us push the bolt and close the chamber,

And let us quick together solve the mystery.

[She shuts the chamber door and runs to the casket.

GOVERNESS.

(Restraining her.) The gold, the colors of the splendid fabrics,

The soft light of the pearls, the gleam of jewels,

Ah! let them all remain unseen! They tempt thee

Beyond control to seek the fatal goal!



artist: otto seitz.

THE NATURAL DAUGHTER. ACT II, SCENE IV.

eugenia placing the parchment in the press.

EUGENIE.

Not they, but what they signify, attract me.

[She opens the box; mirrors adorn the cover.

What costly raiment, lying folded there

E'en as I touch it, shows before my eyes!

And do these mirrors not make swift demand

To image forth the maiden in her jewels?

GOVERNESS.

Medea's fiery garment seems to me
To lie unfolded in my nerveless hand!

EUGENIE.

What Melancholy weaves its mist around thee?
Think rather of delightful bridal feasts!
Come! reach the treasures to me one by one!
That underdress! how richly, sweetly gleam
The silver gauze, the sparkle of its hues.

GOVERNESS.

(Throwing the garment over Eugenie's shoulders.) If e'er the rays of Favor's sun
should darken,

The cause would be such glory's bright reflection.

EUGENIE.

A faithful heart deserves the rays of favor,
And if they fail it draws them back again.—
Now bring the gold-embroider'd overskirt,
And spread the train with all its wealth of lace.
The brilliancy of flowers has ting'd the gold
Spread in metallic hues with tasteful choice.
Am I not beautiful in this array?

GOVERNESS.

Yet beauty unadorn'd is honor'd more
For its own splendor by the truly wise.

EUGENIE.

The truly wise may treasure simple beauty,
But most prefer the beauty that's adorn'd.—
Now bring the tender twilight of the pearls,
The flashing glory of the splendid jewels.

GOVERNESS.

Yet not the appearance but the genuine worth
Can satisfy the cravings of thy heart!

EUGENIE.

What is appearance having naught of substance,
And what would substance be without appearance?

GOVERNESS.

And hast thou not enjoy'd within these walls
The long untroubled days of sunny youth,
Nor felt the secret bliss of holy rapture
When cradled with the hearts of those that love thee?

EUGENIE.

The tender bud rejoices in its calyx
So long as Winter's frost besieges it;
But now the breath of Spring inspires its life,
It bursts in blossoms, full of light and fragrance!

GOVERNESS.

But moderation gives a joy serene!

EUGENIE.

Provided that a moderate aim is set.

GOVERNESS.

He who enjoys submits to limitations.

EUGENIE.

Thy arguments persuade me not, thus rob'd.

Oh, would that this apartment might expand

Until it reach'd the glory of the King's.

That splendid carpets deck'd the polish'd floors,

That golden groins might overarch the vault!

And thus before the throne of royalty

With humble pride, among the haughty nobles

Reflecting back the smiling beams of grace,

I 'mid the circle of distinguish'd ones

Should stand the most distinguish'd at the pageant.

Oh, let me have the foretaste of this joy

When all the world shall wonder at my fortune.

GOVERNESS.

Thou'lt be an object not of wonder only:

Envy will mark thee, hate will seek thy ruin.

EUGENIE.

Success must ever raise the coils of envy.

We learn to keep our guard when haters prowl.

GOVERNESS.

Humiliation oft surprises pride.

EUGENIE.

Presence of mind will guard against surprise!

[Turning to the dressing-case.

Not yet have we examin'd everything.

For self alone I do not ask this fortune;

With others would I all my treasures share.

GOVERNESS.

(Taking out a jewel box.)

Here written on this box the words: "For Gifts."

EUGENIE.

Then pray select the things that please thee most.

Among these watches, boxes, take thy choice.

Yet hold! Be wary! Who can tell? Perchance

Yet costlier things lie hid within the case!

GOVERNESS.

Would that a powerful talisman were here

To win thy cruel brother's love to thee!

EUGENIE.

The pure affections of the ingenuous heart

May gradually soften his ill will.

GOVERNESS.

Yet those who strive to make more black his grudge

Are pledg'd forever to oppose thy wishes.

EUGENIE.

If they till now have sought to block my fortune,

Yet since the grand decision has been made

They will each one conform without a murmur.

GOVERNESS.

That which thou hopest is not yet accomplish'd.

EUGENIE.

Yet 'tis so safe that I can call it done.

[Returning to the case again.]

See what is lying in that long flat box!

GOVERNESS.

(Uncovering it.) The loveliest ribbons, fresh and newly chosen!

Ah, let not curious contemplation ruin

With dissipating tendency thy mind.

Oh, would it might be, that my earnest warning

Should make a moment's impress on thy mind.

From the still circle thou wilt soon emerge

On wider fields where anxious cares will harass,

Where dangerous snares, where Death itself, perchance,

From murderous hands of enemies await thee.

EUGENIE.

Thou art unwell! How can my sure success

Appear to thee as frightful as a spectre?

[Gazing into the box.

What do I see? This roll! 'tis verily

The ribbon of the noblest princely order!

This also I must wear then! Come! make haste!

I wish to see its whole effect! 'Tis part

Of this superb array. It must be tried!

[The order is attached.

Now prate to me of death! now prate of danger!

What nobler grace than when a man can stand

In all the bravery of heroic garb

Amid his peers in presence of his King?

What gives more satisfaction to the eye

Than robes that tell of splendid lines of knights?

This raiment and its colors are they not

A symbol of the danger ever near?

The sash, significant of war, wherewith

A man with dauntless courage girds himself?

My friend, my love! Whatever ornament

Is emblematical of peril, that

Must, of necessity, be dangerous!

So give me then the sentiment of courage

To meet the dangers menacing my path,

Array'd, as now, in splendid princely garb.

Henceforth, irrevocable is my fortune.

GOVERNESS.

(Aside.) The fate that calls thee is irrevocable.

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ACT III.



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SCENE I.—

The Antechamber Of The Duke, *Furnished In Magnificent Modern Style.*

Secretary. Secular Priest.

SECRETARY.

Tread silently into this deathly silence!

The palace is as quiet as the tomb.

The Duke is sleeping, and the servants all,

Touch'd by his grief, are bent in sympathy.

He sleeps! I bless'd him as I saw him lie

Wrapp'd in unconsciousness upon his pillow

Peacefully breathing. The excess of woe

Has yielded to the healing balm of Nature.

The moment that shall wake him, that I fear—

A man of grief before you will appear!

SECULAR PRIEST.

I am prepar'd to see him, doubt it not.

SECRETARY.

An hour or two ago the tidings came

That fair Eugenie had been thrown and kill'd.

You must confirm it: say that she was brought

Unto your chapel as the nearest place

That they could take her from the treacherous ground,

Where, boldly courting death, she forc'd her steed.

SECULAR PRIEST.

And in the meantime she is far away?

SECRETARY.

With breathless haste the speeding coursers fly.

SECULAR PRIEST.

To whom entrust you such a weighty task?

SECRETARY.

The prudent goodwife who is wholly ours.

SECULAR PRIEST.

To what far region have you sent the maid?

SECRETARY.

The port that lies most distant in this realm.

SECULAR PRIEST.

And will a foreign shore receive her next?

SECRETARY.

The favoring wind will bear her quickly hence.

SECULAR PRIEST.

And will they here forever think her dead?

SECRETARY.

The purport of thy fiction shall decide.

SECULAR PRIEST.

And so this error from the very first

Will sway the fortune of all coming time.

Her very grave is feign'd, and for her body
A mask shall cheat the eye. Her lovely image
Shall shatter in a thousand pieces. Horror
Shall sear my wretched hearer's loving heart,
As though with fire, because of this misfortune.
All think her dead, she disappears forever
Within the ashes, gray, of nothingness.
Then each of us will quickly turn to life,
And in the tumult of the busy world
Forget that she too, though so far away,
Still breathes the air of life among the living.

SECRETARY.

Dost thou with utter boldness face the deed?
Will not remorse remain with bitter sting?

SECULAR PRIEST.

Thou askest such a question? We are firm.

SECRETARY.

An inward dissatisfaction oftentimes
Against our will accompanies an action.

SECULAR PRIEST.

What do I hear? art thou become repentant,
Or wilt thou only test me if I be
A worthy pupil in the arts thou teachest?

SECRETARY.

Never sufficiently do men reflect!

SECULAR PRIEST.

They should reflect before the deed's begun.

SECRETARY.

'Tis not too late before the deed is done.

SECULAR PRIEST.

For me the door of forethought is shut fast.

The time for that was when I still delay'd

Within the Paradise of simple joys:

When, bounded by the garden's cosy hedge,

I grafted trees that I myself had planted,

And fed my table from the narrow beds,

When still contentment in the little house

Supplied a sense of having wealth unbounded,

And when, according to my light, I spoke

Unto the congregation from my heart,

A friend with friends, a father with his children,

And gave my hand to aid the worthy man,

And stopp'd the bad man and the sin he did.

Oh, would that some beneficent spirit had then

Turn'd from my door thy hesitating steps,

Whereto thou, weary, thirsty from the chase,

Didst come to knock and with thy flattering ways,

Thy wily words, didst lay a spell upon me!

That beautiful day on which our friendship hung
Peace spread her wings and fled forever from me!

SECRETARY.

We brought thee many pleasures, did we not?

SECULAR PRIEST.

And many anxious wants which weight me down.

I felt my poverty to see the rich.

Anxiety oppress'd me, for I lack'd;

And in my need I ask'd for help from others.

You brought me aid: dearly I pay for it.

You took me as the comrade of your fortune.

You took me as the complice of your deeds—

Nay, rather should I say the slave, for such

You made the once free now abandon'd man.

You gave him pay forsooth, but yet denied

The sole reward which he had dared to ask.

SECRETARY.

Have faith that we shall load thee down ere long

With honors, benefices and estates.

SECULAR PRIEST.

But those are not the things that I expect.

SECRETARY.

And now what new demand hast thou conceiv'd?

SECULAR PRIEST.

You use me as a tool devoid of feelings
Thus once again. This noble child ye thrust
Forth from the living circle of her friends.
'Tis I must palliate, must hide the deed,
Yet you determine and I have no voice.
Henceforth I ask to join your secret conclave
Where frightful deeds are plann'd, where every man
Proud of his strength and genius bends the course
Of monstrous actions unavoidable.

SECRETARY.

That thou so closely art with us allied
Gives thee a new and potent claim upon us.
With weighty secrets shalt thou soon be trusted.
And so be patient and control thyself.

SECULAR PRIEST.

I am, and far more patient than you think.
Long since I saw the purport of your plans.
He only merits secret consecration
Who through presentiment anticipates.

SECRETARY.

What dost thou guess? What dost thou know?

SECULAR PRIEST.

Let that
Be spared until we meet at midnight's hour.

Alas! this maiden's melancholy fate
Has vanish'd like a brook in ocean's tide,
When I consider how ye lift yourselves
In secret in a mighty party schism,
And hope, by treacherous wiles, to oust the King,
And foist yourselves as rulers on the land.
Not you alone, for others also strive
In rivalry with you to reach your goal.



And so ye undermine the throne and State.
Who shall be rescued from the impending fate?
SECRETARY.
Hush! Some one comes! Hide in this secret closet.
When it is time I'll summon thee to enter.

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SCENE II.

Duke. Secretary.

DUKE.

O baleful light! thou call'st me back to life,
Thou bringest me to knowledge of the world
And of myself again. How barren, bare and hollow
Lies all before me now, and burn'd to ashes!
A heap of ruins is my happiness!

SECRETARY.

If each and every of thy faithful friends
Who suffer with thee at this hour could bear
A portion of thy sorrows, how would'st thou
Not feel thyself renew'd in strength and courage!

DUKE.

The wound to love like love itself remains
Incurable, unending! Now I know
The terrible disaster which befalls
The man who misses his accustom'd weal.
Oh, why did you allow these well-known walls
To shine upon me with their bravery
Of gold and color, calling back the days—
The yesterdays—of my complete delight
With chilling sense of loss? Why did you not

Envelop halls and chambers with black crape,
So that the everlasting shades of night,
Without me as within, might cast their gloom?

SECRETARY.

Oh, would that still thy many blessings might
In spite of loss seem something in thy sight!

DUKE.

A dream embodied, free from spirit bonds!
She was the living soul that fill'd this house.
Whene'er I wak'd how sweet before mine eyes
Hover'd the image of the lovely maiden!
Here oft I found a leaflet from her hand,
A soulful, heartfelt word for morning greeting!

SECRETARY.

How oft the wish to give her father joy
Express'd itself in fresh melodious verse!

DUKE.

The hope of seeing her alone relief'd
The weary hours of slow laborious days!

SECRETARY.

And when delay and hindrance clogg'd the wheels,
With what impatience hast thou yearn'd for her,
As the rash lover yearns to see his mistress.

DUKE.

Make no compare between the fire of youth
Devouring selfishly the thing it clutches
And that ecstatic glow a father feels
Who, fill'd with contemplation rapt, rejoices
At all development of wondrous powers,
At all the giant strides in culture's path.
The present is the pledge that love demands.
The future is the parent's treasur'd boon.
There lie the spreading acres of his hopes,
And there the ripening harvest of his joys!

SECRETARY.

Alas! these boundless pleasures thou hast lost;
This ever blossoming hope is now destroy'd.

DUKE.

And have I lost it? But a moment since
Its perfect glory fill'd my joyful soul.
Alas! 'tis gone! Let your laments arise.
Let grief destroy this solid edifice
Which age too generous has preserv'd till now!
Accurs'd be all that's left to me! accurs'd!
And all that shakes and totters now be welcome!
Boil up, ye floods, break o'er the dykes and change
The land to sea! Ye raging gulfs, o'erwhelm
In dire destruction ship and crew and treasure!

Spread out, ye war-compelling ranks, and drown
The fields with gore and every form of death!
Flash forth, ye lightning bolts, across the waste
And blast the haughty heads of solid towers,
Cast stone from stone, let flames arise and scourge
With horrid fury all the haunts of men,
That I, ring'd round by universal sorrow,
May bend before the Fate that hounds me!

SECRETARY.

This unexpected tragedy so monstrous
Weighs fearfully upon thee, noble Duke!

DUKE.

Most suddenly it came, not unforewarn'd!
A happy Fate brought her from realms of death,
And in my arms she came to life again.
I saw with hasty passing glance the horror
Which now confronts me with its frozen stare.
I should have punish'd then her recklessness,
Have set my face with sternest opposition
Against her daring, and have check'd the madness
Which blindly deem'd itself invulnerable,
Immortal, and which sent her from the cliff,
Through wood and stream and thicket like a bird.

SECRETARY.

How should such deeds made certain by success

Have given presentiment of coming woe?

DUKE.

The presage of these woes full well I felt

When I the last—when I the last time saw—

Yea! speak it out—the devastating word

That builds a hedge of darkness round thy way!

Oh, would that I had seen her once again!

Perchance, I might have warded off this blow!

I would have knelt before her, would have pray'd,

Have warn'd her, with a father's faithful warning,

To spare herself and me, and for the sake Of future fortune to attempt no risk,

Of future fortune to attempt no risk,

Though tempted by the madness of the chase.

Alas! this hour was not vouchsaf'd to me!

And now I've lost my precious child forever.

She is no more! Her boldness only grew

From having easily escap'd that fall.

And no one there to warn her, none to guide!

The discipline of childhood was forgotten!

Whose hands did I entrust with such a treasure?

The hands compliant, pampering, of a woman!

No stringent word to bend my daughter's will

In ways of temperate reasonableness!

With freedom uncontroll'd she let her roam

O'er every field that offer'd reckless daring.

I felt it oft and often half confess'd

That she was ill watch'd by her governess.

SECRETARY.

Oh, cast not blame upon that hapless creature!

In company with deathless grief she wanders,

God knows in what far land, now, unconsol'd!

She fled! for who could look thee in the face

If conscious that the least reproach were due?

DUKE.

Oh, let me wreak my wrath on blameless others

Lest in despair I tear myself in pieces!

For I myself must bear the blame, though heavy.

Did I not with my foolish fond beginnings

Tempt death and danger on my darling's head?

It was my pride to see the maiden win

The mastery of every undertaking.

And now I pay the fearful price in full.

In carriage, in the saddle should she shine,

A heroine for guiding foaming steeds!

Or diving through the water did she seem

A goddess to command the elements.

And so she thought to conquer every danger.

Ah me! instead of giving preservation

The wont of danger now has brought her death!

SECRETARY.

The wont of duty's grand behests has brought

Death to the ne'er-to-be-forgotten maiden!

DUKE.

Explain thyself!

SECRETARY.

And shall I wake thy pain

By telling of the childlike noble action?

Her aged, first and highly-honored friend

And teacher, from this city dwells remote,

In melancholy, pain, misanthropy.

'Twas she alone was able to console him.

Compassion put this on her as a duty;

But often when she wish'd to visit him

Her governess denied her. But she plann'd

To compass it. She boldly used the hours

Devoted to her morning ride to dash

With splendid wild impetuosity

And visit the aged, well-beloved man.

A single groom alone was in the secret.

This time he must have put the saddle on

As we suspect; for he cannot be found.

The wretched man and that unhappy woman

Both vanish'd from the world from fear of thee.

DUKE.

Fortunate both! who nothing have to fear,

Whose sorrow for their master's vanish joy

Has lightly chang'd to mere anxiety.

I too have naught to fear, have naught to hope,

So let me hear the whole and spare me not

The least detail! My soul is iron wrought.

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SCENE III.

Duke. Secretary. Secular Priest.

SECRETARY.

Until this very moment, honor'd Prince,

Have I refrain'd from calling in a man

Who, also sad, appears before thee now.

He is the priest who from the hand of death

Receiv'd thy daughter, and when hope was none

Of saving her, with all a father's care

Provided everything that love could do.

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SCENE IV.

Duke. Secular Priest.

SECULAR PRIEST.

How earnestly, exalted Prince, have I
Cherish'd the wish to come before thy presence!
Now it is gratified, but at a moment
When thou and I with thee art bent with grief!

DUKE.

Unwelcome messenger, e'en so, be welcome!
Thou hast beheld her last, thy heart has felt
The pathos of her last long yearning look,
Her last word hast thou reverently heard.
Her last sigh hast thou met with kind response.
Oh, tell me, did she speak? What were her words?
Remember'd she her father? Dost thou bring me
A heartfelt "farewell" from her dying lips?

SECULAR PRIEST.

We bid the unwelcome messenger be welcome
So long as he is silent and our hearts
Hold room for hope, for doubting still hold room.
Bad tidings spoken are detestable.

DUKE.

Why dost thou hesitate? What deeper grief

Can I experience? She is no more.

And peace and silence at this moment hover

Above her tomb. Whate'er she may have suffer'd

Is past for her: for me begins. But speak.

SECULAR PRIEST.

A universal calamity is death.

Consider thus the evil which has come,

And let the path by which she pass'd away

Be hid in darkness like the shades of night.

Not every one can tread the flowery path

That leads unto the silent realm of shadows.

With forceful pain destruction often comes

And brings through pangs of hell eternal peace.

DUKE.

She suffer'd much?

SECULAR PRIEST.

She suffer'd much, not long.

DUKE.

There was a moment while my darling suffer'd,

A moment that she cried in vain for aid!

And I, where was I then? What enterprise,

What scene of pleasure chain'd me at the time?

Did nothing presage what a woful thing

Was come to rend in fragments all my life?

Her cry I heard not, and I felt no sign

Of that misfortune struck so surely home.
Far-working holy sympathy's foreboding
Is but a fable. Sensitive and firm,
Shut in by his environment, man feels
The present good or else the present evil;
And love itself is deaf to distant sounds.

SECULAR PRIEST.

The very utmost comfort speech can give
I feel how little can avail thee now.

DUKE.

A word can wound more readily than heal;
And grief, renew'd, forever strives in vain
To bring again the days of vanish'd joy.
And was there then no skill, no art availing
To call the fleeting spirit back to life?
What was thy first expedient? Oh, tell me,
What didst thou do to save her? Thou didst not
Leave any means untried!

SECULAR PRIEST.

Alas! Too late
When I had found her was it to devise.

DUKE.

Then if forever I must mourn the loss
Of her young life's delightful power
Let me deceive my grief with deeper grief,

Let me immortalize her dear remains!

Come, let us visit her! Where does she lie?

SECULAR PRIEST.

A worthy chapel holds the maiden's tomb,
Kept consecrate and silent! From the altar
Across the iron bars I see the spot;
And while I live my prayers for her shall rise.

DUKE.

Oh, come and lead me thither! With us twain
Shall go the wisest of all wise physicians.
Her beauteous body we will snatch perforce
Before corruption work. With choicest drugs
We will preserve the treasure of her body;
And of the atoms which erewhile were join'd
In that incomparable, priceless form,
None shall return unto the dust again.

SECULAR PRIEST.

What can I say? Must I confess the whole?
Thou canst not go! Alas! the form distorted,
No stranger could behold it without horror!
And in a father's eyes—it could not be!
No, God forbid! thou must not look upon her.

DUKE.

What new device of torment threatens me?

SECULAR PRIEST.

Oh, let me hold my peace, that words of mine
May not abuse remembrance of the lost!
Let me conceal the appalling sight of her
Dragg'd through the thicket, through the mangling rocks,
Disabled and disfigur'd and distorted,
Bleeding and crush'd, unrecognizable,
And lifeless, hanging from my arm. And I
With flooding tears—I bless'd the solemn hour
When I renounc'd a father's holy hope.

DUKE.

Thou hast not been a father. Thou art one
Of those self-seeking, hard, self-centred men
Who let their narrow lives unfruitful run,
To end in gloom. So get thee gone! I hate
The very sight of thee!

SECULAR PRIEST.

I knew 'twas so.
Who could forgive the bringer of such tidings?

[Turns to go.

DUKE.

Forgive me and remain! Hast ever seen
A picture limn'd by art's consummate skill
That once and once again thy recollection
Has striven to catch in all its wondrous beauty?

Oh, if thou hadst, then hadst thou surely never
So ruthlessly destroy'd the image which, for me,
Built with its thousand lines of loveliness,
Was all the world of fortune and of joy,—
And pleasure in remembrance so dispell'd!

SECULAR PRIEST.

What should I do? Conduct thee to the tomb
Bedew'd with countless tears from strangers' eyes
Before I laid the rotting corpse away
To fall in mouldering peaceful dissolution!

DUKE.

Silence! unfeeling man! thou only add'st
New torments to the pain thou think'st to soothe.
Ah, woe! the elements, no longer rul'd
By that fair spirit of order, now destroy
In noiseless conflict what was godlike once.
If o'er her growth and swift development
Paternal fancy hover'd, full of care,
So now before the insistence of despair
The joy of life is turn'd to dust and ashes.

SECULAR PRIEST.

What light and air have made in fleeting form
Is kept for long within the sealed tomb.

DUKE.

The custom of the ancients was a wise one:

That when the active spirit pass'd away
The agency of purifying fire
Should solve the long and earnest work of nature,
Completed in the noble human form.
And when the flames their ruddy billows toss'd
Rolling to heaven and 'mid the clouds was seen
The eagle's mighty wing significant,
Then tears were dried and friends forsaken gaz'd
With vision clarified up to the realms
Where sat the new-crown'd god upon Olympos.
Oh, gather for me in a costly urn
The sad remains of flesh consum'd to ashes,
So that the yearning arms outstretch'd in vain
May clasp reality, that I may press
Against my breast so full of emptiness
The painfulest possession of my life!

SECULAR PRIEST.

Ever more bitter grief becomes by grieving.

DUKE.

By grieving grief at last becomes enjoyment.

Oh, would that wandering ever on and on
I, laden with my melancholy burden
Of shrunken ashes, might with feeble footsteps
In expiation come where last I saw her.
There lay she dead within my arms, and there

Deceiv'd I saw her come to life again.
I thought I clasp'd her, thought I held her fast,
But now she is forever torn from me.
But there will I immortalize my sorrow.
A tribute to her rescue did I vow,
Enraptur'd by the marvel of my dream.
E'en now the gardener's skilful hand is making
Through wood and fell a labyrinth of paths,
Enclosing round about the sacred spot
Where to his heart my royal master press'd
My daughter, and her princely birth confess'd.
Where henceforth symmetry and just proportion
Would grace the spot which brought me happiness.
There not a hand shall labor! Half completed
This plan shall be an emblem of my fate.
But the memorial—that I still shall found.
Heap'd up of unhewn bowlders, orderless,
There will I wander, there in silence dwell
Till Death at last shall bring desir'd relief.
Oh, let me there, like stone, dream life away,
Until the slender trace of former care
Shall vanish from this melancholy desert.
In freedom shall the meadow green with grass
And bough with bough in wildness intertwine,
The bending birch's head shall sweep the ground,

The tender saplings wax to mighty trees,
And moss shall clothe around the slippery stems.
Time passes without note: for she is gone
By whose development I mark'd the years.

SECULAR PRIEST.

And will that man whose pleasure oft has been
To mingle in the beneficent whirl of life
Allow himself to shun the busy world
And choose the monotony of loneliness,
Because a burden unendurable
Has roll'd upon him with its threatening doom?
Go forth! with eagle swiftness through the land,
Through foreign kingdoms, that before thy mind
The world and all its glories may arise.

DUKE.

What have I in the world to look for now,
When she no longer meets my eye who was
The only object that I cared to see?
Shall stream and mountain, vale and wood and fell,
In varied panorama pass before me,
And only wake the bitter need I feel
To hold once more the form so dearly lov'd?
From mountain-top down to the ocean wide
What would the wealth of nature be to me—
Recalling me to poverty and loss?

SECULAR PRIEST.

But novel wealth lies close before thy hand!

DUKE.

'Tis through the eye undimm'd of youth alone

That things familiar vivified can stir us;

When the enthusiasm long despis'd

Comes to us pleasantly from childish lips.

And so I plann'd to show her all the realm,

The peopled plains, the forest depths, the rivers,

And all the boundless majesty of ocean,

So that the intoxication of her gaze

When turn'd upon the infinite of space

Should fill my soul with infinite of love!

SECULAR PRIEST.

If thou, exalted Prince, didst not aspire

To spend the glorious days of fullest life

In contemplation, if activity

In doing for unnumber'd multitudes

Gave thee the precedent unto the throne

For noble service in the common good,

Instead of accident of kingly birth,

Thus in the name of all I summon thee:

Take courage! Let the melancholy hours

Which darken thy horizon be, for others,

Through consolation, counsel, aid, no less

Than for thyself, bright hours of happiness.

DUKE.

How shallow and disgusting such a life,

Where every motion, every impulse brings

Ever new need of motion, need of impulse,

And no desir'd result at last rewards.

That did I see in her alone: for her

I strove and won with pleasure keen

That I might build a realm of pleasing fortune.

So I was genial, was a friend to all,

Obliging, quick, in deed and counsel lavish.

"It is the father in me that they love,"

I said; "they thank the father, and, in time,

The daughter will they welcome as their friend."

SECULAR PRIEST.

No time is left for sentimental musings!

Exalted Prince, quite different thoughts demand thee.

Shall I the secret hazard? I the humblest

Among thy servitors? The eager glances

Of all are turn'd to thee, these dubious days,

Thy solid worth, thy strength undeviating.

DUKE.

The happy man alone feels worth and strength!

SECULAR PRIEST.

The pain intense of woes intolerable

Are bail unto the moment for vast meaning.

Let me have pardon if I boldly wage

To speak the confidential tidings out!

How from below fermenting passions seethe!

How ineffectual the force above!

Not every one has sight to see but thou



More than the multitude in which I move.

Oh, do not falter now the storm draws nigh,

But seize the helm and guide the weltering ship

For the advantage of thy fatherland.

Forget thy grief: else will a thousand fathers

Like thee their children mourn, a thousand children

Call vainly for their fathers, and the cries

Of mourning mothers echo horribly

Against the pitiless hollow prison walls.

Oh, bring an offering of thy grief and pain

Unto the altar of the common weal.

And all whom thou wilt rescue from this doom

Thou shalt in compensation win as children.

DUKE.

From gloomy corners do not raise again

The swarm opaque of spectres to oppress me,
Which through my daughter's wonder-working power
Were often bann'd and readily put to flight.
That all-compelling might of love is vanish'd
Which sang unto my soul in pleasant dreams.
Now heavy on me weighs with solid pressure
The actual present, threatening to crush me.
Away! away! Take me from out the world!
And if the robe in which thou movest lie not,
Then lead me to the place where patience dwells,—
Unto the monastery, and leave me there
In universal silence, silent, bowed,
To sink, a weary mortal, to the vault.

SECULAR PRIEST.

Me scarcely it becomes to recommend
The world to thee: yet boldly will I speak!
Not in the grave nor yet upon the grave
The noble man will waste his wealth of longing.
He turns unto himself, and full of wonder
He finds the lost again within his heart.

DUKE.

The fact that such a treasure still remains
When far and farther flies the treasure lost,
That is the torment which the parted member
Forever torn away must still renew

Upon the pang-wrench'd, palpitating body.

Dismember'd life who can unite again?

Annihilated! who rebuild?

SECULAR PRIEST.

The spirit!

The spirit of man for whom is nothing lost

Which once was priz'd and held in firm possession.

So lives Eugenie still, within thy mind,

Which she erewhile sustain'd, in which she stirr'd

Perception of the wondrous works of Nature.

Still as a lofty pattern doth she work,

Protecting thee from common things and bad

Which, every hour, may meet thee. And the glory

Reflected from her noble truth will banish

The empty falsehood that would sting thee.

So through her power feel that thy strength is doubled,

And give her back a life invulnerable

Which can be shatter'd by no earthly force.

DUKE.

Nay, let some intricate net of death encoil me

With gloomy glowering web of woven dreams.

And, O thou image, perfect in thy beauty,

Remain for me forever young and changeless!

Around me let the pure light of thine eyes

Forever shine! Where'er my steps may wander

Do thou go with me, pointing out the way
Amid the thorny labyrinth of earth!
Thou art no figment of a dream! I see thee!
Just as thou wast, art thou. Almighty God
Conceiv'd thee perfect, perfect wast thou made.
Thou art a portion of the Infinite,
The Endless, and thou art forever mine.

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ACT IV.



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SCENE I.—

Park At The Port. On One Side A Palace, On The Other A Church; In The Background A Row Of Trees Through Which The Port Is Seen Below. Eugenie, Enveloped In A Veil, Seated On A Bench In The Background, With Face Turned To The Sea.

Governess. Counsellor. *In the foreground.*

GOVERNESS.

A wretched business unavoidably
Compels me from the Kingdom's central heart,
The district of the capital, to seek
The limits of the solid land, this haven,
With strenuous care forever at my heels
And dubious distance ever beckoning on.
How would the counsel and the sympathy
Of some strong man reliable and noble
Shine on me as a blessed guiding star!
Forgive me, therefore, if I come to thee
And bring this charter which shall justify
The formidable purpose that I own!
For I have heard thy name in hearty praise
Once in the halls where righteous judgment sways
As worthy aid, but now as perfect judge.

COUNSELLOR.

(Who meantime thoughtfully contemplates the paper.) Not my desert but my endeavor won

Perchance my meed of praise. But strange it seems

That him whom thou hast righteous call'd and noble,

Thou should'st demand in aid, and mock his eyes

With such a paper which can only fill

His bosom with disgust and sheer abhorrence.

Of right, of judgment, let no word be spoken.

This deed is violence, is tyranny!

E'en if the treatment wise and skilful be!

A child of noble birth is given over

For death or life—I speak not too severely?—

Is given over to thy will alone.

All, be they officers, civilians, soldiers,

Are bidden to protect thee, and to do

To her whate'er thy word as law may say.

[Gives back the paper.]

GOVERNESS.

Here show thy wisdom as a righteous umpire.

Let not this paper bring complaint alone!

To me, the deeply blamed, oh, lend an ear!

Consider favorably my proposition!

Of noble blood the peerless maiden sprang.

With every gift, with every virtue grac'd

By Nature as inalienable right,
E'en though the law denies her other
And now has banish'd her. 'Tis I must lead her
Forth from the circle of her friends and hence
Go with her as her guardian to the islands.

COUNSELLOR.

To certain death she goes: where heated vapors
With slow insinuating poison work.
There must this flower of heaven quickly wither,
The color mantling on her cheek must fade!
The form must disappear which yearning eyes
Would ever wish to keep preserv'd from ill.

GOVERNESS.

Before thou judgest, listen to the end.
The girl is innocent (what need of proof?)
Yet is the cause of evils numberless.
An angry God between two parties plac'd her
Like Discord's apple, and they now contend,
Forever separated on the question.
The one would see her rais'd to highest station,
The other strives to push her from the ground.
Both were of stout resolve. A labyrinth
Of cunning, weird devices hedg'd her fate,
Plot cross'd with counterplot and end was none
Until impatient passion brought a crisis,

Precipitating moments big with doom.
Dissimulation then forgot its bounds,
And violence fraught with peril to the State
Broke forth in all its threatening fury.
And now to keep the guilty from their guilt,
And check them, a decree divine is made
That strikes my charge, the innocent occasion
Of all the coil, and crushes me with her.

COUNSELLOR.

The instrument I blame not, scarce can judge
Those powers that work with such high hand. Alas!
They also are the slaves of tyrant fate
And rarely act from free deliberation.
Solicitude and fear of greater evils
Oftimes compel the monarch into deeds
Which are unjust and yet must needs be done.
Complete thy necessary task! Begone
Out of the narrow boundaries of my Eden.

GOVERNESS.

'Tis that I seek, and thither turn my steps,
In hope to find relief. Thou'lt not repulse me!
I long have tried to draw entrancing pictures
Before the worthy maiden of the pure delights
Which might await her in the calm contentment
Within the circles of the burgher classes.

If she would but renounce her high ambition
And claim the safeguard of an honest husband.
Would turn her eyes from sweet forbidden regions
Where danger, banishment and death surround her
To look with favor on a simple home,
Then all were solv'd, my bitter task fulfill'd,
And I, rejoicing in my fatherland,
Releas'd from care could still see peaceful hours.

COUNSELLOR.

A web of wondrous circumstance thou showest.

GOVERNESS.

I show it to a wise and resolute man.

COUNSELLOR.

A suitor to thy mind could win the maid?

GOVERNESS.

She should be his and richly dower'd withal.

COUNSELLOR.

Who could so rashly make a grave decision?

GOVERNESS.

With sudden purpose inclination acts.

COUNSELLOR.

To link one's life with fate unknown were madness.

GOVERNESS.

One glance at her is warrant of her worth.

COUNSELLOR.

The wife's foes are the foes of husband also.

GOVERNESS.

When she is wed comes reconciliation.

COUNSELLOR.

And will her husband know the maiden's secret?

GOVERNESS.

If he is trusty, trust will be bestow'd.

COUNSELLOR.

And will she freely sanction such alliance?

GOVERNESS.

A dread alternative will weight her choice.

COUNSELLOR.

Is it fair to woo in such extremity?

GOVERNESS.

He who would rescue must not reason fine.

COUNSELLOR.

Pray, what before all else dost thou demand?

GOVERNESS.

That thy resolve shall be confirm'd at once.

COUNSELLOR.

And is the peril of thy fate so pressing?

GOVERNESS.

The busy sailors yonder spur the voyage.

COUNSELLOR.

Hast thou advised her yet of such a step?

GOVERNESS.

I hinted thus with quick significance.

COUNSELLOR.

And did she not, indignant, spurn the thought?

GOVERNESS.

Her former fortune then was all too nigh.

COUNSELLOR.

The glorious fancies, will they ever fade?

GOVERNESS.

The awful ocean puts them all to flight.

COUNSELLOR.

She hates to leave her fatherland forever?

GOVERNESS.

She hates to leave it, and to me 'tis death.

Thou, noble sir, by happy fortune found,

Oh, let us not exchange uncertain words.

Thy heart is young and in it dwells that virtue

That needs bright faith and uncondition'd love

For the accomplishment of treasur'd deeds.

In sooth a splendid circle hems thee round

Of men like thee—I would not say of equals.

Oh, look around thee! Look into thy heart

And look into the hearts of all thy friends!
And if thou find'st an overflowing measure
Of love, and charity and strength and courage,
Then let the most deserving take this jewel
And find the blessing that shall be his portion.

COUNSELLOR.

I know, I feel thy dubious situation.
I cannot with myself discreetly balance,
As wisdom would demand, before I choose.
Let me converse with her.
[*The Governess retires towards Eugenie.* What must be done
'Tis fated will be done. In commonest things
Volition, choice determine much. The highest
That comes to us of good, who knows its source?

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SCENE II.

Eugenie. Counsellor.

COUNSELLOR.

E'en as thou comest to me, honor'd lady,
I almost doubt if they have told me truly.
Thou art unhappy, say they, yet thou bringest
Where'er thou art prosperity and fortune.

EUGENIE.

If I o'erwhelm'd in tribulation find
The first to whom I turn my face and voice,
So kind and noble, as thou seem'st to me,
Then will my sorrow disappear, I hope.

COUNSELLOR.

If on a man of wide experience
A lot like thine should fall, 'twere pitiful.
But grief of youth when first oppress'd how sorely
It calls for sympathy and love's protection.

EUGENIE.

Thus but a little time ago I came
Up from the night of death to light of day.
I knew not what befell, what accident
Had hurl'd me headlong from the dizzy cliff.
Then suddenly I rose, I recogniz'd

The lovely world again. I saw the leech
Struggling to stir the dying flames again;
Found in my father's loving glance, his voice,
My life again. And now a second time
I waken from a more disastrous fall.
Unknown and shadowy is the scene around me;
Strange to me are the faces of the men;
Thy gentleness itself is like a dream.

COUNSELLOR.

If strangers feel for our adversity
Then are they nearer to us than our nearest,
Who often look upon our grief with coldness,
From very carelessness of wonted sight.
Thy case is perilous, but who can say
If yet there be not chance of safety for thee?

EUGENIE.

No answer can I make. Unknown to me
The powers are which have brought about my exile.
The woman whom thou spokest with knows well
I suffer from the madden'd deeds of others.

COUNSELLOR.

Although superior power with strenuous blow
Has stricken hard thy fault so innocent,
Thy error made so by an accident,
No less respect remains—and dawning love.

EUGENIE.

The knowledge that my heart is pure within
Makes strange the consequence of little errors.

COUNSELLOR.

'Tis sport to stumble on the level ground;
A single slip hurls from the precipice.

EUGENIE.

Upon those heights I wander'd full of joy;
Excess of rapture caus'd my foot to fail.
The coming fortune I anticipated;
My hands already grasp'd the precious pledge.
A single moment and a little patience,
And, as I fondly thought, the whole was mine.
But rash desire o'erwhelm'd me. Swift temptation
Made havoc with my resolution. Was that it?
I saw, I told what was forbidden me
To see, to tell. Is such a trifling fault
So harshly punish'd? Does a lightly-given
Injunction, seeming like a jocular test,
Relentlessly condemn the breaker of it?
Oh, then 'tis true what ancient legends tell,
Once deem'd incredible. The momentary,
Thoughtless enjoyment of the apple brought
Unending guilt and sorrow on the world.
Thus also to my care a key was trusted.

Forbidden treasures did I dare unlock,
And I unlock'd the entrance to my tomb.

COUNSELLOR.

Thou canst not find the evil's primal source,
And were it found it still would flow forever.

EUGENIE.

In trifling faults I seek it. I impute
To idle fancy blame for such disaster;
But higher, higher let suspicion rest.
The twain to whom I owed my life's completeness,
Those glorious men, apparently were friends.
But now the discord of unstable parties
Which long had coil'd in dusky hiding-places
Perchance is breaking forth in open feud.
And what surrounded me as fear and care
Has reach'd its crisis, while it crushes me
And threats annihilation to the world.

COUNSELLOR.

I pity thee. Destruction of a world
Thou prophesiest since thy grief is sore.
Did not the earth seem fortunate and joyful
When, as a happy child, thou play'dst 'mid flowers?

EUGENIE.

The fortune of the earth who ever saw
Bedeck'd in more attractive hues than I?

Ah! what magnificence, what purity,
What fulness, fill'd my life! The satisfaction
Of every human want seem'd but a tithe
Of all the riches squander'd for my pleasure.
And who provided me this Paradise?
A loving father, who, neglecting naught
Of least or greatest, prodigally pour'd
Bewildering wealth of treasures in my hands,
And form'd me, body and mind alike, to carry
The weight of such responsibility.
If my surroundings seem'd effeminate,
And comfort pour'd its subtile poison round,
Then knightly sports invited me away
To fight with danger on the mettlesome steed.
Ofttimes I yearn'd to visit far horizons
To view the bounds of countries new and strange,
And this my noble father promis'd me.
He promis'd me to take me o'er the sea.
He hop'd to join in loving sympathy
In my first rapture in the infinite.
And here I stand alone and gaze far out,
And closer seems the world to hedge me in.
O God! how limited are earth and heaven
To human hearts left wholly to themselves.

COUNSELLOR.

Thou hapless one! How like a meteor
With fell destruction in its train
Thou sweepst down upon me from on high,
Disturbing all the current of my life!
The joy which in the boundless sea I took
Henceforth is turn'd to pain by thee. When Phœbus
Prepares to couch upon his fiery pyre
And every eye is soften'd with delight,
My face will then be turn'd away, and tears
Will flow in sorrow for thee and thy fate.
Far on the rim of night-surrounded ocean
I see thy path beset by want and sorrow!
Depriv'd of all thy wonted joys and comforts,
Afflicted hopelessly with trials new!
The glowing arrows of the sun are pour'd
Upon a land scarce sever'd from the tide;
The pestilence of poisonous dampness born
Hovers in murky vapors o'er the lowlands.
I see thee in the valley of the shadow
Languid and pale, fading from day to day.
Must she who stands before me fair and blooming
So prematurely die a living death?

EUGENIE.

Thou callest shapes of horror up before me.

There, there they banish me? To yonder land
From childhood painted in the gloomiest colors,
The very hiding-place of hell on earth:
Where 'mid foul swamps the serpent and the tiger,
Through reeds and tangled thorn-brakes lurking, crawl;
Where swarms of insects arm'd with cruel stings
Like living clouds surround the wanderer;
Where every wind-breath, weighted with discomfort
And deadly, shortens life by precious hours.
I thought to ask thee; now thou seest, beg
With importunity the hapless maid:
Thou canst, thou wilt avert this fate from me.

COUNSELLOR.

A talisman of frightful potency
The woman who hath brought thee hither holds.

EUGENIE.

What use are law and order if they fail
To shelter childhood from the crafts of crime?
Who then are you, who with your empty pride
In justice boast of quelling lawlessness?

COUNSELLOR.

In narrow circles lies our jurisdiction;
And all the weight of law that we can wield
Rules the unstable class of humble life.
The varied deeds that pass in higher places,

High-handed deeds that give life or that kill,
Accomplish'd without counsel, without verdict,
Are measur'd by another measure, punish'd,
Perchance, according to another standard,
Remaining ever like a dubious riddle.

EUGENIE.

And is that all? Hast thou no more to say,
To tell me?

COUNSELLOR.

Nothing.

EUGENIE.

I believe thee not;
I do not dare believe!

COUNSELLOR.

Let me depart.
Must I appear a weak, a lackwit coward?
Bewail and pity? Shall I not devise
Some daring stroke that shall secure thy rescue?
Yet would not in this very boldness lurk
The poignant danger that thou mightest hope
Too much from me? that if my plan should fail
I should appear to thee a wretched bungler?

EUGENIE.

I will not let thee go whom fortune sends—

My happy fortune of the olden days
Which from my youth up watch'd and guarded me,
And now, when angry storms are raging, sends
A noble substitute to take her place.
Shall I not see and feel the sympathy
Thou takest in me and my fate? I stand
Not without influence here. Thou thinkest, plannest—
The wide domain of law's experience
Will surely offer some resource to save me.
Not yet is all hope lost. Oh, yes, thou seekest
Some means of rescue—hast already found it.
I know it, read it plainly in thy face,
Thy earnest, friendly, melancholy face.
Turn not away from me. Oh, speak the word,
The earnest glorious word that brings me comfort!

COUNSELLOR.

Thus, full of confidence, the sorely ill
Seeks the physician, begging for relief,
For help against the threat of darkening days.
The skilful man appears to him a god.
Yet ah! a bitter, unendurable means
Is offer'd of relief. Alas! must hope
Give way, must mutilation's gruesome horror
Cause loss instead of healing? must it be?
Thou wilt be rescu'd and thou canst be rescu'd,

But not restor'd. Thy past is gone forever.

The future that may wait thee, canst thou bear it?

EUGENIE.

For rescue from the hateful power of death,



For quickening refreshment of the light,

For mere security of life, one sinking

O'erwhelm'd in waves of difficulty calls.

What later must be heal'd, what be renew'd

And what be miss'd, the coming days will teach.

COUNSELLOR.

And next to life what dost thou most desire?

EUGENIE.

To live in my beloved fatherland.

COUNSELLOR.

That single mighty word is much to ask.

EUGENIE.

A single word contains my happiness.

COUNSELLOR.

Who can annul the magic incantation?

EUGENIE.

Victorious is the counter-charm of virtue.

COUNSELLOR.

'Tis hard to fight against superior might.

EUGENIE.

Superior might is not all-powerful!

But surely knowledge of the legal forms

Which bind alike the lofty and the low

Has found a means. Thou smilest. Is it true?

The means is found. Oh, free me from suspense.

COUNSELLOR.

What were the advantage, lady, if I spoke

Of possibilities to thee? Our wishes

Make everything seem possible. Our acts,

Oppos'd by much without us and within,

Are ignominiously brought to naught.

I cannot, dare not speak. Let me depart.

EUGENIE.

And even if thou should'st deceive! Were only

My imagination for a few glad moments

Allow'd to try a dubious, feeble flight!

Let me exchange one evil for another.

I feel that I am sav'd if I can choose.

COUNSELLOR.

There is one way by which thou canst remain

Here in thy fatherland—a peaceful way,

And many would conceive it pleasant. Favor

Is given it both by God and man. 'Tis lifted
By mighty powers above all fear of chance.
To those who take it, choose it for their own,
It bringeth peace and fortune. Full abundance
Of all desirable fruits of life it gives us
As well as most alluring future hope.
By heaven itself 'twas granted unto men
To be a common benefit and fortune.
Or boldness, or unfroward inclination
May find it leads to fields of sure content.

EUGENIE.

What paradise dost thou present in riddles?

COUNSELLOR.

Earth's heavenly fortune which thou canst create.

EUGENIE.

What helps my riddling it? I am perplex'd.

COUNSELLOR.

Thyself must solve it or thy hope is over.

EUGENIE.

Let that be seen when thou hast told it me.

COUNSELLOR.

Great is my boldness! It is marriage.

EUGENIE.

What!

COUNSELLOR.

The word is spoken. Thou must ponder it.

EUGENIE.

It takes me by surprise; it grieves my heart.

COUNSELLOR.

Thou must face bravely what surprises thee.

EUGENIE.

Far from me was it in my happy days,

And now its nearness is to me a horror.

My sorrow, my anxieties increase.

My father and my King I once suppos'd

Would bring the bridegroom at the proper time.

My anxious fancy did not search the future.

No lover's image ever fill'd my breast.

Now must I think, perforce, unwonted thoughts,

And school myself to feelings new and strange.

Must give me to a husband, ere a man

Loveworthy, worthy of my hand, appear.

And violate the fortune Hymen grants

To save me from the misery of my need.

COUNSELLOR.

A woman may entrust her dubious fate

To any worthy man, albeit a stranger.

He is no stranger who can sympathize.

And quickly one in sore distress will learn

To love his rescuer. What brings in union
Through years of life the woman with the man—
The feeling of security—will never
Fail her in comfort, counsel, help, protection,
With which upon the instant, for all time,
A steadfast man through deeds of bravery
Inspires the woman when oppress'd with danger.

EUGENIE.

And where for me were such a hero found?

COUNSELLOR.

This city has a host of worthy men.

EUGENIE.

Yet no one knows me or would care to know.

COUNSELLOR.

A face like thine cannot remain conceal'd.

EUGENIE.

Oh, do not cheat a hope so prone to fail.

Where would a man be found so generous

To give his hand to me, the deeply-humbl'd?

Could I myself accept a boon so great?

COUNSELLOR.

Unfair seem many things in life; yet soon

And unexpected comes the compensation.

In constant change the weal outweighs the woe,

And sudden sorrows counterbalance joys.

Nothing is constant. Many a coil of trouble

Is disentangled while the days roll by

Resolving into gradual harmony.

And ah! the widest chasms love can bridge,

And bind in lasting union earth and heaven.

EUGENIE.

With empty visions wilt thou mock my eyes?

COUNSELLOR.

Thy safety is secur'd if thou canst trust me.

EUGENIE.

Then let me see my rescuer's faithful image.

COUNSELLOR.

Thou seest him; he offers thee his hand.

EUGENIE.

Thou! What access of madness has o'ercome thee?

COUNSELLOR.

Forever resolute my feelings stand.

EUGENIE.

And can a moment bring forth such a marvel?

COUNSELLOR.

A miracle ever is a moment's birth.

EUGENIE.

And so is error also child of rashness.

COUNSELLOR.

A man who once has seen thee errs no more.

EUGENIE.

Wisdom remains forever queen of life.

COUNSELLOR.

She may mistake, e'en while the heart decides!

Oh, let me tell thee how I with myself,

Not many hours ago, took serious counsel.

And as I felt my loneliness, review'd

My situation as it was, my fortune,

Position, possibilities of life,

And cast my eyes about to seek a wife.

Then fancy show'd me many a pleasing picture,

The garner'd treasures of my recollection.

They pass'd in bright procession through my mind;

But to a choice my heart was not inclin'd:

Now thou appearest and my bosom glows

With sense of what it lack'd. This is my fate.

EUGENIE.

The stranger, ill-entreated, sadly-dower'd,—

She could confess a glad, proud consolation

To see herself so treasur'd and so lov'd,

But she considers also her friend's fortune—

The unselfish man, who should perchance be last

Among all men to proffer her his aid.

Dost thou not cheat thy heart, and dost thou dare
Defy those mighty powers that threaten me?

COUNSELLOR.

Not those alone. The monstrous violence
That stirs among the masses must be shunn'd.
And God has given men the safest haven
Within the home o'er which the husband guards.
There only dwelleth peace, which thou in vain
Outside its sacred circle mightest seek.
Disturbing jealousy, venomous calumny,
The noisy strife and selfish interests
Within its lovely shelter have no place.
Its happiness is hedg'd by love and reason,
And all mischance is soften'd by their power.
Oh, come! Accept the safety I can offer.
I know myself and what I dare to promise.

EUGENIE.

Art thou a Prince within thy house?

COUNSELLOR.

I am.
And so is every man, the evil and the good.
Is not that house a little kingdom where
The husband tyrannizes o'er the wife?
When he, according to his selfish humor,
With whims, and bitter words and cruel deeds,

Takes fiendish pleasure in the slow destruction
Of gentle joys which he had sworn to cherish.
Who dries the suffering woman's tears? What law
Or what tribunal reaches the offender?
He triumphs, and with agony of patience
She sinks before her time into the grave.
Necessity, the law, and custom gave
The man these arbitrary powers. They trusted
His strength, his honest worth would be the safeguard.
I cannot offer thee, beloved, honor'd stranger,
A knightly arm, a long descent of heroes,
Only the yeoman's worthy rank secure.
When thou art mine, what more can trouble thee?
Forever thou art mine, maintain'd, protected.
Should even the King demand thee back from me,
As consort I could reckon with the King.

EUGENIE.

Forgive me. Yet too vividly I see
Hovering before me what I lost so lightly.
O friend magnanimous, thou canst not think
How little now of good remains to me.
This little thou teachest me to prize, thou givest
With new vitality endow'd myself
Back to myself, so generous is thy heart.
I give thee honor for it—can I speak it?—

The grateful loving feelings of a sister!

I call myself thy work, but what thou wishest

Alas! I never can become to thee.

COUNSELLOR.

Dost thou so rashly blast my hope and thine?

EUGENIE.

The word that dooms our hopes is ever sudden.

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SCENE III.



The Same. Governess.

GOVERNESS.

The fleet already hears the favoring wind;
The sails are bellying; all is in commotion.
In tears the parting take one more embrace,
And from the vessels, from the steadfast land,
White handkerchiefs are waving last farewells.
And soon our vessel also weighs the anchor.
Come! let us go. No parting salutation
Consoles us, not a tear is shed for us.

COUNSELLOR.

Not unbewail'd, not without bitter pain
Of friends deserted, who would rescue you,
Who stretch forth yearning arms, ye pass from sight.
Oh, yet perchance from far will smile upon you
Desir'd in vain the vision ye now scorn.

(To Eugenie.)

A few short moments since I welcom'd thee

With rapture. Must a hasty "Fare-thee-well"

Now seal our everlasting separation?

GOVERNESS.

Do I surmise the purport of your talk?

COUNSELLOR.

Thou seest me anxious for the eternal union.

GOVERNESS.

(*To Eugenie.*) And how dost thou receive so great an offer?

EUGENIE.

With keenest gratitude that heart could render.

GOVERNESS.

And art thou not inclin'd to grasp this hand?

COUNSELLOR.

She turn'd to me for aid importunately.

EUGENIE.

What next us lies is oft beyond our reach.

GOVERNESS.

Ah! quite too soon relief will be too late.

COUNSELLOR.

And hast thou thought of all the threatening ill?

EUGENIE.

E'en to the last that threatens—death itself.

GOVERNESS.

Dost thou decline the life that's offer'd thee?

COUNSELLOR.

Delectable days of glad festivity.

EUGENIE.

One festival I hop'd for: hope is past.

GOVERNESS.

Who much has lost again can quickly gain.

COUNSELLOR.

A lingering destiny instead of glory.

EUGENIE.

When glory quench'd its light slow days began.

GOVERNESS.

The possible fate in store should bring content.

COUNSELLOR.

Who would not be content with love and faith?

EUGENIE.

My heart would contradict those flattering words,

And contravene you both impatiently.

COUNSELLOR.

Alas! I know how all too burdensome

Is succor undesir'd. It only rouses

Within our hearts the strongest opposition.

We should be grateful, but our thanks are scanty

Because we are not willing to receive.

So let me go. But ere our paths divide

I must fulfil the duty and the custom

Incumbent on the native of the port:

And to your voyage across the barren main

Devote refreshing stores of fruits and flowers,

My parting benediction and farewell.

Then will I stand and watch with stony eyes

While down the horizon fades the towering sail.

And with it go my happiness and fortune.

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SCENE IV.

Eugenie. Governess.

EUGENIE.

Upon thy will I know my happiness,

My misery depend. Oh, be persuaded!

Oh, let thy hard heart yield! Send me not hence.

GOVERNESS.

It lies with thee to guide our future course.

Thou hast a choice. I only can obey

The ruling hand; it hurls me swift away.

EUGENIE.

And dost thou call it choice when opposite

The stronghold of impossibility

The unavoidable arrays itself?

GOVERNESS.

The alliance can be made, the ban be broken.

EUGENIE.

There are things that a noble cannot do.

GOVERNESS.

This worthy man might well inspire thy favor.

EUGENIE.

If thou would'st bring me back to better fortune

I would reward his kindness boundlessly.

GOVERNESS.

Oh, give him now the only boon he asks,
And lead him by thy hand to higher levels.
If virtue, if desert but slowly forward
The man of capability, if he,
With calm renunciation, scarcely notic'd,
Devotes himself to others, striving upwards,
A noble wife will lead him to his goal.
Let no man look below him for a spouse.
Too lofty his ambition cannot be.
If he succeeds to woo a high-born lady
The path of life will smooth before his steps.

EUGENIE.

The meaning of thy false, confusing words
I disentangle from thy lying speech.
The opposite I know too well is true.
The husband irresistibly compels
The wife to take the exclusive course he follows.
Once there, forever there; she cannot choose
By force inherent ways dissimilar.
From low condition he will lift her up;
And so from higher spheres he snares her down;
Her former self is vanish'd quite away,
Extinguish'd every trace of days departed.
What she has won who now can tear from her?

And who can give her back what she has lost?

GOVERNESS.

And thus thou dost pronounce the fatal sentence.

EUGENIE.

Yet full of hope I look for rescue still.

GOVERNESS.

When he who loves despairs how canst thou hope?

EUGENIE.

A man less passionate would counsel better.

GOVERNESS.

Of choice and counsel let no more be said;

Thou driv'st me into exile: thou must follow.

EUGENIE.

Oh, would that yet once more before my eyes

Thou would'st appear with gentle friendliness,

As always from the earliest days I saw thee.

With not more sweet, benevolent glance than thine,

The sun whose glory animates all life,

The bright moon with its soft inspiring rays,

Pour'd forth their heavenly influence on my mind.

What boldest wish was not anticipated?

What was to fear? The safeguard was prepar'd.

And though my mother held herself aloof

And did not show her favor to her child

Thou camest to me in a mother's place,
Consoling me with limitless affection.
And art thou now so chang'd? Thou seemest
In outward guise the same old loving friend.
But inwardly thy heart has wholly chang'd.
It still is thou whom I so often ask'd
For favors small and great, never denied.
The childlike sentiment of wonted reverence
It prompts me now to ask the greatest boon.



artist: otto seitz.

THE NATURAL DAUGHTER. ACT IV, SCENE IV.

eugenia and the governess.

And could it lower me to beg thee now
On bended knee, as though before my father,
As though before my King, my God, for safety?

[She kneels.

GOVERNESS.

It seems to me that in thy present mood
Thou mockest me, and falsehood moves me not.

[She roughly lifts Eugenie to her feet.

EUGENIE.

A tone so harsh, such inconsiderate treatment,

Must I endure to suffer at thy hands?
And dost thou fright away my dream so rudely?
In clearest light I see my destiny.
'Twas not my fault, 'twas not the strife of party,
It was my brother's guile that drove me hither;
And thou, a sworn conspirator with him,
Compellest me to suffer lifelong exile.

GOVERNESS.

Thy error drives thee into thoughts unjust.
What will thy brother scheme to do against thee?
He has the will perchance but not the power.

EUGENIE.

As he desires, so let it be. I will not
In those far-distant hopeless deserts languish.
A living people move around me here,
A loving people, in whose hearts the name
Of father spoken by a child is sweet.
I will demand their aid. A mighty shout
Would summon rescuers from the brawny rabble.

GOVERNESS.

The brawny rabble thou hast never known.
They stare and wonder and procrastinate
While what is done is done. And if they move
Failure attends their planless enterprise.

EUGENIE.

Thou shalt not with thy chilling word destroy
My faith, as thou hast ruin'd my happiness.
Down in the city life shall give me life;
There where the billowing throngs stream ceaselessly,
Where every heart contented with its pittance
Will open to the touch of sympathy—
Thou shalt not keep me back. I'll shout aloud,
Impetuously mixing in the throng,
And blazon forth the frightful deed of crime
Which fills my soul with poignant pangs of fear.



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ACT V.



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SCENE I.—

Plaza At The Port.

Eugenie. Governess.

EUGENIE.

What influence dost thou use to draw me back?

Now also I obey against my will.

O cursed power, thy voice has won upon me,

Which erst so smoothly led me to obey,

Which got the mastery of the whole domain

Wherein my plastic nature was confin'd.

'Twas thou who taught me first the magic power

Of speech, the fine artistic web of words.

Thy lips unseal'd the world to me and gave me

The costly knowledge of my inmost heart.

This magic now thou usest to my harm;

Thou bindest me, thou draggest me away.

My mind is dull'd, my feelings are confus'd,

And I could wish I were among the dead.

GOVERNESS.

Oh, would this magic had reveal'd its power

In days when I besought thee fervently

To let those lofty schemes of thine dissolve.

EUGENIE.

Didst thou imagine such a monstrous evil
And didst not warn the all-too-trustful mind?

GOVERNESS.

Indeed I warn'd thee but in guarded words;
The secret spoken out had brought thee death.

EUGENIE.

And yet behind thy silence exile lay;
More welcome to me were the doom of death.

GOVERNESS.

Yet this misfortune, unforeseen or not,
Has snar'd me with thee in the selfsame net.

EUGENIE.

How can I know what great reward thou'lt have
When thou hast work'd the undoing of thy charge?

GOVERNESS.

'Tis waiting for me on a foreign shore.
The sail is spread and bears us both away.

EUGENIE.

The prison of the ship has not yet seiz'd me;
'Tis not too late; why should I go unwilling?

GOVERNESS.

Hast thou not once appeal'd unto the people?
They only stared in silence and went their way.

EUGENIE.

Contending as I was with keen emotions
The common people thought that I was mad.
Yet not with words or violence should'st thou hinder
My bold, courageous steps to get me aid.
The magnates of this city from their houses
Come hither to the strand to watch the vessels
Which mass'd in fleets, by us unlov'd, depart.
Within the palace of the governor
The guards are stirring; he it is who comes
Adown you steps escorted by a throng.
I will address him and unfold my case.
If he be fit to represent my King
And take his place in matters of concern,
He'll not repulse me without hearing me.

GOVERNESS.

I stand not in the way of this attempt;
Yet name no names, but only tell thy story.

EUGENIE.

No names until I see that I can trust him.

GOVERNESS.

He seems to be a noble youth, and gladly
Will do his utmost to confer a favor.

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SCENE II.—

The Same.

The Governor. Adjutants.

EUGENIE.

I crave a pardon for my over boldness;

Oh, wilt thou heed the stranger in thy way?

GOVERNOR.

(After long and attentive contemplation.) One who, like thee, commends herself at sight

Will be secure of friendliest reception.

EUGENIE.

No bright and friendly matter do I bring;

The deepest woe compels me to address thee.

GOVERNOR.

Then let it be my duty to dispel it;

Or failing that, to make it light to bear.

EUGENIE.

She who petitions is of loftiest race;

And yet she has no right to bear its name.

GOVERNOR.

A name is soon forgotten; but thy face

Would stay forever in the memory.

EUGENIE.

Me from my father's breast to the wild sea
Has treacherous violence harshly torn and forc'd.

GOVERNOR.

Who with irreverent, hostile hand could think
Of bringing pain to such a peaceful heart?

EUGENIE.

Suspicion only tells me that this blow
Wag'd by a member of my race fell on me.
Mised by selfishness and evil counsels
My brother plotted this destruction for me.
And she whom here thou seest, who nurtured me,
I know not why, sides with my enemies.

GOVERNESS.

I side with her and mitigate an evil
Which I, alas! cannot entirely cure.

EUGENIE.

She forces me to embark upon the ship;
She carries me away to yonder isles!

GOVERNESS.

If I myself go with thee on this exile
It proves my love and motherly devotion.

GOVERNOR.

Forgive me, honor'd ladies, if, one instant,

Surprise at seeing and at hearing you

O'ercomes a man who, young in years, has seen

And has consider'd many things in life.

Ye both to me seem worthy of belief;

And yet does each of you distrust the other.

At least it seems so. What am I to do

To disentangle now the twisted threads

Which in a puzzling knot so strangely bind you?

EUGENIE.

If thou wilt hear me I will tell thee more.

GOVERNESS.

I also much am able to explain.

GOVERNOR.

That oftentimes we are deceiv'd by strangers

Must also prejudice the truth when seen

Behind the seeming of adventurers.

EUGENIE.

If thou dost not believe me I am lost.

GOVERNOR.

E'en if I did believe 'tis hard to help.

EUGENIE.

Oh, send me to my father's house again!

GOVERNOR.

To rescue outcast children, to protect

Foundlings or those who have been put away

Brings small reward to wisely-thinking men.

About the inheritance of property

Arises question of the rightful heir,

And hateful passions seethe, and if relations

Brawl noisily about the Mine and Thine

The stranger who shall meddle wins the hate

Of both sides. Not infrequently indeed,

If his more strenuous interference fail,

In shame before the judgment he is brought.

And so excuse me if I cannot promise

A hopeful answer to thy pressing claim.

EUGENIE.

If such timidity becomes the noble,

Then whither shall the poor downtrodden turn?

GOVERNOR.

Yet certainly thou wilt excuse me now,

Since urgent business calls me swiftly hence,

If I invite thee early on the morrow

To seek my palace, there more comfortably

To learn the heavy fate that weighs thee down.

EUGENIE.

With pleasure will I come. And in advance

Accept my earnest thanks for my relief.

GOVERNESS.

(Putting a paper into his hands.) If we do not accept thy invitation

This leaflet will appear our exculpation.

GOVERNOR.

(Reading it attentively and handing it back.) My only service to thee then can be

To wish that thou may'st have a fortunate voyage,

Submission to thy destiny, and hope.

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SCENE III.

Eugenie. Governess.

EUGENIE.

Is this the talisman which thou hast wielded
To carry me away, to hold me prison'd,
Which palsies all who come to my assistance?
Oh, let me look upon this deadly sheet.
I've learn'd to know my grief; so let me now
Know also who has caus'd the fatal blow.

GOVERNESS.

(Opening the paper before her.)

Here! Look upon it!

EUGENIE.

(Turning away.) Horrible sensation!

Have I surviv'd it that my father's name,
My King's name flash'd against me from the page?
Yet may deception have been play'd, perchance
Some crown official, insolent, has dared
Misuse his power, and serve my brother's whim,
To harass me. Then can I yet be rescu'd.
I'll try this also. Let me see.

GOVERNESS.

(As before.) Behold!

EUGENIE.

(As before.) My courage fails me. Nay! I dare not look.

Let be as Fate will have it: I am lost.

Driven out from all advantage of this world.

Oh, let me then renounce this world forever.

Oh, grant me this one boon. My enemies,

And thou among them, wish my death, they wish

To bury me alive. Permit me then

To yield me to the church which greedily

Has swallow'd so many a guiltless offering.

Here the cathedral stands: this door conducts

To silent sorrow or to silent joy.

Oh, let me take this step and hide myself.

And what awaits me there shall be my fate.

GOVERNESS.

I see the Abbess comes accompanied

By twain o' the sisters down into the plaza.

She too is young and of a princely house.

Disclose thy wish to her; I will not hinder.

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SCENE IV.—

The Same.

Abbess. Two Nuns.

EUGENIE.

Adorable, holy virgin, here thou seest
One who is stupefied, confus'd, at odds
With self and with the world. My present sorrow,
Solicitude for future evils drive me
To seek thy presence, where I dare to hope
For swift deliverance from monstrous wrong.

ABBESS.

If peace, reflection, reconciliation
With God and our own hearts can be imparted,
Then, noble stranger, shall the faithful word
Be taught thee which shall make thee know the joy
That blesses now and ever me and mine.

EUGENIE.

Unending is my woe; not even speech
With power divine could serve to assuage it.
Oh, take me! let me stay where thou dost stay,
And first, dissolv'd in tears of melancholy,
Devote my lighten'd heart to consolation.

ABBESS.

Oft have I seen within my holy sphere
The tears of earth change into heavenly smiles,
And bitter sorrow into joy divine.



Yet not by force can entrance here be made.
Full many a trial must the novice suffer
That we may know her absolute desert.

GOVERNESS.

Complete desert is easy to perceive,
And easy to fulfil severe conditions.

ABBESS.

I do not doubt thy gentleness of birth,
Thy property, are all could be desir'd
To gain the privileges of this house
For thee, although they are so great and tempting:
So let me quickly learn what be thy wishes.

EUGENIE.

Grant my petition, take me to thy care!
Conceal me from the world in deep seclusion.
All that is mine I freely give to thee.

Much do I bring and more I hope to offer.

ABBESS.

If youth and beauty can appeal to us,

A noble maiden fills our heart with love;

Dear child, then hast thou many claims upon us.

Beloved daughter, come into my arms.

EUGENIE.

With words like these, with such a warm embrace,

Thou hast at once appeas'd the angry storm

Which rag'd within my heart. The last wave dying

Still foams around me. I have reach'd the port.

GOVERNESS.

(Stepping between.) Did not a wretched destiny oppose!

Behold this paper! give us then thy pity.

[She hands the Abbess the paper.]

ABBESS.

(Having read it.) My censure thou deservest since thou knewest

That this was so, and yet our vain discourse

Thou didst permit unchalleng'd, though thou heardest.

I bow my head before the mightier hand

That seems to rule here.

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SCENE V.

Eugenie. Governess.

EUGENIE.

What! a mightier hand?

What means the hypocrite? Is't God she means?

The Almighty God of heaven has not surely

To do with any such atrocious deed.

Or does she mean our King? Well! I must bear it—

Whatever he imposes on me. Yet

I will no longer dubiously hover

Between my love and fear, nor like a woman

E'en while I sink will spare the feelings

Which fill my timid heart. So let it break

If break it must; and now I wish to see

That paper, if the sentence unto death

Be by my King or by my father sign'd.

Before the angry godhead that has crush'd me

I stand and face the consequences boldly.

Oh, that I really stood before it! Fearful

Is the last glance of injur'd innocence.

GOVERNESS.

I never have refus'd it; take it now.

EUGENIE.

(Looking at the outside of the paper.) It is the idiosyncrasy of man

That in the very extremity of evil

The fear of further loss clings to him still.

Are we so rich, ye gods, that at one blow

Ye cannot strip us of our last possession?

This paper tore me from my life's delight,

And lets me still forebode a deeper grief.

[She unfolds it.

Ah, well! be brave, my heart, and tremble not

To drain this bitter cup e'en to the dregs.

[She peers into it.

The seal and manual of the King!

GOVERNESS.

(Taking away the paper.)

Good child!

On me have pity while thyself thou mournest.

In undertaking this disastrous duty

I but fulfil the bidding of the Almighty,

That I may stand beside thee in thy sorrow,

Lest in the hand of strangers thou should'st fall.

What fills my soul with anguish, all I know

About this frightful deed soon thou shalt learn.

But grant me pardon if necessity

With iron hand compels me instantly

To take our passage on the parting vessel.

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SCENE VI.

Eugenie. *Afterwards Governess in background.*

EUGENIE.

Thus then the loveliest kingdom on the earth,

This seaport peopled by its busy thousands,

Becomes a wilderness. I am alone.

Here noble gentlemen conform to laws,

And warriors listen to the word of duty;

Here saints in peace beseech the God of heaven;

The throng are busy striving after gain;

But I am banish'd without right or justice.

There is no hand to arm itself for me;

The house of safety is shut fast against me;

None dares to stir an inch in my defence.

Banishment! Yes, the hideous, burdensome word

Already crushes me with all its weight.

I feel that I am but a lifeless member

The which the healthy body lops away.

As one who dies before his time I am—

Who, conscious of himself but stricken dumb,

Lies shuddering in a waking dream, to be

The unwilling witness of his own interment.

Unspeakable necessity! Yet hold!

Is not a choice still left me? Can I not

Lay hold upon the hand of that good man
Who offer'd aid to me, the nobly born.
But could I do it? I renounce the birth
Which lifted me to such a lofty height?
Forever yield the glory of my hope?
In vain! oh, seize me, Force, with brazen claws!
Unseeing Fate, oh, take me hence away!
The choice that trembles dubious 'twixt two ills
Is even harder than the ill itself.

[Governess, with porters carrying luggage, goes in silence across the background.]

They come, they bear off with them my possessions,
The last remaining of my costly treasures.
Will all I have be stolen from me too?
They take them to the ship and I must follow.
A favoring zephyr lifts the pennant seawards;
Soon shall I see the swelling sails all spread.
The fleet already leaves the harbor mouth!
And now the ship that bears me wretched sails.
They're coming! I must set my foot on board.
O God! Why are the heavens as brass above me?
Does not my voice of anguish reach thine ear?
So be it! I will go. Yet shall the vessel
Not swallow me within its prison cell.
The plank that leads me over to its side
Shall be the first step for me unto freedom.

Receive me then, ye billows, take me up,
And girdling me around let me descend
Into the bosom of your solemn peace.
And when at last no more I have to fear
From the injustice of this world, then roll
To shore my whitening bones, that pious care
May make my grave upon my native soil.

[She takes a few steps.]

Why stop then?

[She hesitates.]

Will my foot no more obey me?
What chains my steps? What seems to hold me here?
Oh, fatal love for miserable life,
Again thou bring'st me to the bitter strife.
By banishment, by death and degradation
I am environ'd round about and each
Has deeper anguish for me than the other.
And when I turn my shuddering eyes from one
The other glares with hellish face upon me.
Is there no mortal means, no means divine
To free me from this thousand-footed anguish?
Oh, that a single sympathetic word
Might chance to reach me from the passing throng.
Oh, that a bird, foreboding peace, might fly
Light-winged by me, guiding me to shelter.

I gladly follow whither fate should call.

Point me the way and faith shall lead me on.

Or give me but a hint and I will yield

In hope and confidence without delay.

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SCENE VII.

Eugenie. Monk.

EUGENIE.

(Standing long in contemplation, then lifting her eyes and seeing the Monk.)

I cannot doubt it: here at last is safety.

Yes, this is he who shall decide my course.

In answer to my prayer he comes to me,

A man of wisdom, full of years, to whom

The heart unhesitating flies for succor.

[Approaching him.

My father! let the sweet, paternal name

To me denied, forbidden and embitter'd,

Be now transferr'd to thee, the noble stranger.

Let me narrate my trouble in few words.

With pain and yet with confidence I lay it

Upon thy heart, not for thy quality

Of wisdom and discreetness, but because

Thou art an aged man belov'd by God.

MONK.

What troubles thee disclose with perfect freedom.

Through Providence the sufferer meets with him

Who ever must regard his highest duty

The alleviation of the woes of others.

EUGENIE.

A riddle thou wilt hear and not complaints.

For I would seek an oracle, not counsel.

In two detestable directions stretch

Two paths before my feet. The one leads hither,

The other thence. Which one shall I select?

MONK.

Thou art a tempter to me. Thou wilt count

My answer as a lot?

EUGENIE.

A sacred lot.

MONK.

If I conceive thee right, thy eyes aspire

To higher regions out of deepest need.

The will is stricken dead within thy heart.

Thou hopest for a stronger to decide.

In sooth, incomprehensibly to us,

The ever-active Agent as by chance

Sets this or that before us, for our good,

For our deliberation, our decision,

Or our accomplishment: thus, as it were,

Carried, in spite of us we win the goal.

To comprehend this is the richest fortune;

'Tis absolute duty not to interfere,

To wait in patience, comfort in distress.

Oh, would that I were granted grace to feel
Beforehand what were truly best for thee.
But in my breast presentiment is silent.
And if thou canst confide no more in me
Then take a fruitless pity for farewell.

EUGENIE.

Shipwreck'd I still have one last spar to clutch.
I hold thee fast and speak against my will
For the last time the word that crushes hope.
A scion of a noble house I now
Am outcast, banish'd o'er the sea; but yet
I could avoid my fate through marriage bonds
Which drag me down to low ignoble spheres.
What whispers now thy heart? Still is it silent?

MONK.

Let it not speak until my searching reason
Shall be oblig'd to recognize its weakness.
The story which to me thou hast confided
Is too indefinite, and my advice
Can likewise only be indefinite.
If thou art forc'd to choose between two evils
Both hated, face them boldly, and then choose
The one that will allow thee widest scope
For worthy deeds and holy undertakings,
That puts the smallest limits to thy spirit,

That hinders thee the least from noble actions.



EUGENIE.

It is not marriage then that thou advisest?

MONK.

Not such an one as seems to threaten thee.

What blessing can the priest give when the "Yes"

Proceeds not from the fair bride's inmost heart?

He should not chain two contraries together

Lest conflict ever freshly born should rise.

It is his godlike service to fulfil

The wish of Love which to the All, the one,

To the eternal joins the momentary,

And that which fades to that which lasts forever.

EUGENIE.

Thou sendest me to woe across the ocean.

MONK.

Go hence with comfort for the wretched there.

EUGENIE.

What comfort can I give in dark despair?

MONK.

A pure heart as is witness'd by thy face.

A noble courage, lofty, boundless thoughts,
Will hold thee firm and others, wheresoe'er
On earth thy steps may wander. If thou now
In bloom of youth art banish'd innocent,
And bearest through thy solemn acquiescence
The imputation of the sins of others,
Then wilt thou, like a superhuman nature,
Diffuse a wondrous virtue all around thee—
The happy fortune of thy innocence.
So then go hence! Go like a healing breeze
Within the circle of those sorrowing ones;
Rejoice with thy appearance that sad world.
Through powerful words, through mighty deeds encourage
New strength in hearts that have forgot to hope.
Unite the scatter'd into bands around thee.
Bind them in love together, all to thee.
Create there what thou here hast lost,
A race and fatherland and princely house.

EUGENIE.

Would'st thou have faith to do what thou commandest?

MONK.

Thus have I done. When still my years were young
The spirit led me into savage lands.
I chang'd rough lives to gentle practices;
I gave the hope of heaven unto death.

Oh, had I not, misled by genuine longing
To serve my fatherland, turn'd back my steps
Unto this desert of audacious life,
This city wilderness of subtle crimes,
This troubled pool of selfish vanity!
The era's impotency chains my spirit,
Old customs, duties and perhaps a fate
That brought its heaviest trial on me late.
But thou art young, and free from every hindrance;
The wide world lies before thee; press thou on
And get salvation. All the grief thou feelest
Will change to genuine pleasure. Hasten forth!

EUGENIE.

Explain more clearly what it is thou fearest.

MONK.

In darkness comes the future pressing on;
What closest lies before us is not seen
E'en by the open eyes of sense, of reason.
If I by daylight wander through these streets
In wonder, and behold the splendid buildings,
The solid bulks rocklike with lofty towers,
The parks with palaces, the noble churches,
And see the harbor with its fleets of ships—
It all appears to me dispos'd and founded
To last forever, and these hurrying throngs

Of busy workers rushing on and on
In ceaseless waves through all the spaces seem
The promise of eternal lastingness.
But when at night this mighty panorama
Repasses through the chambers of my mind,
Then all the murky air is fill'd with rumblings,
The solid earth gives way, the towers totter,
The fitted stonework falls, and all the glory
Which fill'd the scene is scatter'd in confusion.
A few sad creatures climb the hills new risen,
And every heap of rubbish marks a tomb.
A lessen'd people, hard-oppress'd, no more
Are able to restrain the elements;
And with its restless overflow the tide
Fills up the harbor with its sand and slime.

EUGENIE.

Night first disarms a man and then in spite
Subdues him with her idle fantasies.

MONK.

Ah! soon enough the sun's face veil'd in sadness
Comes forth to look upon our woful plight.
But thou must go, thou whom a kindly spirit
Bless'd e'en in banishing. Farewell and hasten!

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SCENE VIII.

EUGENIE.

From selfish sorrow I am led away
And others' woes are plac'd before my ken.
Yet does it not concern thee what shall happen
Unto thy fatherland? With added weight
This settles on my overburden'd heart.
Besides the present evil must I bear
The imaginary burdens of the future?
Then it is true what e'en in childhood's days
Rang in my ears unconscious, what I heard
In youth and question'd and at last have learn'd
From truthful lips of father and of King:
This realm is threaten'd with a sudden fall;
The elements once fused in mighty life
No longer will reciprocally join
With force of love in unity renew'd
Continually. Scattering, forth they fly,
And each returns unto itself in coldness.
Where was the mighty spirit of our fathers
Which for one purpose brought them into union
That hitherto had stood apart in battle,
And which before this mighty people became
Personified as monarch and as father?

That spirit is no more. What now remains
Is but a spectre which with idle striving
Gropes blindly, hopelessly, for lost possessions.
And could I take such cares across with me?
Could I withdraw me from the common danger?
Could I neglect the chance to show myself
Of courage worthy of my noble sires,
And in a time of trouble by my aid
Shame him who has unworthily oppress'd me?
Now, O my fatherland, thy sacred soil
Has first become my inspiration, now
I feel for the first time the pressing call
To stand by thee so long as life shall last.
I will not let thee go; whate'er the bond
That binds me unto thee is henceforth holy.
Where shall I find that noble-minded man
Who offer'd me his hand so honorably?
To him I will confide my life. In secret
He shall preserve me as a talisman pure!
For if a marvel happens on the earth
It happens through the love of faithful hearts.
The greatness of the peril I dismiss;
I do not dare to think upon my weakness.
A favorable chance when times are ripe
Shall bring to lofty purposes the whole.

And if my father, if my King forget me
Whom once they banish'd and disown'd, their eyes
Astonish'd shall upon me rest, preserv'd
To work for the accomplishment in sorrow
Of what in fortune she had vow'd to do.
He comes! With more delight I see him now
Than when he left me. Seeking me he comes!
He thinks we part; I shall remain to him.

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SCENE IX.

Eugenie. Counsellor. *Boycarrying a beautiful casket.*

COUNSELLOR.

The vessels one by one are putting out
And soon I fear me wilt thou too be call'd.
Receive once more a hearty "Fare-thee-well"
With this slight gift which breathes to weary hearts
Refreshment for the long-continu'd voyage.
Remember me, and oh, may evil days
On which thou yearnest for me never come.

EUGENIE.

With pleasure I accept thy graceful gift;
It is a pledge to me of loving care;
Yet send it quickly to thy house again.
And if thou thinkest former thoughts and feelest
As thou hast felt, that still my love could be
A satisfaction to thee, I will follow.

COUNSELLOR.

(After a pause, motioning the Boy to depart.) Is't possible? Has such a sudden change
Brought round thy will to answer in my favor?

EUGENIE.

My will is chang'd indeed; but do not think
That apprehension drove me back to thee.

A feeling that is nobler (let me hide it)
Preserves me for my fatherland, for thee.
Now let the question come: Hast thou the courage,
The lofty courage for renunciation,
To vow thyself to her who must renounce?
Canst thou agree to take me, as a sister
Is taken by a brother, in pure affection?
And wilt thou give me counsel and protection
And peaceful home-life in return for love?

COUNSELLOR.

I think that I could all things bear but one—
The thought of losing thee now I have found thee
Seems unendurable to me. To see thee,
Near thee to be, for thee to live, I count
My sole, my highest fortune. Therefore let
Thy heart alone be privileg'd to set
The terms of the alliance which we pledge.

EUGENIE.

Henceforth, the world avoiding, I must live
In deep seclusion only known by thee.
If thou a distant lonely house possessest,
Then give it me and send me thence away.

COUNSELLOR.

A small estate I own, well-situated;
But old and half in ruins is the house.

Thou canst however in that region soon
The loveliest dwelling find at small expense.

EUGENIE.

Nay! let me settle in the ancient ruin.
It suits my circumstances and my mind.
And when my fortune brightens I shall find
Material and time for busy action.
So soon as I am thine, accompanied
By some retainer, old and faithful, let me
There find a lonely burial-place, in hope
Soon to return in joyful resurrection.

COUNSELLOR.

When can I make my visit to thee there?

EUGENIE.

Thou must await in patience till I summon,
For such a day will come to us perchance
To bind us closer with most solemn bonds.

COUNSELLOR.

Thou layest on me a burden all too heavy.

EUGENIE.

Fulfil thy obligations unto me;
That I acknowledge mine be well assur'd.
Thou darest much to offer me thy hand
That thou may'st save me. Should I be discover'd,

Too soon discover'd, much thou mightest suffer.

I bid thee keep the wisest circumspection;

Let no one learn the place from which I came.

Indeed my distant lov'd ones I will visit

In spirit only. Not a single line,

No messenger shall dare to name me there

Where for my rescue glows perchance a spark.

COUNSELLOR.

In this momentous crisis words are vain.

The lips can often counterfeit with boldness

Disinterested love, when in the heart

The monster, selfishness, is grimly lurking.

The power of love is shown by deeds alone.

Thus while I win thee I must yield up all,

Even the sight of thee. I meet the test.

Thy image ever will before my eyes

Seem as it seem'd when first I saw thy face,

An object of attraction and of honor.

Because of thee I wish to live. Thou art

My mistress and my queen. And if the priest

From day to day so long as life may last

Bows low before the God he cannot see,

Which in a moment of supreme conviction

In grand ideal swept before his spirit,

So nothing shall destroy henceforth for me,

However thou may'st hide thyself away,

The glory thou hast shed upon my life.

EUGENIE.

How absolutely I confide in thee,

And read the truthful lineaments of thy face,

The accents of thy tongue so free from guile!

How sure I am of what a man thou art,

Upright, warm-hearted, strong, reliable!

Here have the proof than which no higher can be

By any woman in her senses given:

I linger not, I haste to follow thee,

Here is my hand. We go unto the altar!

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THE SORROWS OF YOUNG WERTHER

I have carefully collected whatever I have been able to learn of the story of poor Werther, and here present it to you, knowing that you will thank me for it. To his spirit and character you cannot refuse your admiration and love; to his fate you will not deny your tears.

And thou, good soul, who sufferest the same distress as he once endured, draw comfort from his sorrows; and let this little book be thy friend, if from fortune or thine own fault thou canst find no dearer companion.



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BOOK I.



May 4th.

WHAT happiness I experience to be away! My dear friend, what a thing is the heart of man! To leave you, from whom I have been inseparable, whom I love so dearly, and yet to feel happy! I know you will forgive me. Have not other attachments been specially appointed by fate to torment a head like mine? Poor Leonora! and yet I was not to blame. Was it my fault that whilst the peculiar charms of her sister afforded me an agreeable entertainment, a passion for me was engendered in her feeble heart? And yet am I wholly blameless? Did I not encourage her emotions? Did I not feel charmed at those truly genuine expressions of nature, which, though but little mirthful in reality, so often amused us? Did I not— But oh, what is man that he dares so to accuse himself? My dear friend, I promise you I will improve; I will no longer, as has ever been my habit, continue to ruminate on every petty vexation which fortune may dispense; I will enjoy the present, and the past shall be for me the past. You are doubtless right, my best of friends, there would be far less suffering amongst mankind if men—and God knows why they are so fashioned—did not employ their imaginations so assiduously in recalling the memory of past sorrow, instead of bearing their present lot with equanimity.

Be kind enough to inform my mother that I shall attend to her business to the best of my ability, and shall give her the earliest information about it. I have seen my aunt, and find her very far from the disagreeable person our friends allege her to be. She is a lively, cheerful woman, with the best of hearts. I explained to her my mother's wrongs with regard to that part of her portion which has been withheld from her. She told me the motives and reasons of her own conduct, and the terms upon which she is willing to give up the whole, and do more than we have asked. In short, I cannot write further upon this subject at present, only assure my mother that all will go on well. And I have again observed, my dear friend, in this trifling affair, that misunderstandings and neglect occasion more mischief in the world than even malice and wickedness. At all events, the two latter are of less frequent occurrence.

In other respects I am very happy here. Solitude in this terrestrial paradise is a genial balsam to my mind, and the young Spring cheers with its bounteous promises my oftentimes misgiving heart. Every tree, every bush, is full of flowers, and one might wish himself transformed into a butterfly, to float about in this ocean of perfume and find his whole existence therein.

The town itself is disagreeable, but then all around you find an inexpressible beauty of nature. This induced the late Count M— to lay out a garden on one of the sloping hills which here intersect each other with the most charming variety, and form the most lovely valleys. The garden is simple, and it is easy to perceive, even upon your first entrance, that the plan was not designed by a scientific gardener, but by a sensitive heart, who wished here to study its own enjoyment. Many a tear have I already shed to the memory of its departed master in a summer-house, now reduced to ruins, which was his favorite resort, and is now mine. I shall soon be master of the place. The gardener has become attached to me within the last few days, and he will be no loser thereby.

May 10th.

A wonderful serenity has taken possession of my entire soul, like these sweet mornings of spring which I enjoy with my whole heart. I am alone and feel the charm of existence in this spot which was created for the bliss of souls like mine. I am so happy, my dear friend, so absorbed in the exquisite sense of mere tranquil existence, that I neglect my talents. I should be incapable of drawing a single stroke at the present moment, and yet I feel that I never was a greater artist than now. When the lovely valley teems with vapor around me, and the meridian sun strikes the upper surface of the impenetrable foliage of my trees, and but a few stray gleams steal into the inner sanctuary, then I throw myself down in the tall grass by the trickling stream, and as I lie close to the earth a thousand unknown plants discover themselves to me. When I hear the buzz of the little world among the stalks, and grow familiar with the countless indescribable forms of the insects and flies, then I feel the presence of the Almighty, who formed us in His own image, and the breath of that universal love which bears and sustains us, as it floats round us in an eternity of bliss; and then, my friend, when darkness overspreads my eyes, and heaven and earth seem to dwell in my soul, and absorb its power, like the idea of a beloved mistress, then I often long and think: Oh, that you could describe these conceptions, that you could impress upon paper all that lives so full and warm within you, that it might be the mirror of your soul, as your soul is the mirror of the infinite God! O, my friend—but it is too much for my strength—I sink under the weight of the grandeur of these visions.

May 12th.

I know not whether some deceiving spirits haunt this spot, or whether it be the warm celestial fancy in my own heart, which makes everything around me seem like paradise. In front of the house is a fountain—a fountain to which I am bound by a charm like Melusina and her sisters. Descending a gentle slope you come to an arch, where, some twenty steps lower down, water of the clearest crystal gushes from the marble rock. The narrow wall which encloses it above, the tall trees which encircle the spot, and the coolness of the place itself,—everything imparts a pleasant but sublime impression. Not a day passes that I do not spend an hour there. The young maidens come from the town to fetch water,—innocent and necessary employment, and formerly the occupation of the daughters of kings. As I take my rest there the idea of the old patriarchal life is awakened around me. I see them, our old ancestors, how they formed their friendships and contracted alliances at the fountain-side, and I feel

how fountains and streams were guarded by beneficent spirits. He who is a stranger to these sensations has never really enjoyed cool repose at the side of a fountain after the fatigue of a weary summer day.

May 13th.

You ask if you shall send me books. My dear friend. I beseech you, for the love of God, relieve me from such a yoke. I need no more to be guided, agitated, heated. My heart ferments sufficiently of itself. I want strains to lull me, and I find them to perfection in my Homer. Often do I strive to allay the burning fever of my blood, and you have never witnessed anything so unsteady, so uncertain, as my heart. But need I confess this to you, my dear friend, who have so often endured the anguish of witnessing my sudden transitions from sorrow to immoderate joy, and from sweet melancholy to violent passions? I treat my poor heart like a sick child, and gratify its every fancy. Do not mention this again; there are people who would censure me for it.

May 15th.

The common people of the place know me already, and love me, particularly the children. At first when I associated with them, and inquired in a friendly tone about their various trifles, some fancied that I wished to ridicule them, and turned from me in exceeding ill-humor. I did not allow that circumstance to grieve me; I only felt most keenly what I have often before observed. Persons of some pretension to rank keep themselves coldly aloof from the common people, as though they feared to lose their importance by the contact, whilst wanton idlers and poor pretenders to understanding affect to descend to their level only to make the poor people feel their impertinence more keenly.

I know very well that we are not and cannot be all equal; but in my opinion he who avoids the common people in order to command their respect, is as culpable as a coward who hides himself from his enemy because he fears defeat.

The other day I went to the fountain, and found a young servant-girl, who had set her pitcher on the lowest step, and looked round to see if one of her companions was approaching to place it on her head. I ran down and looked at her. "Shall I help you, pretty lass?" said I. She blushed deeply. "O sir!" she exclaimed. "No ceremony!" I replied. She placed herself properly, and I helped her. She thanked me, and went up the steps.

May 17th.

I have made all sorts of acquaintance, but as yet have found no society. I know not what attraction I possess for the people, so many of them like me and attach themselves to me, and then I feel sorry when our road together only goes a short distance. If you inquire what the people are like here, I must answer, "The same as everywhere!" The human race is but a monotonous affair. Most of them labor the greater part of their time for mere subsistence, and the small portion of freedom which

remains unemployed so troubles them that they use every exertion to get rid of it. Oh, the destiny of man!

But they are a right good sort of people! If I occasionally forget myself, and take part in the innocent pleasures which are not yet forbidden to the peasantry, and enjoy myself, for instance, with genuine freedom and sincerity, round a well-covered table, or arrange an excursion or dance opportunely, and so forth, all this produces a good effect upon my disposition; only I must forget that so many other qualities lie dormant within me, which moulder uselessly, and which I am obliged to keep carefully concealed. Ah! this thought affects my spirits fearfully. And yet to be misunderstood is the fate of us all.

Alas, that the friend of my youth is gone! Alas, that I ever knew her! I might say to myself, "You are a dreamer to seek what is not to be found here below." But she has been mine. I have possessed that heart, that noble soul, in whose presence I seemed to be more than I really was, because I was all that I could be. Good Heaven! did a single power of my soul remain then unexercised? In her presence could I not display the entire of that mysterious feeling with which my heart embraces nature? Was not our intercourse a perpetual web of the finest emotions, of the keenest wit, whose varieties, even in their very eccentricity, bore the stamp of genius? Alas! the few years by which she was my senior brought her to the grave before me. Never can I forget her strong sense or her heavenly patience.

A few days ago I met a certain young V—, a frank open fellow, with a most happy expression of face. He has just left the University. He does not fancy himself otherwise, but believes he knows more than other people. He has worked hard, as I can perceive from many circumstances, and, in short, possesses a large stock of information. When he heard that I drew a good deal, and could read Greek (two wonderful things for this part of the country), he came to see me, and displayed his whole store of learning, from Batteaux to Wood, from De Piles to Winkelmann: he assured me he had read through the first part of Sultzzer's theory, and also possessed a manuscript of Heyne on the study of the antique. I allowed it all to pass.

I have become acquainted also with a very worthy person, the district judge, a frank and open-hearted man. I am told it is a most delightful thing to see him in the midst of his children, of whom he has nine. His eldest daughter is much spoken of. He has invited me to go and see him, and I intend to do so the first opportunity. He lives at one of the royal hunting-lodges, an hour and a half's walk from hence, which he obtained leave to inhabit after the loss of his wife, as his residence in town and at the court was so painful to him.

A few other originals, of a questionable sort, have come in my way, who are in all respects undesirable, and most intolerable in their demonstrations of friendship. Good-bye. This letter will please you: it is quite a history.

May 22d.

That the life of man is but a dream is the opinion of many, and this feeling pursues me everywhere. When I consider the narrow limits within which our active and inquiring faculties are confined,—when I see how all our energies are wasted in providing for mere necessities, which again have no further end than to prolong a wretched existence,—and then that all our satisfaction upon certain subjects of investigation ends in nothing better than a passive resignation, whilst we amuse ourselves with painting our prison-walls with bright figures and brilliant landscapes,—when I consider all this, Wilhelm, I am silent. I examine my own being, and find there a world, but a world rather of imagination and dim desires, than of distinctness and living power. Then everything swims before my senses; I smile and dream my way back into existence.

All learned professors and doctors are agreed that children do not comprehend the cause of their desires; but that grown people should wander about this earth like children, without knowing whence they come or whither they go, influenced as little by fixed motives, but guided like them by biscuits, sugar-plums and chastisements,—this is what nobody is willing to acknowledge, and yet I think it can be made palpable.

I know what you will say in reply, and I am ready to admit, that the happiest are those who, like children, amuse themselves with their playthings, dress and undress their dolls, and attentively watch the cupboard where mamma has locked her sweet things, and when at last they get a delicious morsel, eat it greedily and cry for more. These are certainly happy beings; but others also are objects of envy, who dignify their paltry employments, and sometimes even their passions, with pompous titles, representing them to mankind as achievements of a superior order, accomplished for their welfare and glory. But the man who humbly acknowledges the vanity of all this, who observes with what pleasure the thriving citizen converts his little garden into a paradise, and how patiently even the poor man pursues his weary way under his burden, and how all wish equally to behold the light of the sun a little longer—yes, such a man is at peace, and creates his own world within himself; and he is also happy, because he is a man. And then, however limited his sphere, he still preserves in his bosom the sweet feeling of liberty, and knows that when he will he can burst his prison.

May 26th.

You know of old my ways of finding amusement; how I select a little cottage in some sequestered spot, and there put up with every inconvenience. I have just discovered such a spot here which possesses peculiar charms for me.

About a league from the town is a place called Walheim.* It is delightfully situated on the side of a hill, and by proceeding along one of the footpaths which lead out of the village you can have a view of the whole valley. A good old woman lives there who keeps a small inn. She sells wine, beer and coffee, and is cheerful and pleasant notwithstanding her age. The chief charm of this spot consists in two linden trees, which spread their enormous branches over the little green before the church, which is entirely surrounded by peasants' cottages, with their barns and homesteads. I have

seldom seen a place so retired and peaceable, and I often have my table and chair brought out from the little inn, and there I drink my coffee and read my Homer. Accident brought me to the spot one fine afternoon, and I found it perfectly deserted. Everybody was in the fields, except a little boy about four years old, who was sitting on the ground and held between his knees a child about six months old; he pressed it to his bosom with both arms, which thus formed a sort of arm-chair, and notwithstanding the liveliness which sparkled in its black eyes it remained perfectly still. The sight charmed me. I sat down upon a plough opposite, and sketched with great delight this little picture of brotherly tenderness. I added the neighboring hedge, the barn-door and some broken cart-wheels, just as they happened to lie; and I found in about an hour that I had made a very correct and interesting drawing, without putting in the slightest thing of my own. This confirmed me in my resolution of adhering for the future entirely to nature. She alone is inexhaustible, and capable of forming the greatest masters. Much may be alleged in favor of rules, as much may be likewise advanced in favor of the laws of society; an artist formed upon them will never produce anything absolutely bad or disgusting, as a man who observes the laws and obeys decorum can never be an absolutely intolerable neighbor, nor a decided villain; but yet say what you will of rules, they destroy the genuine feeling of nature as well as its true expression. Do not tell me "that this is too hard, that they only restrain and prune superfluous branches, etc." My good friend, I will illustrate this by an analogy. These things resemble love. A warm-hearted youth becomes strongly attached to a maiden, he spends every hour of the day in her company, wears out his health, and lavishes his fortune, to afford continual proof that he is wholly devoted to her. Then comes a man of the world, a man of place and respectability, and addresses him thus: "My good young friend, love is natural, but you must love within bounds. Divide your time, devote a portion to business, and give the hours of recreation to your mistress. Calculate your fortune, and out of the superfluity you may make her a present, only not too often, on her birthday and such occasions." Pursuing this advice he may become a useful member of society, and I should advise some prince to give him an appointment; but his love is annihilated, and if he be an artist, his genius is fled. Oh, my friends, why is it that the torrent of genius so seldom bursts forth, so seldom rolls in full flowing stream, overwhelming your wondering soul? Because, on either side of this stream, cold and respectable persons have taken up their abodes, and forsooth their summer-houses and tulip-beds would suffer from the torrent, wherefore they dig trenches and raise embankments betimes in order to avert the impending danger.



May 27th.

I find I have fallen into raptures, declamation and similes, and have forgotten in consequence to tell you what became of the children. Absorbed in my artistic contemplations, which I briefly described in my letter of yesterday, I continued sitting on the plough for two hours. Towards evening a young woman, with a basket on her arm, came running towards the children, who had not moved all that time. She exclaimed, from a distance, "You are a good boy, Philip." She saluted me; I returned it, rose and approached her. I inquired if she was the mother of those pretty children? "Yes," she said; and, giving the eldest a piece of bread, she took the little one in her arms and kissed it with a mother's tenderness. "I left my child with Philip to take care of," she said, "whilst I went into the town with my eldest boy to buy some white bread, some sugar, and an earthen pot." I saw the various articles in the basket, from which the cover had fallen. "I shall make some broth to-night for my little Hans (which was the name of the youngest); that wild fellow, the big one, broke the pot for me yesterday, whilst he was scrambling with Philip for what remained of the contents." I inquired for the eldest, and she had scarcely time to tell me that he was driving a couple of geese home from the meadow when he ran up, and handed Philip an ozier-twig. I talked a little longer with the woman, and found that she was the daughter of the schoolmaster, and that her husband was gone on a journey into Switzerland for some money a relation had left him. "They wanted to cheat him," she said, "and would not answer his letters, so he is gone there himself; I hope he has met with no accident as I have heard nothing of him since his departure." I left the woman with regret, giving each of the children a kreutzer, with an additional one for the youngest, to buy some white bread for his broth when she went to town next, and so we parted.

I assure you, my dear friend, when my thoughts are all in tumult, the sight of such a creature as this tranquillizes my disturbed mind. She moves in a happy thoughtlessness within the confined circle of her existence; she supplies her wants from day to day; and when she sees the leaves fall they raise no other idea in her mind than that winter is approaching.

Since that time I have gone out there frequently. The children have become quite familiar with me; and each gets a lump of sugar when I drink my coffee, and they share my milk and bread and butter in the evening. They always receive their kreutzer on Sundays, for when I do not go there after evening service the good woman has orders to give it to them.

They are quite at home with me, tell me everything, and I am particularly amused with observing their tempers, and the simplicity of their behavior when some of the other village children are assembled with them.

It has given me a deal of trouble to satisfy the anxiety of the mother, lest (as she says) "they should inconvenience the gentleman."

May 30th.

What I have lately said of painting is equally true with respect to poetry. It is only necessary for us to know what is really excellent, and venture to give it expression,

and that is saying much in few words. To-day I have had a scene, which if literally related, would make the most beautiful idyl in the world. But why should I talk of poetry and scenes and idyls? Can we never take pleasure in nature without requiring the assistance of art?

If you expect anything grand or magnificent from this introduction you will be sadly mistaken. It relates merely to a peasant lad who has excited in me the warmest interest. As usual, I shall tell my story badly; and you, as usual, will think me extravagant. It is Walheim once more—always Walheim—which produces these wonders.

A party had assembled outside the house under the linden trees to drink coffee. The company did not exactly please me, and under one pretext or another I lingered behind.

A peasant came from an adjoining house and set to work arranging some part of the same plough which I had lately sketched. His appearance pleased me, and I spoke to him—inquired about his circumstances, made his acquaintance, and, as is usual with me amongst persons of that class, was soon admitted into his confidence. He said he was servant to a young widow with whom he was in high favor. He spoke so much of his mistress, and praised her so extravagantly, that I could soon see he was desperately in love with her. “She is no longer young,” he said; “and she was treated so badly by her former husband that she does not mean to marry again.” From his account it was plain she possessed incomparable charms for him, and that he wished ardently she would select him to extinguish the recollection of her first husband’s ill conduct. But I should repeat his own words to describe the depth of the poor fellow’s attachment, truth and devotion. It would, in fact, require the gifts of a great poet to convey the expression of his features, the harmony of his voice, and the heavenly fire of his eye. No words can portray the tenderness of his every movement, and of every feature: no effort of mine could do justice to the scene. His alarm lest I should misconceive his relation towards his mistress, or question the propriety of her conduct, particularly touched me. The charming manner with which he described her form and her person, which, without possessing the graces of youth, won and attached him to her, is inexpressible, and must be left to the imagination. I have never in my life witnessed, or fancied, or conceived the possibility of such intense devotion, such ardent affections united with so much purity. Do not blame me if I say that the recollection of this innocence and truth is deeply impressed upon my very soul; that this picture of fidelity and tenderness haunts me incessantly, and that my own heart, enkindled by the flame, glows and burns within me.

I mean now to try and see her as soon as I can, or, perhaps, on second thoughts, I had better not. It is better I should behold her through the eyes of her lover. To my sight, perhaps, she would not appear as she now stands before me; and why should I destroy so sweet a picture?

June 16th.

“Why do I not write to you?” You pretend to penetration and ask such a question. You should have guessed that I was well, but that—in a word, I have made an acquaintance who has won my heart; I have found—I know not what.

To give you a regular account of the manner in which I have become acquainted with the most amiable of women would be a difficult task. I am a happy and contented mortal, but a poor historian.

An angel! Nonsense! Everybody so describes his mistress; and yet I find it impossible to tell you how perfect she is, or why she is so perfect; enough to say she has captivated all my senses.

So much simplicity with so much understanding—so mild, and yet so resolute—a mind so placid, and a life so active.

But this is all mere commonplace abstract ideas which express no single character or feature. Some other time—but no, not some other time, but now, this very instant, will I tell you all about it. Now or never. Well, between ourselves, since I commenced my letter, I have been on the point three times of throwing down my pen, ordering my horse, and riding out. And yet I vowed this morning that I would not ride to-day, and I run every moment to the window to see how high the sun is.

* * * * *

I could not restrain myself—go to her I must. I have just returned, Wilhelm, and whilst I am taking supper I will write to you. What a delight it was for my soul to see her in the midst of her dear, beautiful children—eight brothers and sisters!

But if I proceed thus you will be no wiser at the end of my letter than you were at the beginning. Attend then, and I will compel myself to give you the details.

I mentioned to you the other day that I had become acquainted with S—, the district judge, and that he had invited me to go and visit him in his retirement, or rather in his little kingdom. But I neglected going, and perhaps should never have gone if chance had not discovered to me the treasure which lay concealed in that retired spot. Some of our young people had proposed giving a ball in the country, at which I consented to be present. I offered my hand for the evening to a pretty and agreeable, but rather commonplace sort of girl from the immediate neighborhood; and it was agreed that I should engage a carriage, and call upon Charlotte, with my partner and her aunt, to convey them to the ball. My companion informed me, as we drove along through the park to the hunting-lodge, that I should make the acquaintance of a very charming young lady. “Take care,” added the aunt, “that you do not lose your heart.” “Why?” said I. “Because she is already engaged to a very worthy man,” she replied, “who is gone to settle his affairs upon the death of his father, and will succeed to a very considerable inheritance.” This information possessed no interest for me. When we arrived at the gate the sun was setting behind the tops of the mountains. The atmosphere was heavy, and the ladies expressed their fears of an approaching storm, as masses of low black clouds were gathering in the horizon. I relieved their anxieties

by pretending to be weather-wise, although I myself had some apprehensions lest our pleasure should be interrupted.

I alighted, and a maid came to the door and begged us to wait a moment for her mistress. I walked across the court to a well-built house, and ascending the flight of steps in front, opened the door, and saw before me the most charming spectacle I had ever witnessed. Six children, from eleven to two years old, were running about the hall, and surrounding a lady of middle height, with a lovely figure, dressed in a robe of simple white, trimmed with pink ribbons. She held a brown loaf in her hand, and was cutting slices for the little ones all round in proportion to their age and appetite. She performed her task in a graceful and affectionate manner, each claimant awaiting his turn with outstretched hands, and boisterously shouting his thanks. Some of them ran away at once to enjoy their evening meal, whilst others of a gentler disposition retired to the courtyard to see the stranger, and survey the carriage which was to carry away their Charlotte. "Pray forgive me for giving you the trouble to come for me, and for keeping the ladies waiting, but dressing and the arranging some household duties before I leave had made me forget my children's supper, and they do not like to take it from any one but me." I uttered some unmeaning compliment, but my whole soul was absorbed by her air, her voice, her manner, and I had scarcely recovered myself when she ran into her room to fetch her gloves and fan. The young ones threw inquiring glances at me from a distance, whilst I approached the youngest, a most delicious little creature. He drew back, and Charlotte entering at the very moment, said, "Louis, shake hands with your cousin." The little fellow obeyed willingly, and I could not resist giving him a hearty kiss. "Cousin," said I to Charlotte as I handed her down, "do you think I deserve the happiness of being related to you?" She replied, with an arch smile, "Oh, I have such a number of cousins that I should be sorry if you were the most undeserving of them." In taking leave she desired her next sister, Sophy, a girl about eleven years old, to take great care of the children, and to say good-bye to papa for her when he came home from his ride. She desired the little ones to obey their sister Sophy as they would herself, upon which some promised that they would, but a little fair-haired girl, about six years old, looked discontented, and said, "But Sophy is not you, Charlotte, and we like you best." The two eldest boys had clambered up the carriage, and at my request she permitted them to accompany us a little way through the forest, upon their promising to sit very still and hold fast.

We were hardly seated, and the ladies had scarcely exchanged compliments, making the usual remarks upon each other's dress, and upon the company they expected to meet, when Charlotte stopped the carriage and made her brothers get down. They insisted upon kissing her hands once more, which the eldest did with all the tenderness of a youth of fifteen, but the other in a lighter and more careless manner. She desired them again to give her love to the children, and we drove off.

The aunt inquired of Charlotte whether she had finished the book she had last sent her. "No," said Charlotte; "I did not like it; you can have it again; and the one before was not much better." I was surprised, upon asking the title, to hear that it was —. * I found penetration and character in everything she said; every expression seemed to brighten her features with new charms—with new rays of genius—which unfolded by degrees, as she felt herself understood.

“When I was younger,” she observed, “I loved nothing so much as romances. Nothing could equal my delight when, on some holiday, I could settle down quietly in a corner, and enter with my whole heart and soul into the joys or sorrows of some fictitious Leonora. I do not deny that they even possess some charms for me yet. But I read so seldom, that I prefer books suited exactly to my taste. And I like those authors best whose scenes describe my own situation in life, and the friends who are about me, whose stories touch me with interest, from resembling my own homely existence, which, without being absolutely paradise, is on the whole a source of indescribable happiness.”



artist: c. bosch.

CHARLOTTE AND HER SISTERS.

I endeavored to conceal the emotion which these words occasioned, but it did not last long, for when she had expressed her opinion truly and beautifully of the Vicar of Wakefield, and of other works, whose names I omit,* I could no longer contain myself, but gave utterance to all my own thoughts on the subject; and it was not until Charlotte had addressed herself to the two other ladies that I remembered their presence, and observed them sitting mute with astonishment. The aunt looked at me several times with an air of raillery, which, however, I did not at all mind.

We talked of the pleasures of dancing. “If it is a fault to love it,” said Charlotte, “I confess myself extremely guilty, as no amusement is more agreeable to me. If anything disturbs me I go to the piano, play an air to which I have danced, and all goes right again directly.”

You who know me can fancy how steadfastly I gazed upon her rich dark eyes during these remarks; how my very soul gloated over her warm lips and fresh glowing cheeks; how I became lost in the delightful meaning of her words, to such a degree that I scarcely heard the actual expressions. In fine, I alighted from the carriage like a person in a dream, and was so lost to the dim world around me that I scarcely heard the music which resounded from the illuminated saloon.

The two Messrs. Andran and a certain N. N.,—(I cannot trouble myself with the names)—who were the aunt's and Charlotte's partners, received us at the carriage door and took possession of their ladies, whilst I followed with mine.

We commenced with a minuet. I led out one lady after another, and precisely those who were the most disagreeable could not bring themselves to leave off. Charlotte and her partner began an English country-dance, and you must imagine my delight when it came to their turn to dance the figure with us. You should see Charlotte dance. She dances with her whole heart and soul; her figure is all harmony, elegance and grace,

as if she were conscious of nothing else, and had no other thought or feeling, and doubtless for the moment every other sensation is extinct.

She was engaged for the second country-dance, but she promised me the third, and she assured me, with the most agreeable freedom, that she was very fond of waltzing. "It is the custom here," she said, "for the previous partners to waltz together; but my partner is an indifferent waltzer, and will feel delighted if I save him the trouble. Your partner is not allowed to waltz, and indeed is equally incapable; but I observed during the country-dance that you waltz well, so if you will waltz with me I beg you to propose it to my partner, and I will propose it to yours." We agreed, and it was arranged that our partners should mutually entertain each other.

We set off, and at first delighted ourselves with the usual graceful motions of the arms. With what grace, with what ease she moved! When the waltz commenced, and the dancers whirled round each other in the giddy maze, there was a little confusion arising from the incapacity of some. But we judiciously remained still, allowing the others to weary themselves, and when the awkward dancers had withdrawn we joined in and kept it up famously together with one other couple, Andran and his partner. Never did I dance more lightly. I felt myself more than mortal, holding this loveliest of creatures in my arms, flying with her as rapidly as the wind, till I lost sight of every other object; and, O Wilhelm, I vowed at that moment that a maiden whom I loved, or for whom I felt the slightest attachment, never, never should waltz with another than with me, if I went to perdition for it—you will understand this.

We took a few turns in the room to recover our breath. Charlotte sat down and felt refreshed by partaking of some oranges, which I had privately brought with me, and were difficult to procure; but every slice which she kindly offered to her neighbors was a dagger to my heart.

We were the second couple in the third country-dance. As we were going down (and Heaven knows with what ecstasy I gazed upon her arms and her eyes, which beamed with the sweetest feeling of pure and genuine enjoyment), we passed a lady whom I had noticed for her charming expression of countenance, although she was no longer young. She looked at Charlotte with a smile; then holding up her finger in a threatening attitude, repeated twice, in a very significant tone of voice, the name of "Albert."



"Who is Albert," said I to Charlotte, "if it is not impertinent to ask?" She was about to answer, when we were obliged to separate by a figure in the dance, and as we crossed over again in front of each other I perceived she looked a little pensive. "Why need I conceal it from you?" she said, as she gave me her hand for the promenade—"Albert

is a worthy man to whom I am engaged." Now there was nothing new to me in this (for the girls had told me of it on the way), but it was so far new that I had not thought of it in connection with her, whom in so short a time I had learned to prize so highly. Enough, I became confused, got out in the figure, and occasioned general confusion, so that it required all Charlotte's presence of mind to set me right, by pulling and pushing me into my proper place.

The dance was not yet finished when the lightning, which had for some time been seen in the horizon, and which I had asserted to proceed entirely from heat, grew more violent, and the thunder was heard above the music. When any distress or terror surprises us in the midst of our amusements it naturally makes a deeper impression than at other times, either because the contrast makes us more keenly susceptible, or rather perhaps because our senses are then more open to impressions, and the shock is consequently stronger. To this cause I must ascribe the fright and shrieks of the ladies. One sagaciously sat down in a corner with her back to the window and held her fingers to her ears; a second knelt down before her and hid her face in her lap; a third threw herself between them and embraced her sister with a thousand tears; some insisted upon going home; others, unconscious of their actions, wanted sufficient presence of mind to repress the impertinence of their young partners, who sought to direct to themselves those sighs which the lips of our agitated beauties intended for heaven. Some of the gentlemen had gone down stairs to smoke a quiet cigar, and the rest of the company gladly embraced a happy suggestion of the hostess to retire into another room, which was provided with shutters and curtains. We had hardly got there when Charlotte placed the chairs in a circle, and when the company had sat down in compliance with her request, she forthwith proposed a round game.

I observed some of the company prepare their mouths and draw themselves up at the prospect of some agreeable forfeit. "Let us play at counting," said Charlotte. "Observe now, I go round the circle from right to left, and each person is to count, one after the other, the number that comes to him, and must count fast; whoever stops or mistakes is to have a box on the ear, and so on, till we have counted a thousand." It was delightful to see the fun. She went round the circle with upraised arm. "One," said the first; "two," the second; "three," the third, and so on, till Charlotte went faster and faster. One made a mistake, instantly a box on the ear; and amid the laughter that ensued came another box, and so on, faster and faster. I myself came in for two. I fancied they were harder than the rest, and felt quite delighted. A general laughter and confusion put an end to the play long before we had reached a thousand. The party broke up into little separate knots, the storm had ceased, and I followed Charlotte into the saloon. On the way she said: "The game banished their fears of the storm." I could make no reply. "I myself," she continued, "was as much frightened as any of them; but by affecting courage, to keep up the spirits of the others, I forgot my apprehensions." We went to the window. It still thundered at a distance; a soft rain was pouring down over the country, and filled the air around us with delicious odors. Charlotte leaned forward upon her arm; her eyes wandered over the scene; she raised them to heaven, and then turned them upon me; they were moistened with tears; she placed her hand upon mine, and said: "Klopstock!" At once I remembered the magnificent ode which was in her thoughts; I felt oppressed with the weight of my sensations, and sank under them. It was more than I could bear. I bent over her hand

and kissed it in a stream of delicious tears. As I raised myself I looked steadfastly in her face. Divine Klopstock! why didst thou not see thy apotheosis in those eyes? And thy name, so often profaned, why should I ever desire to hear it again repeated?

June 19th.

I no longer remember where I broke off with my narrative; I only know it was two in the morning when I went to bed, and if you had been with me that I might have talked instead of writing to you, in all probability I should have kept you up till daylight.

I believe I have not related what happened on our way home from the ball, and I have not time to tell you now. It was a most magnificent sunrise; the whole country was refreshed, and the rain fell drop by drop from the trees in the forest. Our companions were asleep. Charlotte asked me if I did not wish to sleep too, and desired I would not make any ceremony on her account. Looking steadfastly at her I answered, "As long as those eyes continue open there is no fear of mine." We both continued awake till we reached the door. The maid opened it softly, and assured her, in answer to her inquiries, that her father and the children were well, and still asleep. I left her, asking permission to visit her in the course of the day. She consented, and I went; and since that time, sun, moon and stars may pursue their course; I know not whether it is day or night; the whole world is nothing to me.

June 21st.

My days are as happy as those reserved by God for his elect, and whatever be my fate hereafter, I can never say that I have not tasted joy,—the purest joy of life. You know Walheim. I am now completely settled there. In that spot I am only half a league from Charlotte, and there I enjoy myself, and taste all the pleasure which can fall to the lot of man.

Little did I imagine when I selected Walheim for my pedestrian excursions that all heaven lay so near it. How often in my wanderings from the hillside or from the meadows across the river have I beheld this hunting-lodge, which now contains within it all the joy of my heart!

I have often, my dear Wilhelm, reflected on the eagerness men feel to wander and make new discoveries, and upon that secret impulse which afterwards inclines them to return back to their narrow circle, to conform to the laws of custom, and to embarrass themselves no longer with what passes around them.

It is so strange how, when I came here first and gazed upon that lovely valley from the hillside, I felt charmed with the entire scene around me. The little wood opposite,—how delightful to sit under its shade! How fine the view from that point of rock! Then that delightful chain of hills and the exquisite valleys at their feet! Could I but wander and lose myself amongst them! I went and returned without finding what I wished. Distance, my friend, is like futurity. A dim vastness is spread before our souls; the perceptions of our mind are as obscure as those of our vision, and we desire earnestly to surrender up our whole being that it may be filled with the complete and

perfect bliss of one glorious emotion. But, alas! when we have attained our object, when the distant *there* becomes the present *here*, all is changed again; we are as poor and circumscribed as ever, and our souls still languish for unattainable happiness.

So the restless traveller pants for his native soil, and finds in his own cottage, in the arms of his wife, in the affections of his children, and in the labor necessary for their support, that happiness which he had sought in vain through the wide world.

When I go out at sunrise in the morning to Walheim, and with my own hands gather the peas in the garden, which are to serve for my dinner, when I sit down to shell them and read my Homer during the intervals, and then selecting a saucepan from the kitchen, fetch my own butter, put my mess on the fire, cover it up, and sit down to stir it as occasion requires, I figure to myself the illustrious suitors of Penelope, killing, dressing and preparing their own oxen and swine. Nothing fills me with a more pure and genuine sense of happiness than those traits of patriarchal life which, thank Heaven! I can imitate without affectation. Happy is it, indeed, for me that my heart is capable of feeling the same simple and innocent pleasure as the peasant, whose table is covered with food of his own rearing, and who not only enjoys his meal, but remembers with delight the happy days and sunny mornings when he planted it, the soft evenings when he watered it, and the pleasure he experienced in watching its daily growth.

June 29th.

The day before yesterday the physician came from the town to pay a visit to the Judge. He found me on the floor playing with Charlotte's children. Some of them were scrambling over me, and others romped with me, and as I caught and tickled them they made a great noise. The Doctor is a formal sort of personage; he adjusts the plaits of his ruffles, and continually settles his frill whilst he speaks with you, and he thought my conduct beneath the dignity of a sensible man. I could perceive this by his countenance. But I did not suffer myself to be disturbed. I allowed him to continue his wise conversation whilst I rebuilt the children's card-houses for them as fast as they threw them down. He went about the town, afterwards, complaining that the Judge's children were spoiled enough before, but that now Werther was completely ruining them.

Nothing on this earth, my dear Wilhelm, affects my heart so much as children. When I consider them, when I mark in the little creatures the seeds of all those virtues and qualities which they will one day find so indispensable; when I behold in the obstinate all the future firmness and constancy of a noble character; in the capricious, that levity and gayety of temper which will carry them lightly over the dangers and troubles of life, their whole nature simple and unpolluted; then I call to mind the golden words of the Great Teacher of mankind, "If you become not like one of these!" And now, my friend, these children, who are our equals, whom we ought to consider as our models, we treat them as subjects. They are allowed no will of their own! And have we then none ourselves? Whence comes our exclusive right? Is it because we are older and more experienced? Great God! from the height of thy heaven, thou beholdest great children and little children, and no others; and thy Son has long since declared which

afford Thee greatest pleasure. But they believe in Him, and hear Him not,—that too is an old story; and they train their children after their own image, etc.

Adieu, Wilhelm, I will not further bewilder myself with this subject.

July 1st.

The consolation which Charlotte can bring to an invalid I experience from my own heart, which suffers more from her absence than many a poor creature who lingers on a bed of sickness. She is gone to spend a few days in the town with a very worthy woman, who is given over by the physicians, and wishes to have Charlotte near her in her last moments. I accompanied her last week on a visit to the vicar of S—, a small village in the mountains, about a league from hence. We arrived about four o'clock; Charlotte had taken her little sister with her. When we entered the vicarage court we found the good old man sitting upon a bench before the door, under the shade of two large walnut trees. At the sight of Charlotte he seemed to gain new life, rose up, forgot his stick, and ventured to walk towards her. She ran to him and made him sit down again; then placing herself by his side she gave him a number of messages from her father, and then caught up his youngest child, a dirty, ugly little thing, the joy of his old age, and kissed it. I wish you could have witnessed her attention to this old man—how she raised her voice on account of his deafness—how she told him of healthy young people who had been carried off when it was least expected; praised the virtues of Carlsbad, and commended his determination to spend the ensuing summer there; and assured him that he looked better and stronger than he did when she saw him last. I, in the meantime, paid attention to his good lady. The old man seemed quite in spirits; and, as I could not help admiring the beauty of the walnut trees which formed such an agreeable shade over our heads, he began, though with some little difficulty, to tell us their history. “As to the oldest,” said he, “we do not know who planted it—some say one clergyman, and some another; but the younger one, there behind us, is exactly the age of my wife, fifty years old next October; her father planted it in the morning, and in the evening she came into the world. My wife's father was my predecessor here, and I cannot tell you how fond he was of that tree, and it is fully as dear to me. Under the shade of that very tree, upon a log of wood, my wife was seated knitting, when I, a poor student, came into this court for the first time, just seven-and-twenty years ago.” Charlotte inquired for his daughter. He said she was gone with Herr Schmidt to the meadows, and was with the haymakers. The old man then resumed his story, and told us how his predecessor had taken a fancy to him, as had his daughter likewise; and how he had become first his curate, and subsequently his successor. He had scarcely finished his story when his daughter returned through the garden, accompanied by the above-mentioned Herr Schmidt. She welcomed Charlotte affectionately, and I confess I was much taken with her appearance. She was a lively-looking, good-humored brunette, quite competent to amuse one for a short time in the country. Her lover (for such Herr Schmidt evidently appeared to be) was a polite, reserved personage, and would not join our conversation, notwithstanding all Charlotte's endeavors to draw him out. I was much annoyed at observing, by his countenance, that his silence did not arise from want of talent, but from caprice and ill-humor. This subsequently became very evident when we set out to take a walk, and Frederica joining Charlotte, with whom I was talking, the worthy

gentleman's face, which was naturally rather sombre, became so dark and angry, that Charlotte was obliged to touch my arm and remind me that I was talking too much to Frederica. Nothing distresses me more than to see men torment each other; particularly when in the flower of their age, in the very season of pleasure, they waste their few short days of sunshine in quarrels and disputes, and only perceive their error when it is too late to repair it. This thought dwelt upon my mind; and in the evening, when we returned to the vicar's, and were sitting around the table, with our bread and milk, the conversation turned on the joys and sorrows of the world, I could not resist the temptation to inveigh bitterly against ill-humor. "We are apt," said I, "to complain, but with very little cause, that our happy days are few and our evil days many. If our hearts were always disposed to receive the benefits which Heaven sends us we should acquire strength to support evil when it comes." "But," observed the vicar's wife, "we cannot always command our tempers, so much depends upon the constitution: when the body suffers the mind is ill at ease." "I acknowledge that," I continued; "but we must consider such a disposition in the light of a disease, and inquire whether there is no remedy for it." "I should be glad to hear one," said Charlotte; "at least I think very much depends upon ourselves: I know it is so with me. When anything annoys me, and disturbs my temper, I hasten into the garden, hum a couple of country-dances, and it is all right with me directly." "That is what I meant," I replied; "ill-humor resembles indolence; it is natural to us: but if once we have courage to exert ourselves we find our work run fresh from our hands, and we experience in the activity from which we shrank a real enjoyment." Frederica listened very attentively, and the young man objected that we were not masters of ourselves, and still less so of our feelings. "The question is about a disagreeable feeling," I added, "from which every one would willingly escape, but none know their own power without trial. Invalids are glad to consult physicians, and submit to the most scrupulous regimen, the most nauseous medicines to recover their health." I observed that the good old man inclined his head, and exerted himself to hear our discourse; so I raised my voice, and addressed myself directly to him. "We preach against a great many crimes," I observed, "but I never remember a sermon delivered against ill-humor." "That may do very well for your town clergymen," said he; "country people are never ill-humored; though, indeed, it might be useful occasionally to my wife, for instance, and the Judge." We all laughed, as did he likewise very cordially, till he fell into a fit of coughing, which interrupted our conversation for a time. Herr Schmidt resumed the subject. "You call ill-humor a crime," he remarked, "but I think you use too strong a term." "Not at all," I replied, "if that deserves the name which is so pernicious to ourselves and our neighbors. Is it not enough that we want the power to make one another happy,—must we deprive each other of the pleasure which we can all make for ourselves? Show me the man who has the courage to hide his ill-humor, who bears the whole burden himself, without disturbing the peace of those around him. No; ill-humor arises from an inward consciousness of our own want of merit—from a discontent which ever accompanies that envy which foolish vanity engenders. We see people happy whom we have not made so, and cannot endure the sight." Charlotte looked at me with a smile; she observed the emotion with which I spoke; and a tear in the eyes of Frederica stimulated me to proceed. "Woe unto those," I said, "who use their power over a human heart to destroy the simple pleasures it would naturally enjoy! All the favors, all the attentions in the world cannot compensate for the loss of that happiness which a cruel tyranny has

destroyed." My heart was full as I spoke. A recollection of many things which had happened pressed upon my mind, and filled my eyes with tears. "We should daily repeat to ourselves," I exclaimed, "that we should not interfere with our friends, unless to leave them in possession of their own joys, and increase their happiness by sharing it with them. But when their souls are tormented by a violent passion, or their hearts rent with grief, is it in your power to afford them the slightest consolation?"



"And when the last fatal malady seizes the being whose untimely grave you have prepared, when languid and exhausted she lies before you, her dim eyes raised to heaven, and the damp of death upon her pallid brow, then you stand at her bedside like a condemned criminal, with the bitter feeling that your whole fortune could not save her; and the agonizing thought wrings you that all your efforts are powerless to impart even a moment's strength to the departing soul, or quicken her with a transitory consolation."

At these words the remembrance of a similar scene at which I had been once present fell with full force upon my heart. I buried my face in my handkerchief and hastened from the room, and was only recalled to my recollection by Charlotte's voice, who reminded me that it was time to return home. With what tenderness she chid me on the way for the too eager interest I took in everything! She declared it would do me injury, and that I ought to spare myself.—Yes, my angel! I will do so for your sake.

July 6th.

She is still with her dying friend, and is still the same bright, beautiful creature, whose presence softens pain and sheds happiness around whichever way she turns. She went out yesterday with her little sisters; I knew it, and went to meet them, and we walked together. In about an hour and a half we returned to the town. We stopped at the spring I am so fond of, and which is now a thousand times dearer to me than ever. Charlotte seated herself upon the low wall, and we gathered about her. I looked around and recalled the time when my heart was unoccupied and free.—"Dear fountain!" I said, "since that time I have no more come to enjoy cool repose by thy fresh stream; I have passed thee with careless steps, and scarcely bestowed a glance upon thee." I looked down and observed Charlotte's little sister, Jane, coming up the steps with a glass of water. I turned towards Charlotte, and I felt her influence over me. Jane at the moment approached with the glass. Her sister, Marianne, wished to take it from her. "No!" cried the child, with the sweetest expression of face, "Charlotte must drink first."

The affection and simplicity with which this was uttered so charmed me, that I sought to express my feelings by catching up the child and kissing her heartily. She was frightened and began to cry.—"You should not do that," said Charlotte. I felt perplexed.—"Come, Jane," she continued, taking her hand and leading her down the steps again, "it is no matter; wash yourself quickly in the fresh water." I stood and watched them, and when I saw the little dear rubbing her cheeks with her wet hands,

in full belief that all the impurities contracted from my ugly beard would be washed off by the miraculous water, and how, though Charlotte said it would do, she continued still to wash with all her might, as though she thought too much were better than too little, I assure you, Wilhelm, I never attended a baptism with greater reverence; and when Charlotte came up from the well I could have prostrated myself as before the prophet of an eastern nation.

In the evening I could not resist telling the story to a person who I thought possessed some natural feeling, because he was a man of understanding. But what a mistake I made! He maintained it was very wrong of Charlotte—that we should not deceive children—that such things occasioned countless mistakes and superstitions, from which we were bound to protect the young. It occurred to me then that this very man had been baptized only a week before, so I said nothing further, but maintained the justice of my own convictions. We should deal with children as God deals with us,—we are happiest under the influence of innocent delusion.



July 8th.

What a child is man! that he should be so solicitous about a look! What a child is man! We had been to Walheim: the ladies went in a carriage, but during our walk I thought I saw in Charlotte's dark eyes—I am a fool—but forgive me! you should see them—those eyes! However, to be brief (for my own eyes are weighed down with sleep), you must know, when the ladies stepped into their carriage again, young W. Seldstadt, Andran, and I were standing about the door. They are a merry set of fellows, and they were all laughing and joking together. I watched Charlotte's eyes; they wandered from one to the other, but they did not light on me—on me, who stood there motionless, and who saw nothing but her! My heart bade her a thousand times adieu, but she noticed me not. The carriage drove off, and my eyes filled with tears. I looked after her; suddenly I saw Charlotte's bonnet leaning out of the window, and she turned to look back—was it at me? My dear friend, I know not, and in this uncertainty I find consolation. Perhaps she turned to look at me. Perhaps! Good-night! What a child I am!

July 10th.

You should see how foolish I look in company when her name is mentioned, particularly when I am asked plainly how I like her? How I like her!—I detest the phrase. What sort of creature must he be who merely liked Charlotte, whose whole heart and senses were not entirely absorbed by her. Like her! Some one asked me lately how I liked Ossian.

July 11th.

Madame M. is very ill. I pray for her recovery because Charlotte shares my sufferings. I see her occasionally at my friend's house, and to-day she has told me the strangest circumstance. Old M. is a covetous, miserly fellow, who has long worried and annoyed the poor lady sadly; but she has borne her afflictions patiently. A few days ago, when the physician informed us that her recovery was hopeless, she sent for her husband (Charlotte was present), and addressed him thus: "I have something to confess, which after my decease may occasion trouble and confusion. I have hitherto conducted your household as frugally and economically as possible, but you must pardon me for having defrauded you for thirty years. At the commencement of our married life you allowed a small sum for the wants of the kitchen and the other household expenses. When our establishment increased and our property grew larger I could not persuade you to increase the weekly allowance in proportion; in short, you know that when our wants were greatest you required me to supply everything with seven florins a week. I took the money from you without an observation, but made up the weekly deficiency from the money-chest, as nobody would suspect your wife of robbing the household bank. But I have wasted nothing, and should have been content to meet my eternal Judge without this confession, if she, upon whom the management of your establishment will devolve after my decease, would be free from embarrassment upon your insisting that the allowance made to me, your former wife, was sufficient."



I talked to Charlotte of the inconceivable manner in which men allow themselves to be blinded; how any one could avoid suspecting some deception when seven florins only were allowed to defray expenses twice as great. But I have myself known people who believed, without any visible astonishment, that their house possessed the prophet's never-failing cruse of oil.

July 13th.

No, I am not deceived. In her dark eyes I read a genuine interest in me and in my fortunes. Yes, I feel it, and I may believe my own heart which tells me—dare I say it?—dare I pronounce the divine words?—that she loves me!

That she loves me! How the idea exalts me in my own eyes! and as you can understand my feelings, I may say to you how I honor myself since she loves me!

Is this presumption, or is it a consciousness of the truth? I do not know a man able to supplant me in the heart of Charlotte; and yet when she speaks of her betrothed with so much warmth and affection I feel like the soldier who has been stripped of his honors and titles, and deprived of his sword.

July 16th.

How my heart beats when by accident I touch her finger, or my feet meet hers under the table! I draw back as if from a furnace, but a secret force impels me forward again, and my senses become disordered. Her innocent, unconscious heart never knows what agony these little familiarities inflict upon me! Sometimes when we are talking she lays her hand upon mine, and in the eagerness of conversation comes closer to me, and her balmy breath reaches my lips,—when I feel as if lightning had struck me, and that I could sink into the earth. And yet, Wilhelm! with all this heavenly confidence,—if I know myself and should ever dare—you understand me. No, no, my heart is not so corrupt,—it is weak, weak enough—but is not that a degree of corruption?

She is to me a sacred being. All passion is still in her presence; I cannot express my sensations when I am near her. I feel as if my soul beat in every nerve of my body. There is a melody which she plays on the piano with angelic skill—so simple is it and yet so spiritual! It is her favorite air; and when she plays the first note, all pain, care and sorrow disappear from me in a moment.

I believe every word that is said of the magic of ancient music. How her simple song enchants me! Sometimes, when I am ready to commit suicide, she sings that air, and instantly the gloom and madness which hung over me are dispersed, and I breathe freely again.

July 18th.

Wilhelm! what is the world to our hearts without love? What is a magic-lantern without light? You have but to kindle the flame within and the brightest figures shine on the white wall; and if love only show us fleeting shadows we are yet happy when, like mere children, we behold them, and are transported with the splendid phantoms. I have not been able to see Charlotte to-day. I was prevented by company from which I could not disengage myself. What was to be done? I sent my servant to her house, that I might, at least, see somebody to-day who had been near her. Oh! the impatience with which I waited for his return—the joy with which I welcomed him! I should certainly have caught him in my arms and kissed him, if I had not been ashamed.

It is said that the Bonona stone, when placed in the sun, attracts the rays, and for a time appears luminous in the dark. So was it with me and this servant. The idea that Charlotte's eyes had dwelt on his countenance, his cheek, his very apparel, endeared them all inestimably to me, so that at the moment I would not have parted from him for a thousand crowns. His presence made me so happy! Beware of laughing at me, Wilhelm. Can that be a delusion which makes us happy?

July 19th.

“I shall see her to-day!” I exclaim with delight, when I rise in the morning, and look out with gladness of heart at the bright, beautiful sun.—“I shall see her to-day!” and then I have no further wish to form; all—all is included in that one thought.

July 20th.

I cannot assent to your proposal that I should accompany the Ambassador to —. I do not love subordination, and we all know that he is a rough, disagreeable person to be connected with. You say my mother wishes me to be employed. I could not help laughing at that. Am I not sufficiently employed? And is it not in reality the same, whether I shell peas or count lentils? The world runs on from one folly to another, and the man who, solely from regard to the opinion of others, and without any wish or necessity of his own, toils after gold, honor, or any other phantom, is no better than a fool.

July 24th.

You insist so much on my not neglecting my drawing, that it would be as well for me to say nothing as to confess how little I have lately done.

I never felt happier; I never understood nature better, even down to the veriest stem, or smallest blade of grass; and yet I am unable to express myself; my powers of execution are so weak, everything seems to swim and float before me, so that I cannot make a clear, bold outline; but I fancy I should succeed better if I had some clay or wax to model. I shall try, if this state of mind continues much longer, and will take to modelling, if I only knead dough.

I have commenced Charlotte's portrait three times, and have as often disgraced myself. This is the more annoying as I was formerly very happy in taking likenesses. I have since sketched her profile, and must content myself with that.

July 25th.

Yes, dear Charlotte! I will order and arrange everything. Only give me more commissions,—the more the better. One thing, however, I must request. Use no more writing-sand with the dear notes you send me. To-day I raised your letter hastily to my lips, and it set my teeth on edge.

July 26th.

I have often determined not to see her so frequently. But who could keep such a resolution? Every day I am exposed to the temptation, and promise faithfully that to-morrow I will really stay away; but when to-morrow comes, I find some irresistible reason for seeing her; and before I can account for it I am with her again. Either she has said on the previous evening, “You will be sure to call to-morrow!”—and who could stay away then?—or she gives me some commission, and I find it essential to take her the answer in person; or the day is fine and I walk to Walheim, and when I

am there it is only half a league further to her. I am within the charmed atmosphere, and soon find myself at her side. My grandmother used to tell us a story of a mountain of loadstone. When any vessels came near it they were deprived instantly of their ironwork, the nails flew to the mountain, and the unhappy crew perished amongst the disjointed planks.

July 30th.

Albert is arrived and I must take my departure. Were he the best and noblest of men and I in every respect his inferior, I could not endure to see him in possession of such a perfect being. Possession!—enough, Wilhelm; her betrothed is here! A fine, worthy fellow, whom one cannot help liking. Fortunately I was not present at their meeting. It would have broken my heart! And he is so considerate; he has not given Charlotte one kiss in my presence. Heaven reward him for it! I must love him for the respect with which he treats her. He shows a regard for me, but for this I suspect I am more indebted to Charlotte than to his own fancy for me. Women have a delicate tact in such matters; and it should be so. They cannot always succeed in keeping two rivals on terms with each other; but when they do, they are the only gainers.

I cannot help esteeming Albert. The coolness of his temper contrasts strongly with the impetuosity of mine, which I cannot conceal. He has a great deal of feeling, and is fully sensible of the treasure he possesses in Charlotte. He is free from ill-humor, which you know is the fault I detest most.



He regards me as a man of sense; and my attachment to Charlotte, and the interest I take in all that concerns her, augment his triumph and his love. I shall not inquire whether he may not at times tease her with some little jealousies, as I know that were I in his place I should not be entirely free from such sensations.

But be that as it may, my pleasure with Charlotte is over. Call it folly, or infatuation, what signifies a name? The thing speaks for itself. Before Albert came, I knew all that I know now. I knew I could make no pretensions to her, nor did I offer any; that is, as far as it was possible in the presence of so much loveliness, not to pant for its enjoyment. And now, behold me, like a silly fellow, staring with astonishment when another comes in and deprives me of my love.

I bite my lips and feel infinite scorn for those who tell me to be resigned, because there is no help for it. Let me escape from the yoke of such silly subterfuges! I ramble through the woods, and when I return to Charlotte, and find Albert sitting by her side in the summer-house in the garden, I am unable to bear it; behave like a fool; and commit a thousand extravagances. “For Heaven’s sake,” said Charlotte to-day, “let us have no more scenes like those of last night. You terrify me when you are so violent.”

Between ourselves, I am always away now when he visits her, and I feel delighted when I find her alone.

August 8th.

Believe me, dear Wilhelm, I did not allude to you when I spoke so severely of those who advise resignation to inevitable fate. I did not think it possible for you to indulge such a sentiment. But in fact you are right. I only suggest one objection. In this world one is seldom reduced to make a selection between two alternatives. There are as many varieties of conduct and opinion as there are turns of feature between an aquiline nose and a flat one.

You will, therefore, permit me to concede your entire argument, and yet contrive means to escape your dilemma.

Your position is this: "Either you have hopes of obtaining Charlotte, or you have none. Well, in the first case, pursue your course, and press on to the fulfilment of your wishes. In the second, be a man, and shake off a miserable passion which will enervate and destroy you." My dear friend, this is well and easily said.

But would you require a wretched being, whose life is slowly wasting under a lingering disease, to despatch himself at once by the stroke of a dagger? Does not the very disorder which consumes his strength deprive him of the courage to effect his deliverance?

You may answer me, if you please, with a similar analogy. "Who would not prefer the amputation of an arm to the perilling of life by doubt and procrastination?" But I know not if I am right, and let us leave these comparisons.

Enough!—There are moments, Wilhelm, when I could rise up and shake it all off, and when, if I only knew where to go, I could fly from this place.

The same evening.

My diary, which I have for some time neglected, came before me to-day, and I am amazed to see how deliberately I have entangled myself step by step. To have seen my position so clearly, and yet to have acted so like a child! Even still I behold the result plainly, and yet have no thought of acting with greater prudence.

August 10th.

If I were not a fool I could spend the happiest and most delightful life here. So many agreeable circumstances, and of a kind to ensure a worthy man's happiness, are seldom united. Alas! I feel it too sensibly—the heart alone makes our happiness. To be admitted into this most charming family, to be loved by the father as a son, by the children as a father, and by Charlotte!—then the noble Albert, who never disturbs my happiness by any appearance of ill-humor, receiving me with the heartiest affection, and loving me next to Charlotte better than all the world! Wilhelm, you would be delighted to hear us in our rambles and conversations about Charlotte; nothing in the

world can be more absurd than our connection, and yet the thought of it often moves me to tears.

He tells me sometimes of her excellent mother—how upon her deathbed she had committed her house and children to Charlotte, and had given Charlotte herself in charge to him—how since that time a new spirit had taken possession of her—how in care and anxiety for their welfare she became a real mother to them—how every moment of her time was devoted to some labor of love in their behalf—and yet her mirth and cheerfulness had never forsaken her. I walk by his side, pluck flowers by the way, arrange them carefully into a nosegay, then fling them into the first stream I pass, and watch them as they float gently away. I forget whether I told you that Albert is to remain here. He has received a government appointment with a very good salary, and I understand he is in high favor at court. I have met few persons so punctual and methodical in business.

August 12th.

Certainly Albert is the best fellow in the world. I had a strange scene with him yesterday. I went to take leave of him, for I took it into my head to spend a few days in these mountains, from whence I now write to you. As I was walking up and down his room my eye fell upon his pistols. "Lend me those pistols," said I, "for my journey." "By all means," he replied, "if you will take the trouble to load them, for they only hang there for form." I took down one of them, and he continued: "Ever since I was near suffering for my extreme caution I have had nothing to do with such things." I was curious to hear the story. "I was staying," said he, "some three months ago at a friend's house in the country. I had a brace of pistols with me unloaded, and I slept without any anxiety. One rainy afternoon I was sitting by myself, doing nothing, when it occurred to me—I do not know how—that the house might be attacked—that we might require the pistols—that we might—in short, you know how we go on fancying when we have nothing better to do. I gave the pistols to the servant to clean and load. He was playing with the maid, and trying to frighten her, when the pistol went off—God knows how!—the ramrod was in the barrel and it went straight through her right hand, and shattered the thumb. I had to endure all the lamentation and the surgeon's bill to pay; so since that time I have kept all my weapons unloaded. But, my dear friend, what is the use of prudence? We can never be on our guard against all possible dangers. However—" Now you must know I can tolerate all men till they come to "however," for it is self-evident that every universal rule must have its exceptions. But he is so exceedingly accurate that if he only fancies he has said a word too precipitate, or too general, or only half true, he never ceases to qualify, to modify and extenuate, till at last he appears to have said nothing at all. Upon this occasion Albert was deeply immersed in his subject; I ceased to hear him and became lost in reverie. With a sudden motion I pointed the mouth of the pistol to my forehead, over the right eye. "What do you mean?" cried Albert, turning back the pistol. "It is not loaded," said I. "And even if not," he answered with impatience, "what can you mean? I cannot comprehend how a man can be so mad as to shoot himself, and the bare idea of it shocks me."

“But why should any one,” said I, “in speaking of an action, venture to pronounce it mad, or wise, or good, or bad? What is the meaning of all this? Have you carefully studied the secret motives of our actions? Do you understand—can you explain the causes which occasion them, and make them inevitable? If you can, you will be less hasty with your decision.”

“But you will allow,” said Albert, “that some actions are criminal, let them spring from whatever motives they may.” I granted it and shrugged my shoulders.

“But still, my good friend,” I continued, “there are some exceptions here too. Theft is a crime, but the man who commits it from extreme poverty, with no design but to save his family from perishing, is he an object of pity or of punishment? Who shall throw the first stone at a husband who, in the heat of just resentment, sacrifices his faithless wife and her perfidious seducer? or at the young maiden who, in her weak hour of rapture, forgets herself in the impetuous joys of love? Even our laws, cold and cruel as they are, relent in such cases and withhold their punishment.”

“That is quite another thing,” said Albert; “because a man under the influence of violent passion loses all power of reflection, and is regarded as intoxicated or insane.”

“Oh! you people of sound understandings,” I replied, smiling, “are ever ready to exclaim, ‘Extravagance and madness, and intoxication!’ You moral men are so calm and so subdued! You abhor the drunken man, and detest the extravagant; you pass by like the Levite, and thank God, like the Pharisee, that you are not like one of them. I have been more than once intoxicated, my passions have always bordered on extravagance; I am not ashamed to confess it, for I have learned, by my own experience, that all extraordinary men, who have accomplished great and astonishing actions, have ever been decried by the world as drunken or insane. And in private life, too, is it not intolerable that no one can undertake the execution of a noble or generous deed without giving rise to the exclamation that the doer is intoxicated or mad? Shame upon you, ye sages!”

“This is another of your extravagant humors,” said Albert; “you always exaggerate a case, and in this matter you are undoubtedly wrong, for we were speaking of suicide, which you compare with great actions, when it is impossible to regard it as anything but a weakness. It is much easier to die than to bear a life of misery with fortitude.”

I was on the point of breaking off the conversation, for nothing puts me so completely out of patience as the utterance of a wretched commonplace, when I am talking from my inmost heart. However, I composed myself, for I had often heard the same observation with sufficient vexation, and I answered him, therefore, with a little warmth: “You call this a weakness! Beware of being led astray by appearances. When a nation which has long groaned under the intolerable yoke of a tyrant rises at last and throws off its chains—do you call that weakness? The man who, to rescue his house from the flames, finds his physical strength redoubled, so that he lifts burdens with ease, which in the absence of excitement he could scarcely move; he who under the rage of an insult attacks and puts to flight half a score of his enemies—are such

persons to be called weak? My good friend, if resistance be strength, how can the highest degree of resistance be a weakness?"



Albert looked steadfastly at me, and said, "Pray, forgive me, but I do not see that the examples you have adduced bear any relation to the question." "Very likely," I answered, "for I have often been told that my style of illustration borders a little on the absurd. But let us see if we cannot place the matter in another point of view, by inquiring what can be a man's state of mind who resolves to free himself from the burden of life—a burden often so pleasant to bear—for we cannot otherwise reason fairly upon the subject.

"Human nature," I continued, "has its limits. It is able to endure a certain degree of joy, sorrow and pain, but becomes annihilated as soon as this measure is exceeded. The question therefore is, not whether a man is strong or weak, but whether he is able to endure the measure of his sufferings? The suffering may be moral or physical; and in my opinion it is just as absurd to call a man a coward who destroys himself as to call a man a coward who dies of a malignant fever."

"Paradox! all paradox!" exclaimed Albert.

"Not so paradoxical as you imagine," I replied. "You allow that we designate a disease as mortal when nature is so severely attacked and her strength so far exhausted that she cannot possibly recover her former condition under any change that may take place.

"Now, my good friend, apply this to the mind; observe a man in his natural isolated condition, consider how ideas work and how impressions fasten upon him, till at length a violent passion seizes him, destroying all his powers of calm reflection and provoking his utter ruin.

"It is in vain that a man of sound mind and cool temper understands the condition of such a wretched being, in vain he counsels him. He can no more communicate his own wisdom to him than a healthy man can instil his strength into the invalid by whose bedside he is seated."

Albert thought this too general. I reminded him of a girl who had drowned herself a short time previously, and I related her history:

"She was a good creature, who had grown up in the narrow sphere of household industry and weekly-appointed labor, one who knew no pleasure beyond indulging in a walk on Sundays, arrayed in her best attire, accompanied by her friends, or perhaps

joining in the dance now and then at some festival, and chatting away her spare hours with a neighbor, discussing the scandal or the quarrels of the village—trifles sufficient to occupy her heart. At length the warmth of her nature is influenced by certain new and unknown wishes. Inflamed by the flatteries of men, her former pleasures become by degrees insipid, till at length she meets with a youth to whom she is attracted by an indescribable feeling. Upon him she now rests all her hopes; she forgets the world around her; she sees, hears, desires nothing but him, and him only. He alone occupies all her thoughts. Uncorrupted by the idle indulgence of an enervating vanity, her affection moving steadily towards its object, she hopes to become his, and to realize in an everlasting union with him all that happiness which she sought, all that bliss for which she longed. His repeated promises confirm her hopes; embraces and endearments, which increase the ardor of her desires, overmaster her soul. She floats in a dim delusive anticipation of her happiness, and her feelings become excited to their utmost tension. She stretches out her arms finally to embrace the object of all her wishes—and her lover forsakes her. Stunned and bewildered, she stands upon a precipice. All is darkness around her. No prospect, no hope, no consolation—forsaken by him in whom her existence was centred! She sees nothing of the wide world before her, thinks nothing of the many individuals who might supply the void in her heart; she feels herself deserted, forsaken by the world; and blinded and impelled by the agony which wrings her soul, she plunges into the deep, to end her sufferings in the broad embrace of death. See here, Albert, the history of thousands, and tell me, is not this a case of physical infirmity? Nature has no way to escape from the labyrinth; her powers are exhausted; she can contend no longer, and the poor soul must die.

“Shame upon him who can look on calmly and exclaim: ‘The foolish girl! she should have waited; she should have allowed time to wear off the impression; her despair would have been softened, and she would have found another lover to comfort her.’ One might as well say, ‘The fool, to die of a fever! Why did he not wait till his strength was restored, till his blood became calm? All would then have gone well, and he would have been alive now.’ ”

Albert, who could not see the justice of the comparison, offered some further objections, and amongst others urged that I had taken the case of a mere ignorant girl. But how any man of sense, of more enlarged views and experience, could be excused, he was unable to comprehend. “My friend,” I exclaimed, “man is but man, and whatever be the extent of his reasoning powers, they are of little avail when passion rages within and he feels himself confined by the narrow limits of nature. It were better then— But we will talk of this some other time,” I said, and caught up my hat. Alas! my heart was full, and we parted without conviction on either side. How rarely in this world do men understand each other!

August 15th.

There can be no doubt that in this world nothing is so indispensable as love. I observe that Charlotte could not lose me without a pang, and the very children have but one wish; that is, that I should visit them again to-morrow. I went this afternoon to tune Charlotte's piano; but I could not do it, for the little ones insisted on my telling them a story, and Charlotte herself urged me to satisfy them. I waited upon them at tea, and

they are now as fully contented with me as with Charlotte, and I told them my very best tale of the princess who was waited upon by dwarfs. I improve myself by this exercise, and am quite surprised at the impression my stories create. If I sometimes invent an incident which I forget upon the next narration, they remind me directly that the story was different before, so that I now endeavor to relate with exactness the same anecdote in the same monotonous tone, which never changes. I find by this how much an author injures his works by altering them, even though they be improved in a poetical point of view. The first impression is readily received. We are so constituted that we believe the most incredible things; and once they are engraved upon the memory, woe to him who would endeavor to efface them!

August 18th.

Must it ever be thus—that the source of our happiness must also be the fountain of our misery? The full and ardent sentiment which animated my heart with the love of nature, overwhelming me with a torrent of delight, and which brought all paradise before me, has now become an insupportable torment—a demon which perpetually pursues and harasses me. When in bygone days I gazed from these rocks upon yonder mountains across the river, and upon the green flowery valley before me, and saw all nature budding and bursting around—the hills clothed from foot to peak with tall, thick forest trees—the valleys in all their varied windings, shaded with the loveliest woods, and the soft river gliding along amongst the lispings reeds, mirroring the beautiful clouds which the soft evening breeze wafted across the sky,—when I heard the groves about me melodious with the music of birds, and saw the million swarms of insects dancing in the last golden beams of the sun, whose setting rays awoke the humming beetles from their grassy beds, whilst the subdued tumult around directed my attention to the ground, and I there observed the arid rock compelled to yield nutriment to the dry moss, whilst the heath flourished upon the barren sands below me,—all this displayed to me the inner warmth which animates all nature and filled and glowed within my heart. I felt myself exalted by this overflowing fulness to the perception of the Godhead, and the glorious forms of an infinite universe became visible to my soul! Stupendous mountains encompassed me, abysses yawned at my feet, and cataracts fell headlong down before me; impetuous rivers rolled through the plain, and rocks and mountains resounded from afar. In the depths of the earth I saw innumerable powers in motion and multiplying to infinity, whilst upon its surface and beneath the heavens there teemed ten thousand varieties of living creatures. Everything around is alive with an infinite number of forms, while mankind fly for security to their petty houses, from the shelter of which they rule in their imaginations over the wide-extended universe. Poor fool! in whose petty estimation all things are little. From the inaccessible mountains, across the desert which no mortal foot has trod, far as the confines of the unknown ocean, breathes the spirit of the eternal Creator, and every atom to which he has given existence finds favor in his sight. Ah, how often at that time has the flight of a bird soaring above my head inspired me with the desire of being transported to the shores of the immeasurable waters, there to quaff the pleasures of life from the foaming goblet of the Infinite, and to partake, if but for a moment, even with the confined powers of my soul, the beatitude of that Creator who accomplishes all things in himself and through himself!

My dear friend, the bare recollection of those hours still consoles me. Even this effort to recall those ineffable sensations and give them utterance exalts my soul above itself, and makes me doubly feel the intensity of my present anguish.

It is as if a curtain had been drawn from before my eyes, and, instead of prospects of eternal life, the abyss of an ever-open grave yawned before me. Can we say of anything that it exists when all passes away—when time, with the speed of a storm, carries all things onward—and our transitory existence, hurried along by the torrent, is either swallowed up by the waves or dashed against the rocks? There is not a moment but preys upon you and upon all around you—not a moment in which you do not yourself become a destroyer. The most innocent walk deprives of life thousands of poor insects; one step destroys the fabric of the industrious ant and converts a little world into chaos. No; it is not the great and rare calamities of the world, the floods which sweep away whole villages, the earthquakes which swallow up our towns, that affect me. My heart is wasted by the thought of that destructive power which lies concealed in every part of universal nature. Nature has formed nothing that does not consume itself and every object near it; so that, surrounded by earth and air and all the active powers, I wander on my way with aching heart, and the universe is to me a fearful monster, forever devouring its own offspring.

August 21st.

In vain do I stretch out my arms towards her when I awaken in the morning from my weary slumbers. In vain do I seek for her at night in my bed, when some innocent dream has happily deceived me, and placed her near me in the fields, when I have seized her hand and covered it with countless kisses. And when I feel for her in the half confusion of sleep, with the happy sense that she is near me, tears flow from my oppressed heart, and bereft of all comfort I weep over my future woes.

August 22d.

What a misfortune, Wilhelm! My active spirits have degenerated into contented indolence. I cannot be idle, and yet I am unable to set to work. I cannot think; I have no longer any feeling for the beauties of nature, and books are distasteful to me. Once we give ourselves up, we are totally lost. Many a time and oft I wish I were a common laborer—that, awakening in the morning, I might have but one prospect, one pursuit, one hope for the day which has dawned. I often envy Albert when I see him buried in a heap of papers and parchments, and I fancy I should be happy were I in his place. Often impressed with this feeling, I have been on the point of writing to you and to the minister for the appointment at the embassy, which you think I might obtain. I believe I might procure it. The minister has long shown a regard for me, and has frequently urged me to seek employment. It is the business of an hour only. Now and then the fable of the horse recurs to me. Weary of liberty, he suffered himself to be saddled and bridled, and was ridden to death for his pains. I know not what to determine upon; for is not this anxiety for change the consequence of that restless spirit which would pursue me equally in every situation of life?

August 28th.

If my ills would admit of any cure they would certainly be cured here. This is my birthday, and early in the morning I received a packet from Albert. Upon opening it I found one of the pink ribbons which Charlotte wore in her dress the first time I saw her, and which I had several times asked her to give me. With it were two volumes in duodecimo of Wetstein's Homer, a book I had often wished for, to save me the inconvenience of carrying the large Ernestine edition with me upon my walks. You see how they anticipate my wishes, how well they understand all those little attentions of friendship, so superior to the costly presents of the great, which are humiliating. I kissed the ribbon a thousand times, and in every breath inhaled the remembrance of those happy and irrevocable days which filled me with the keenest joy. Such, Wilhelm, is our fate. I do not murmur at it. The flowers of life are but visionary. How many pass away and leave no trace behind! how few yield any fruit! and the fruit itself, how rarely does it ripen! And yet there are flowers enough! And is it not strange, my friend, that we should suffer the little that does really ripen, to rot, decay and perish unenjoyed? Farewell! It is a glorious summer. I often climb into the trees in Charlotte's orchard and shake down the pears that hang on the highest branches. She stands below and catches them as they fall.



August 30th.

Unhappy being that I am! Why do I thus deceive myself? What is to come of all this wild, aimless, endless passion? I cannot pray except to her. My imagination sees nothing but her; all surrounding objects are of no account except as they relate to her. In this dreamy state I enjoy many happy hours, till at length I feel compelled to tear myself away from her. Ah, Wilhelm! to what does not my heart often compel me! When I have spent several hours in her company, till I feel completely absorbed by her figure, her grace, the divine expression of her thoughts, my mind becomes gradually excited to the highest excess, my sight grows dim, my hearing confused, my breathing oppressed as if by the hand of a murderer, and my beating heart seeks to obtain relief for my aching senses. I am sometimes unconscious whether I really exist. If in such moments I find no sympathy, and Charlotte does not allow me to enjoy the melancholy consolation of bathing her hand with my tears, I feel compelled to tear myself from her, when I either wander through the country, climb some precipitous cliff, or force a path through the trackless thicket, where I am lacerated and torn by thorns and briars, and thence I find relief. Sometimes I lie stretched on the ground, overcome with fatigue and dying with thirst. Sometimes late in the night, when the moon shines above me, I recline against an aged tree, in some sequestered forest, to rest my weary limbs, when, exhausted and worn, I sleep till break of day. O Wilhelm! the hermit's cell, his sackcloth and girdle of thorns would be luxury and indulgence compared with what I suffer. Adieu! I see no end to this wretchedness except the grave.

September 3d.

I must away. Thank you, Wilhelm, for determining my wavering purpose. For a whole fortnight I have thought of leaving her. I must away. She is returned to town and is at the house of a friend. And then, Albert—Yes, I must go.

September 10th.

Oh, what a night, Wilhelm! I can henceforth bear anything. I shall never see her again. Oh, why cannot I fall on your neck, and with floods of tears and raptures give utterance to all the passions which distract my heart! Here I sit gasping for breath and struggling to compose myself. I wait for day, and at sunrise the horses are to be at the door.

And she is sleeping calmly, little suspecting that she has seen me for the last time. I am free. I have had the courage, in an interview of two hours' duration, not to betray my intention. And oh, Wilhelm! what a conversation it was!

Albert had promised to come to Charlotte in the garden immediately after supper. I was upon the terrace under the tall chestnut trees, and watched the setting sun. I saw him sink for the last time beneath this delightful valley and silent stream. I had often visited the same spot with Charlotte and witnessed that glorious sight, and now—I was walking up and down the very avenue which was so dear to me. A secret sympathy had frequently drawn me thither before I knew Charlotte, and we were delighted when, in our early acquaintance, we discovered that we each loved the same spot, which is indeed as romantic as any that ever captivated the fancy of an artist.



artist: c. bosch.

ON THE TERRACE.

charlotte, albert and werther.

From beneath the chestnut trees there is an extensive view. But I remember that I have mentioned all this in a former letter, and have described the tall mass of beech trees at

the end, and how the avenue grows darker and darker as it winds its way among them, till it ends in a gloomy recess which has all the charm of a mysterious solitude. I still remember the strange feeling of melancholy which came over me the first time I entered that dark retreat at bright mid-day. I felt some secret foreboding that it would one day be to me the scene of some happiness or misery.

I had spent half an hour struggling between the contending thoughts of going and returning, when I heard them coming up the terrace. I ran to meet them; I trembled as I took her hand and kissed it. As we reached the top of the terrace the moon rose from behind the wooded hill. We conversed on many subjects, and without perceiving it we approached the gloomy recess. Charlotte entered and sat down. Albert seated himself beside her; I did the same, but my agitation did not suffer me to remain long seated. I got up and stood before her, then walked backwards and forwards, and sat down again. I was restless and miserable. Charlotte drew our attention to the beautiful effect of the moonlight, which threw a silver hue over the terrace in front of us beyond the beech trees. It was a glorious sight, and was rendered more striking by the darkness which surrounded the spot where we were. We remained for some time silent, when Charlotte observed: "Whenever I walk by moonlight it brings to my remembrance all my beloved and departed friends, and I am filled with thoughts of death and futurity. We shall live again, Werther!" she continued, with a firm but feeling voice; "but shall we know one another again? What do you think—what do you say?"

"Charlotte!" I said, as I took her hand in mine, and my eyes filled with tears, "we shall see each other again—here and hereafter we shall meet again." I could say no more. Why, Wilhelm, should she put this question to me, just at the moment when the fear of our cruel separation filled my heart?

"And oh! do those departed ones know how we are employed here? do they know when we are well and happy? do they know when we recall their memories with the fondest love? In the silent hour of evening the shade of my mother hovers round me; when seated in the midst of my children I see them assembled near me as they used to assemble near her! and then I raise my anxious eyes to heaven, and wish she could look down upon us and witness how I fulfil the promise I made to her in her last moments, to be a mother to her children. With what emotion do I then exclaim, 'Pardon, dearest of mothers, pardon me, if I do not adequately supply your place. Alas! I do my utmost; they are clothed and fed, and still better, they are loved and educated. Could you but see, sweet saint! the peace and harmony that dwells amongst us, you would glorify God with the warmest feelings of gratitude, to whom, in your last hour, you addressed such fervent prayers for our happiness.' " Thus did she express herself, but O! Wilhelm, who can do justice to her language, how can cold and passionless words convey the heavenly expressions of the spirit? Albert interrupted her gently. "This affects you too deeply, my dear Charlotte: I know your soul dwells on such recollections with intense delight, but I implore—" "O Albert," she continued, "I am sure you do not forget the evenings when we three used to sit at the little round table, when papa was absent, and the little ones had retired. You often had a good book with you, but seldom read it; the conversation of that noble being was preferable to everything—that beautiful, bright, gentle, and yet ever-toiling

woman. God alone knows how I have supplicated with tears on my nightly couch that I might be like her.”

I threw myself at her feet, and seizing them, bedewed them with a thousand tears. “Charlotte!” I exclaimed, “God’s blessing and your mother’s spirit are upon you.” “Oh, that you had known her!” she said, with a warm pressure of the hand; “she was worthy of being known to you.” I thought I should have fainted; never had I received praise so flattering. She continued: “And yet she was doomed to die in the flower of her youth, when her youngest child was scarcely six months old. Her illness was but short, but she was calm and resigned—and it was only for her children, especially the youngest, that she felt unhappy. When her end drew nigh, she bade me bring them to her. I obeyed; the younger ones knew nothing of their approaching loss, while the elder ones were quite overcome with grief. They stood around the bed, and she raised her feeble hands to heaven and prayed over them, then kissing them in turn she dismissed them, and said to me: ‘Be you a mother to them.’ I gave her my hand. ‘You are promising much, my child,’ she said, ‘a mother’s fondness, and a mother’s care! I have often witnessed, by your tears of gratitude, that you know what is a mother’s tenderness; show it to your brothers and sisters, and be dutiful and faithful to your father as a wife: you will be his comfort.’ She inquired for him. He had retired to conceal his intolerable anguish—he was heartbroken.

“Albert! you were in the room. She heard some one moving, she inquired who it was, and desired you to approach. She surveyed us both with a look of composure and satisfaction expressive of her conviction that we should be happy—happy with one another.” Albert fell upon her neck and kissed her, and exclaimed, “We are so, and we shall be so.” Even the composure of Albert was moved, and I was excited beyond expression.

“And such a being,” she continued, “was to leave us, Werther! Great God! must we thus part with everything we hold dear in this world? Nobody felt this more acutely than the children; they cried and lamented for a long time afterwards, complaining that black men had carried away their dear mamma.”

Charlotte stood up. It aroused me, but I continued sitting, and held her hand. “Let us go,” she said; “it grows late.” She attempted to withdraw her hand; I held it still. “We shall see each other again,” I exclaimed; “we shall recognize each other under every possible change. I am going,” I continued, “going willingly, but should I say forever, perhaps I may not keep my word. Adieu, Charlotte! adieu, Albert; we shall meet again.” “Yes, to-morrow, I think,” she answered, with a smile. To-morrow! how I felt the word! Ah! she little thought when she drew her hand away from mine. They walked down the avenue. I stood gazing after them in the moonlight. I threw myself upon the ground and wept; I then sprang up and ran out upon the terrace, and saw, under the shade of the linden trees, her white dress disappearing near the garden gate. I stretched out my arms, and she vanished.



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BOOK II.



October 20th.

WE arrived here yesterday. The ambassador is indisposed, and will not go out for some days. If he were less peevish and morose all would be well. I see but too plainly that Heaven has destined me to severe trials; but courage! a light heart may bear anything. A light heart! I smile to find such a word proceeding from my pen. A little more lightheartedness would render me the happiest being under the sun. But must I despair of my talents and faculties, whilst others of far inferior abilities parade before me with the utmost self-satisfaction? Gracious Providence! to whom I owe all my powers, why didst thou not withhold some of those blessings I possess, and substitute in their place a feeling of self-confidence and contentment?

But patience! all will yet be well; for I assure you, my dear friend, you were right; since I have been obliged to associate continually with other people, and observe what they do, and how they employ themselves, I have become far better satisfied with myself. For we are so constituted by nature that we are ever prone to compare ourselves with others, and our happiness or misery depends very much on the objects and persons around us. On this account, nothing is more dangerous than solitude; there our imagination, always disposed to rise, taking a new flight on the wings of fancy, pictures to us a chain of beings of whom we seem the most inferior. All things appear greater than they really are, and all seem superior to us. This operation of the mind is quite natural; we so continually feel our own imperfections, and fancy we perceive in others the qualities we do not possess, attributing to them also all that we enjoy ourselves, that by this process we form the idea of a perfect, happy man—a man, however, who only exists in our own imagination.

But when, in spite of weakness and disappointments, we set to work in earnest, and persevere steadily, we often find that, though obliged continually to tack, we make more way than others who have the assistance of wind and tide; and, in truth, there can be no greater satisfaction than to keep pace with others, or outstrip them in the race.

November 26th.

I begin to find my situation here more tolerable. I find a great advantage in being much occupied; and the number of persons I meet, and their different pursuits, create a varied entertainment for me. I have formed the acquaintance of the Count C—, and I esteem him more and more every day. He is a man of strong understanding and great discernment; but though he sees further than other people he is not on that account

cold in his manner, but is capable of inspiring and returning the warmest affection. He appeared interested in me on one occasion when I had to transact some business with him. He perceived, at the first word, that we understood each other, and that he could converse with me in a different tone from what he used with others. I cannot sufficiently esteem his frank and open kindness to me. It is the greatest and most genuine of pleasures to observe a great mind in sympathy with our own.

December 24th.

As I anticipated, the ambassador occasions me infinite annoyance. He is the most punctilious blockhead under heaven. He does everything step by step, with the trifling minuteness of an old woman, and he is a man whom it is impossible to please because he is never pleased with himself. I like to do business regularly and cheerfully, and when it is finished, to leave it. But he constantly returns my papers to me, saying, "They will do," but recommending me to look over them again, as "one may always improve by using a better word, or a more appropriate participle." I then lose all patience and wish myself at the devil. Not a conjunction, not an adverb must be omitted; he has a deadly antipathy to all those transpositions of which I am so fond, and if the music of our periods is not tuned to the established official key, he cannot comprehend our meaning. It is deplorable to be connected with such a fellow.

My acquaintance with the Count C— is the only compensation for such an evil. He told me frankly the other day that he was much displeased with the difficulties and delays of the ambassador; that people like him are obstacles both to themselves and to others; but," added he, "one must submit like a traveller who has to ascend a mountain; if the mountain was not there the road would be both shorter and pleasanter, but there it is, and he must get over it."

The old man perceives the Count's partiality for me; this annoys him, and he seizes every opportunity to depreciate the Count in my hearing. I naturally defend him, and that only renders matters worse. Yesterday he made a blow at me in allusion to him. "The Count," he said, "is a man of the world and a good man of business; his style is good, and he writes with facility; but like other geniuses he has no solid learning." He looked at me with an expression that seemed to ask if I felt the blow? But it did not produce the desired effect: I despise a man who can think and act in such a manner. However, I made a stand, and answered with no little warmth. The Count, I said, was a man entitled to respect alike for his character and his acquirements. I had never met a person whose mind was stored with more useful and extensive knowledge—who had, in fact, mastered such an infinite variety of subjects, and who yet retained all his activity for the details of ordinary business. This was altogether beyond his comprehension and I took my leave, lest my anger should be too highly excited by some new absurdity on his part.

And you are to blame for all this, you who persuaded me to bend my neck to this yoke, by preaching a life of activity to me. If the man who plants vegetables and carries his corn to town on market-days, is not more usefully employed than I am, then let me work ten years longer at the galleys to which I am now chained.

Oh! the brilliant wretchedness, the weariness that one is doomed to witness among the silly people whom we meet in society here! The ambition of rank; how they watch, how they toil to gain precedence! What poor and contemptible passions are displayed in their utter nakedness! We have a woman here, for example, who never ceases to entertain the company with accounts of her family and her estates. Any stranger would consider her a silly being, whose head was turned by her pretensions to rank and property; but she is in reality even more ridiculous—the daughter of a mere magistrate's clerk from this neighborhood. I cannot understand how human beings can so debase themselves.

Every day I observe more and more the folly of judging of others by ourselves; and I have so much trouble with myself, and my own heart is in such constant agitation, that I am well content to let others pursue their own course if they only allow me the same privilege.

What provokes me most is the unhappy extent to which distinctions of rank are carried. I know perfectly well how necessary are inequalities of condition, and I am sensible of the advantages I myself derive therefrom—but I would not have these institutions prove a barrier to the small chance of happiness which I may enjoy on this earth.

I have lately become acquainted with a Miss B—, a very agreeable girl, who has retained her natural manners in the midst of artificial life. Our first conversation pleased us both equally, and at taking leave I requested permission to visit her. She consented in so obliging a manner that I waited with impatience for the arrival of the happy moment. She is not a native of this place but resides here with her aunt. The countenance of the old lady is not prepossessing. I paid her much attention, addressing the greater part of my conversation to her, and in less than half an hour I discovered what her niece subsequently acknowledged to me, that her aged aunt, having but a small fortune, and a still smaller share of understanding, enjoys no satisfaction except in the pedigree of her ancestors, no protection save in her noble birth, and no enjoyment but in looking from her castle over the heads of the humble citizens. She was, no doubt, handsome in her youth, and in her early years probably trifled away her time in rendering many a poor youth the sport of her caprice; in her riper years she has submitted to the yoke of a veteran officer, who, in return for her person and her small independence, has spent with her what we may designate her age of brass. He is dead, and she is now a widow and deserted. She spends her iron age alone, and would not be approached except for the loveliness of her niece.

January 8th, 1772.

What beings are men, whose whole thoughts are occupied with form and ceremony, who for years together devote their mental and physical exertions to the task of advancing themselves but one step, and endeavoring to occupy a higher place at the table. Not that such persons would otherwise want employment; on the contrary, they give themselves much trouble by neglecting important business for such petty trifles. Last week a question of precedence arose at a sledging party, and all our amusement was spoiled.

The silly creatures cannot see that it is not place which constitutes real greatness, since the man who occupies the first place but seldom plays the principal part. How many kings are governed by their ministers—how many ministers by their secretaries? Who, in such cases, is really the chief? He, as it seems to me, who can see through the others, and possesses strength or skill enough to make their power or passions subservient to the execution of his own designs.

January 20th.

I must write to you from this place, my dear Charlotte, from a small room in a country inn, where I have taken shelter from a severe storm. During my whole residence in that wretched place D—, where I lived amongst strangers—strangers, indeed, to this heart—I never at any time felt the smallest inclination to correspond with you; but in this cottage, in this retirement, in this solitude, with the snow and hail beating against my lattice-pane, you are my first thought. The instant I entered, your figure rose up before me, and the remembrance! O my Charlotte, the sacred, tender remembrance! Gracious Heaven! restore to me the happy moment of our first acquaintance.

Could you but see me, my dear Charlotte, in the whirl of dissipation; how my senses are dried up, but my heart is at no time full. I enjoy no single moment of happiness; all is vain—nothing touches me. I stand, as it were, before the raree-show, I see the little puppets move, and I ask whether it is not an optical illusion. I am amused with these puppets, or rather, I am myself one of them, but when I sometimes grasp my neighbor's hand, I feel that it is not natural, and I withdraw mine with a shudder. In the evening I say I will enjoy the next morning's sunrise, and yet I remain in bed; in the day I promise to ramble by moonlight, and I nevertheless remain at home. I know not why I rise, nor why I go to sleep.

The heaven which animated my existence is gone, the charm which cheered me in the gloom of night and aroused me from my morning slumbers, is forever fled.

I have found but one being here to interest me, a Miss B—. She resembles you, my dear Charlotte, if any one can possibly resemble you. "Ah!" you will say, "he has learned to pay fine compliments." And this is partly true. I have been very agreeable lately, as it was not in my power to be otherwise. I have, moreover, a deal of wit, and the ladies say that no one understands flattery better—or falsehoods, you will add, since the one accomplishment invariably accompanies the other. But I must tell you of Miss B. She has abundance of soul which flashes from her deep blue eyes. Her rank is a torment to her and satisfies no one desire of her heart. She would gladly retire from this whirl of fashion, and we often picture to ourselves a life of undisturbed happiness in distant scenes of rural retirement; and then we speak of you, my dear Charlotte, for she knows you and renders homage to your merits, but her homage is not exacted, but voluntary—she loves you and delights to hear you made the subject of conversation.

Oh, that I were sitting at your feet in your favorite little room, with the dear children playing around us. If they became troublesome to you I would tell them some appalling goblin story, and they would crowd around me with silent attention. The sun is setting in glory; his last rays are shining on the snow which covers the face of the

country; the storm is over, and I must return to my dungeon. Adieu! Is Albert with you, and what is he to you? God forgive the question!

February 8th.

For a week past we have had the most wretched weather, but this to me is a blessing, for during my residence here not a single fine day has beamed from the heavens but has been lost to me by the intrusion of somebody. During the severity of rain, sleet, frost and storm, I congratulate myself that it cannot be worse indoors than abroad, nor worse abroad than it is within doors, and so I become reconciled. When the sun rises bright in the morning and promises a glorious day, I never omit to exclaim, "There now, they have another blessing from Heaven which they will be sure to destroy; they spoil everything—health, fame, happiness, amusement—and they do this generally through folly, ignorance, or imbecility, and always, according to their own account, with the best intentions. I could often beseech them, on my bended knees, to be less resolved upon their own destruction.

February 17th.

I fear that my ambassador and I shall not continue much longer together. He is really growing past endurance. He transacts his business in so ridiculous a manner, that I am often compelled to contradict him and do things my own way, and then, of course, he thinks them very ill done. He complained of me lately on this account at Court and the minister gave me a reprimand,—a gentle one it is true, but still a reprimand. In consequence of this I was about to tender my resignation, when I received a letter, to which I submitted with great respect on account of the high, noble and generous spirit which dictated it. He endeavored to soothe my excessive sensibility, paid a tribute to my extreme ideas of duty, of good example, and of perseverance in business, as the fruit of my youthful ardor,—an impulse which he did not seek to destroy but only to moderate, that it might have proper play and be productive of good. So now I am at rest for another week and no longer at variance with myself. Content and peace of mind are valuable things. I could wish, my dear friend, that these precious jewels were less transitory.

February 20th.

God bless you, my dear friends, and may he grant you that happiness which he denies to me!

I thank you, Albert, for having deceived me. I waited for the news that your wedding-day was fixed, and I intended on that day, with solemnity, to take down Charlotte's profile from the wall, and to bury it with some other papers I possess. You are now united and her picture still remains here. Well, let it remain! Why should it not? I know that I am still one of your society, that I still occupy a place uninjured in Charlotte's heart, that I hold the second place therein, and I intend to keep it. Oh! I should become mad if she could forget.—Albert! that thought is hell. Farewell, Albert—farewell, angel of heaven—farewell, Charlotte!

March 15th.

I have just had a sad adventure which will drive me from hence. I lose all patience!—Death!—It is not to be remedied, and you are alone to blame, who urged and impelled me to fill a post for which I was by no means suited. I have now reason to be satisfied, and so have you! But that you may not again attribute this fatality to my impetuous temper, I send you, my dear sir, a plain and simple narration of the affair, as a mere chronicler of facts would describe it.

The Count of C— likes me, and distinguishes me: it is well known, and I have mentioned this to you a hundred times. Yesterday I dined with him; it is the day on which the nobility are accustomed to assemble at his house in the evening. I never once thought of the assembly, nor that we subalterns did not belong to such society. Well! I dined with the Count, and after dinner we adjourned to the large hall; we walked up and down together, and I conversed with him and with Colonel B. who joined us, and in this manner the hour for the assembly approached. God knows I was thinking of nothing, when who should enter but the honorable Lady S., accompanied by her noble husband and their silly, scheming daughter, with her small waist and flat neck—and with disdainful looks and a haughty air, they passed me by. As I heartily detest the whole race, I determined upon going away, and only waited till the Count had disengaged himself from their impertinent prattle to take leave, when the agreeable Miss B. came in. As I never meet her without experiencing a heartfelt pleasure, I stayed and talked to her, leaning over the back of her chair, and did not perceive till after some time that she seemed a little confused, and ceased to answer me with her usual ease of manner. I was struck with it. “Heavens!” I said to myself, “can she too be like the rest?” I felt annoyed and was about to withdraw; but I remained, notwithstanding, forming excuses for her conduct, fancying she did not mean it, and still hoping to receive some friendly recognition. The rest of the company now arrived. There was the Baron F— in an entire suit that dated from the coronation of Francis I., the Chancellor N— with his deaf wife, the shabbily-dressed I—, whose old-fashioned coat bore evidence of modern repairs—this crowned the whole. I conversed with some of my acquaintance, but they answered me laconically. I was engaged in observing Miss B—, and did not notice that the women were whispering at the end of the room, that the murmur extended by degrees to the men, that Madame S— addressed the Count with much warmth (this was all related to me subsequently by Miss B.), till at length the Count came up to me and took me to the window.—“You know our ridiculous customs,” he said; “I perceive the company is rather displeased at your being here; I would not on any account—” “I beg your excellency’s pardon,” I exclaimed; “I ought to have thought of this before, but I know you will forgive this little inattention. I was going,” I added, “some time ago, but my evil genius detained me,” and I smiled and bowed to take my leave. He shook me by the hand in a manner which expressed everything. I hastened at once from the illustrious assembly, sprang into a carriage and drove to M—. I contemplated the setting sun from the top of the hill, and read that beautiful passage in Homer, where Ulysses is entertained by the hospitable herdsmen. This was indeed delightful.



I returned home to supper in the evening. But few persons were assembled in the room; they had turned up a corner of the table-cloth and were playing at dice. The good-natured A— came in; he laid down his hat when he saw me, approached me and said, in a low tone,—“You have met with a disagreeable adventure.” “I!” I exclaimed. “The Count obliged you to withdraw from the assembly!” “Deuce take the assembly,” said I; “I was very glad to be gone.” “I am delighted,” he added, “that you take it so lightly; I am only sorry that it is already so much spoken of.” The circumstance then began to pain me. I fancied that every one who sat down, and even looked at me, was thinking of this incident, and my heart became embittered.

And now I could plunge a dagger into my bosom, when I hear myself everywhere pitied, and observe the triumph of my enemies, who say that this is always the case with vain persons, whose heads are turned with conceit, who affect to despise forms and such petty, idle nonsense.

Say what you will of fortitude, but show me the man who can patiently endure the laughter of fools when they have obtained an advantage over him. 'Tis only when their nonsense is without foundation that one can suffer it without complaint.

March 16th.

Everything conspires against me. I met Miss B— walking to-day. I could not help joining her; and when we were at a little distance from her companions I expressed my sense of her altered manner towards me. “O Werther!” she said, in a tone of emotion, “you who know my heart, how could you so ill interpret my distress? What did I not suffer for you from the moment you entered the room! I foresaw it all—a hundred times was I on the point of mentioning it to you. I knew that the S—s and T—s, with their husbands, would quit the room rather than remain in your company; I knew that the Count would not break with them: and now so much is said about it.” “How!” I exclaimed, and endeavored to conceal my emotion, for all that Adelin had mentioned to me yesterday recurred to me painfully at that moment. “Oh, how much it has already cost me!” said this amiable girl, while her eyes filled with tears. I could scarcely contain myself, and was ready to throw myself at her feet. “Explain yourself!” I cried. Tears flowed down her cheeks. I became quite frantic. She wiped them away, without attempting to conceal them. “You know my aunt,” she continued—“she was present, and in what light does she consider the affair! Last night and this morning, Werther, I was compelled to listen to a lecture upon my acquaintance with you. I have been obliged to hear you condemned and depreciated, and I could not—I dared not—say much in your defence.”

Every word she uttered was a dagger to my heart. She did not feel what a mercy it would have been to conceal everything from me. She told me, in addition, all the impertinence that would be further circulated, and how the malicious would triumph; how they would rejoice over the punishment of my pride, over my humiliation for that want of esteem for others with which I had often been reproached. To hear all this, Wilhelm, uttered by her in a voice of the most sincere sympathy, awakened all my passions, and I am still in a state of extreme excitement. I wish I could find a man to jeer me about this event. I would sacrifice him to my resentment: the sight of his blood might possibly be a relief to my fury. A hundred times have I seized a dagger to give ease to this oppressed heart. Naturalists tell of a noble race of horses that instinctively open a vein with their teeth, when heated and exhausted by a long course, in order to breathe more freely. I am often tempted to open a vein to procure for myself everlasting liberty.

March 24th.

I have tendered my resignation to the Court. I hope it will be accepted, and you will forgive me for not having previously consulted you. It is necessary I should leave this place. I know all you will urge to induce me to stay, and therefore—. I beg you will soften this news to my mother. I am unable to do anything for myself; how, then, should I be competent to assist others? It will afflict her that I should have interrupted that career which would have made me first a privy councillor, and then minister, and that I should look behind me in place of advancing. Argue as you will, combine all the reasons which should have induced me to remain—I am going; that is sufficient. But that you may not be ignorant of my destination, I may mention that the Prince of — is here. He is much pleased with my company; and having heard of my intention to resign, he has invited me to his country house to pass the spring months with him. I shall be left completely my own master; and as we agree on all subjects but one, I shall try my fortune, and accompany him.

April 19th.

Thanks for both your letters. I delayed my reply and withheld this letter till I should obtain an answer from the Court. I feared my mother might apply to the minister to defeat my purpose. But my request is granted—my resignation is accepted. I shall not recount with what reluctance it was accorded, nor relate what the minister has written; you would only renew your lamentations. The Crown Prince has sent me a present of five-and-twenty ducats; and indeed such goodness has affected me to tears. For this reason I shall not require from my mother the money for which I lately applied.



May 5th.

I leave this place to-morrow; and as my native place is only six miles from the highroad, I intend to visit it once more, and recall the happy dreams of my childhood. I shall enter at the same gate through which I came with my mother, when, after my father's death, she left that delightful retreat to immure herself in your melancholy town. Adieu, my dear friend; you shall hear of my future career.

May 9th.

I have paid my visit to my native place with all the devotion of a pilgrim, and have experienced many unexpected emotions. Near the great elm tree, which is a quarter of a league from the village, I got out of the carriage and sent it on before, that alone, and on foot, I might enjoy vividly and heartily all the pleasure of my recollections. I stood there under that same elm which was formerly the term and object of my walks. How things have since changed! Then, in happy ignorance, I sighed for a world I did not know, where I hoped to find every pleasure and enjoyment which my heart could desire; and now, on my return from that wide world, O my friend, how many disappointed hopes and unsuccessful plans have I brought back!

I contemplated the mountains which lay stretched out before me, and I thought how often they had been the object of my dearest desires. Here used I to sit for hours together with my eyes bent upon them, ardently longing to wander in the shade of those woods—to lose myself in those valleys, which form so delightful an object in the distance! With what reluctance did I leave this charming spot when my hour of recreation was over and my leave of absence expired! I drew near to the village—all the well-known old summer-houses and gardens were recognized again; I disliked the new ones, and all other alterations which had taken place. I entered the village, and all my former feelings returned. I cannot, my dear friend, enter into details, charming as were my sensations; they would be dull in the narration. I had intended to lodge in the market-place, near our old house. As soon as I entered I perceived that the schoolroom, where our childhood had been taught by that good old woman, was converted into a shop. I called to mind the sorrow, the heaviness, the tears and oppression of heart which I experienced in that confinement. Every step produced some particular impression. A pilgrim in the Holy Land does not meet so many spots pregnant with tender recollections, and his soul is hardly moved with greater devotion. One incident will serve for illustration. I followed the course of a stream to a farm, formerly a delightful walk of mine, and I paused at the spot where as boys we used to amuse ourselves with making ducks and drakes upon the water. I recollected so well how I used formerly to watch the course of that same stream, following it with inquiring eagerness, forming romantic ideas of the countries it was to pass through; but my imagination was soon exhausted, while the water continued flowing farther and farther on, till my fancy became bewildered by the contemplation of an invisible distance. Exactly such, my dear friend, so happy and so confined, were the thoughts of our good ancestors. Their feelings and their poetry were fresh as childhood. And when Ulysses talks of the immeasurable sea and of the boundless earth, his epithets are true, natural, deeply felt and mysterious. Of what importance is it that I have learned with every schoolboy that the world is round? Man needs but little earth for enjoyment, and still less for his final repose.

I am at present with the Prince at his hunting-lodge. He is a man with whom one can live happily. He is honest and unaffected. There are, however, some strange characters about him, whom I cannot at all understand. They do not seem vicious, and yet they do not carry the appearance of thoroughly honest men. Sometimes I am disposed to believe them honest, and yet I cannot persuade myself to confide in them. It grieves me to hear the Prince occasionally talk of things which he has only read or heard of, and always with the same view in which they have been represented by others.

He values my understanding and talents more highly than he does my heart, and I am alone proud of the latter. It is the sole source of everything, of our strength, of our happiness and our misery. All the knowledge I possess every one else can acquire, but my heart is exclusively my own.

May 25th.

I have had a plan in my head, of which I did not intend to speak to you until it was accomplished. Now that it has failed I may as well mention it. I wished to enter the army, and had long been desirous of taking the step. This, indeed, was the chief reason for my coming here with the Prince, as he is a general in the — service. I communicated my design to him during one of our walks together. He disapproved of it, and it would have been actual madness not to have listened to his reasons.

June 11th.

Say what you will, I can remain here no longer. Why should I remain? I am weary of it. The Prince is as gracious to me as any one could be, and yet I am not at my ease. There is, indeed, nothing in common between us. He is a man of understanding, but quite of the ordinary kind. His conversation affords me no more amusement than I should derive from the perusal of a well-written book. I shall remain here a week longer, and then start again on my travels. My drawings are the best things I have done since I came here. The Prince has a taste for the arts, and would improve if his mind were not fettered by cold rules and mere technical ideas. I often lose patience when, with a glowing imagination I am giving expression to art and nature, he interferes with learned suggestions, and uses at random the technical phraseology of artists.

July 16th.

Once more I am a wanderer, a pilgrim, through the world. But what else are you?

July 18th.

Whither am I going? I will tell you in confidence. I am obliged to continue a fortnight longer here, and then I think it would be better for me to visit the mines in —. But I am only deluding myself thus. The fact is, I wish to be near Charlotte again—that is all. I smile at the suggestions of my heart and obey its dictates.

July 29th.

No! no! it is yet well—all is well. I, her husband! O God, who gave me being, if thou hadst destined this happiness for me, my whole life would have been one continual thanksgiving! But I will not murmur. Forgive these tears! forgive these fruitless wishes! She—my wife! Oh, the very thought of folding that dearest of Heaven's creatures in my arms! Dear Wilhelm, my whole frame feels convulsed when I see Albert put his arms around her slender waist!

And shall I avow it? Why should I not, Wilhelm? She would have been happier with me than with him! Albert is not the man to satisfy the wishes of such a heart. He wants a certain sensibility; he wants—in short, their hearts do not beat in unison! How often, my dear friend, in reading a passage from some interesting book, when my heart and Charlotte's seemed to meet, and in a hundred other instances, when our sentiments were unfolded by the story of some fictitious character, have I felt that we were made for each other! But, dear Wilhelm, he loves her with his whole soul, and what does not such a love deserve?

I have been interrupted by an insufferable visit. I have dried my tears and composed my thoughts. Adieu, my best friend!

August 4th.

I am not alone unfortunate! All men are disappointed in their hopes and deceived in their expectations. I have paid a visit to my good old woman under the lime trees. The eldest boy ran out to meet me. His exclamation of joy brought out his mother, but she had a very melancholy look. Her first word was, "Alas! dear sir, my little John is dead!" He was the youngest of her children. I was silent. "And my husband has returned from Switzerland without any money, and if some kind people had not assisted him he must have begged his way home. He was taken ill with fever on his journey." I could answer nothing, but made the little one a present. She invited me to take some fruit; I complied, and left the place with a sorrowful heart.

August 21st.

My sensations are constantly changing. Sometimes a happy prospect opens before me; but, alas! it is only for a moment; and then when I am lost in reverie I cannot help saying to myself, "If Albert were to die?—Yes, she would become—and I should be—" And so I pursue a chimera, till it leads me to the edge of a precipice, at which I shudder.

When I pass through the same gate and walk along the same road which first conducted me to Charlotte, my heart sinks within me at the change that has since taken place. All, all is altered! No sentiment, no pulsation of my heart is the same. My sensations are such as would occur to some departed prince whose spirit should return to visit the superb palace which he had built in happy times, adorned with costly magnificence, and left to a beloved son, but whose glory he should find departed and its halls deserted and in ruins.

September 3d.

I sometimes cannot understand how she can love another, how she dares love another, when I love nothing in this world so completely, so devotedly, as her—when I know only her, and have no other possession than her in the world.

September 4th.

It is even so! As Nature puts on her autumn tints, it becomes autumn with me and around me. My leaves are sere and yellow, and the neighboring trees are divested of their foliage. Do you remember my writing to you about a peasant boy shortly after my arrival here? I have just made inquiries about him in Walheim. They say he has been dismissed from his service, and is now avoided by every one. I met him yesterday on the road, going to a neighboring village. I spoke to him, and he told me his story. It interested me exceedingly, as you will easily understand when I repeat it to you. But why should I trouble you? Why should I not reserve all my sorrow for myself? Why should I continue to give you occasion to pity and blame me? But no matter; this also is part of my destiny.



At first the peasant lad answered my inquiries with a sort of subdued melancholy, which seemed to me the mark of a timid disposition; but as we grew to understand each other he spoke with less reserve, and openly confessed his faults and lamented his misfortune. I wish, my dear friend, I could give proper expression to his language. He told me, with a sort of pleasurable recollection, that after my departure his passion for his mistress increased daily, until at last he neither knew what he did nor what he said, nor what was to become of him. He could neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep; he felt a sense of suffocation; he disobeyed all orders, and forgot all commands involuntarily; he seemed as if pursued by an evil spirit; till one day, knowing that his mistress had gone to an upper chamber, he followed her, or rather felt attracted after her. As she proved deaf to his entreaties, he had recourse to violence. He knows not what happened, but he called God to witness that his intentions to her were honorable, and that he desired nothing more sincerely than that they should marry and pass their lives together. When he had come to this point he began to hesitate, as if there was something which he had not courage to utter, till at length he acknowledged with some confusion certain little confidences which she had encouraged and freedoms which she had allowed. He broke off two or three times in his narration, and assured me most earnestly that he had no wish to make her bad, as he termed it, for he loved her still as sincerely as ever; that the tale had never before escaped his lips, and was only now told to convince me that he was not utterly lost and abandoned. And here, my dear friend, I must commence the old song, which you know I utter eternally. If I could only represent the man as he stood and stands now before me—could I only give his true expressions—you would feel compelled to sympathize in his fate. But enough. You, who know my misfortune and my disposition, can easily comprehend the attraction which draws me towards every unfortunate being, but particularly towards him whose story I have recounted.

Upon perusing this letter a second time, I find I have omitted the conclusion of my tale, but it is easily supplied. She became reserved towards him, at the instigation of her brother, who had long hated him, and desired his expulsion from the house, fearing that his sister's second marriage might deprive his children of the handsome fortune which they expected from her, as she is childless. He was dismissed at length, and the whole affair occasioned so much scandal that the mistress dared not take him back, even if she had wished it. She has since hired another servant, with whom, they say, the brother is equally displeased, and whom she is likely to marry; but my informant assures me that he himself is determined not to survive such a catastrophe.

This story is neither exaggerated nor embellished; indeed, I have weakened and impaired it in the narration, by the necessity of using the more refined expressions of society.

This love, then, this constancy, this passion is no poetical fiction. It is actual, and dwells in its greatest purity amongst that class of mankind whom we term rude, uneducated. We are the educated, not the perverted! But read this story with attention, I implore you. I am tranquil to-day, for I have been employed upon this narration; you see by my writing that I am not so agitated as usual. Read and re-read this tale, Wilhelm! it is the history of your friend. My fortune has been and will be similar; and I am neither half so brave nor half so determined as the poor wretch with whom I hesitate to compare myself.

September 5th.

Charlotte had written a letter to her husband in the country, where he was detained by business. It commenced, "My dearest love, return as soon as possible; I await you with a thousand raptures." A friend who arrived brought word that, for certain reasons, he could not return immediately. Charlotte's letter was not forwarded, and the same evening it fell into my hands. I read it and smiled. She asked the reason. "What a heavenly treasure is imagination!" I exclaimed; "I fancied for a moment that this was written to me!" She paused and seemed displeased. I was silent.

September 6th.

It cost me much to part with the blue coat which I wore the first time I danced with Charlotte. But I could not possibly wear it any longer. But I have ordered a new one, precisely similar, even to the collar and sleeves, as well as a new waistcoat and pantaloons.

But it does not produce the same effect upon me. I know not how it is; but I hope in time I shall like it better.



September 12th.

She has been absent for some days. She went to meet Albert. To-day I visited her; she rose to receive me, and I kissed her hand most tenderly.

A canary at the moment flew from a mirror and settled upon her shoulder. "Here is a new friend," she observed, while she made him perch upon her hand; "he is a present for the children. What a dear he is! Look at him! When I feed him he flutters with his wings, and pecks so nicely. He kisses me, too—only look!"

She held the bird to her mouth, and he pressed her sweet lips with so much fervor, that he seemed to feel the excess of bliss which he enjoyed.

"He shall kiss you, too," she added, and then she held the bird towards me. His little beak moved from her mouth to mine, and the delightful sensation seemed like the forerunner of the sweetest bliss.

"A kiss," I observed, "does not seem to satisfy him; he wishes for food, and seems disappointed by these unsatisfactory endearments."

"But he eats out of my mouth," she continued, and extended her lips to him containing seed, and she smiled with all the charm of a being who has allowed an innocent participation of her love.

I turned my head away. She should not act thus. She ought not to excite my imagination with such displays of heavenly innocence and happiness, nor awaken my heart from its slumbers, in which it dreams of the worthlessness of life! And why not? Because she knows how much I love her.

September 15th.

It makes me wretched, Wilhelm, to think that there should be men incapable of appreciating the few things which possess a real value in life. You remember the walnut trees at S—, under which I used to sit with Charlotte during my visits to the worthy old vicar. Those glorious trees, the very sight of which has so often filled my heart with joy, how they adorned and refreshed the parsonage yard, with their wide extended branches! and how pleasing was our remembrance of the good old pastor, by whose hands they were planted so many years ago! The schoolmaster has frequently mentioned his name. He had it from his grandfather. He must have been a most excellent man, and under the shade of those old trees his memory was ever venerated by me. The schoolmaster informed us yesterday, with tears in his eyes, that those trees had been felled. Yes, cut to the ground! I could in my wrath have slain the monster who struck the first stroke. And I must endure this!—I who, if I had had two such trees in my own court, and one had died from old age, should have wept with real affliction. But there is some comfort left—such a thing is sentiment—the whole village murmurs at the misfortune, and I hope the vicar's wife will soon find, by the cessation of the villagers' presents, what a wound she has inflicted upon the feelings of the neighborhood. It was she who did it—the wife of the present incumbent (our good old man is dead)—a tall, sickly creature, who is so far right to disregard the

world, as the world totally disregards her. The silly being affects to be learned, pretends to examine the canonical books, lends her aid towards the new-fashioned reformation of Christendom, moral and critical, and shrugs up her shoulders at the mention of Lavater's enthusiasm. Her health is destroyed, which prevents her from having any enjoyment here below. Such a creature alone could have cut down my walnut trees! I can never pardon it. Hear her reasons. The falling leaves made the court wet and dirty, the branches obstructed the light, boys threw stones at the nuts when they were ripe, and the noise affected her nerves and disturbed her profound meditations, when she was weighing the difficulties of Kennicot, Semler and Michaelis. Finding that all the parish, particularly the old people, were displeased, I asked "why they allowed it?" "Ah, sir!" they replied, "when the steward orders, what can we poor peasants do?" But one thing has happened well. The steward and the vicar (who for once thought to reap some advantage from the caprices of his wife) intended to divide the trees between them. The revenue-office being informed of it, revived an old claim to the ground where the trees had stood, and sold them to the best bidder. There they still lie on the ground. If I were the sovereign I should know how to deal with them all—vicar, steward and revenue-office. Sovereign did I say? I should in that case care little about the trees that grew in the country.

October 10th.

Only to gaze upon her dark eyes is to me a source of happiness! And what grieves me is, that Albert does not seem so happy as he—hoped to be—as I should have been—if—. I am no friend to these pauses, but here I cannot express myself otherwise; and probably I am explicit enough.

October 12th.

Ossian has superseded Homer in my heart. To what a world does the illustrious bard carry me! To wander over pathless wilds, surrounded by impetuous whirlwinds, where, by the feeble light of the moon, we see the spirits of our ancestors; to hear from the mountaintops, mid the roar of torrents, their plaintive sounds issuing from deep caverns, and the sorrowful lamentations of a maiden who sighs and expires on the mossy tomb of the warrior by whom she was adored. I meet this bard with silver hair; he wanders in the valley, he seeks the footsteps of his fathers, and, alas! he finds only their tombs. Then contemplating the pale moon, as she sinks beneath the waves of the rolling sea, the memory of bygone days strikes the mind of the hero,—days, when approaching danger invigorated the brave, and the moon shone upon his bark laden with spoils and returning in triumph. When I read in his countenance deep sorrow, when I see his dying glory sink, exhausted, into the grave, as he inhales new and heart-thrilling delight from his approaching union with his beloved, and he casts a look on the cold earth and the tall grass which is so soon to cover him, and then exclaims, "The traveller will come—he will come who has seen my beauty, and he will ask, where is the bard—where is the illustrious son of Fingal? He will walk over my tomb, and will seek me in vain!" Then, O my friend, I could instantly, like a true and noble knight, draw my sword, and deliver my prince from the long and painful languor of a living death, and dismiss my own soul to follow the demigod whom my hand had set free.

October 19th.

Alas! the void—the fearful void, which I feel in my bosom! Sometimes I think if I could only once—but once—press her to my heart, this dreadful void would be filled.

October 26th.

Yes, I feel certain, Wilhelm, and every day I become more certain, that the existence of any being whatever is of very little consequence. A friend of Charlotte's called to see her just now; I withdrew into a neighboring apartment and took up a book; but finding I could not read I sat down to write. I heard their conversation; they spoke upon ordinary topics, and retailed the news of the town. One was going to be married, another was ill, very ill—she had a dry cough; her face was growing thinner daily, and she had occasional fits. "N— is very unwell, too," said Charlotte. "His limbs begin to swell already," answered the other, and my lively imagination carried me at once to the beds of the infirm. There I see them struggling against death, with all the agonies of pain and horror; and these women, Wilhelm, talk of all this with as much indifference as one would mention the death of a stranger. And when I look around the apartment where I now am,—when I see Charlotte's apparel lying before me, and Albert's writings, and all those articles of furniture which are so familiar to me, even to the very inkstand which I am using,—when I think what I am to this family—everything. My friends esteem me; I often contribute to their happiness, and my heart seems as if it could not beat without them; and yet—if I were to die, if I were to be summoned from the midst of this circle, would they feel—or how long would they feel, the void which my loss would make in their existence? How long! Yes, such is the frailty of man, that even there, where he has the greatest consciousness of his own being, where he makes the strongest and most forcible impression, even in the memory, in the heart of his beloved, there also he must perish—vanish—and that quickly.

October 27th.

I could tear open my bosom with vexation to think how little we are capable of influencing the feelings of each other. No one can communicate to me those sensations of love, joy, rapture and delight which I do not naturally possess; and though my heart may glow with the most lively affection, I cannot make the happiness of one in whom the same warmth is not inherent.

October 27th. Evening.

I possess so much, but my love for her absorbs it all. I possess so much, but without her I have nothing.

October 30th.

One hundred times have I been on the point of embracing her. Heavens! what a torment it is to see so much loveliness passing and repassing before us, and yet not dare to touch it! And to touch is the most natural of human instincts. Do not children touch everything they see? And I!

November 3d.

Witness Heaven how often I lie down in my bed with a wish, and even a hope, that I may never awaken again! and in the morning, when I open my eyes, I behold the sun once more, and am wretched. If I were whimsical I might blame the weather, or an acquaintance, or some personal disappointment, for my discontented mind, and then this insupportable load of trouble would not rest entirely upon myself. But, alas! I feel it too sadly. I am alone the cause of my own woe—am I not? Truly, my own bosom contains the source of all my sorrow, as it previously contained the source of all my pleasure. Am I not the same being who once enjoyed an excess of happiness—who, at every step, saw paradise open before him, and whose heart was ever expanded towards the whole world? And this heart is now dead; no sentiment can revive it: my eyes are dry, and my senses, no more refreshed by the influence of soft tears, wither and consume my brain. I suffer much, for I have lost the only charm of life; that active sacred power which created worlds around me—it is no more. When I look from my window at the distant hills, and behold the morning sun breaking through the mists, and illuminating the country around, which is still wrapt in silence, whilst the soft stream winds gently through the willows which have shed their leaves; when glorious Nature displays all her beauties before me, and her wondrous prospects are ineffectual to extract one tear of joy from my withered heart; I feel that in such a moment I stand like a reprobate before Heaven, hardened, insensible and unmoved. Oftentimes do I then bend my knee to the earth, and implore God for the blessing of tears, as the desponding laborer, in some scorching climate, prays for the dews of heaven to moisten his parched corn.

But I feel that God does not grant sunshine or rain to our importunate entreaties. And O those bygone days, whose memory now torments me, why were they so fortunate? Because I then waited with patience for the blessings of the Eternal, and received his gifts with the grateful feelings of a thankful heart.

November 8th.

Charlotte has reproved me for my excesses with so much tenderness and goodness. I have lately drunk more wine than usual. “Don’t do it!” she said; “think of Charlotte!” “Think of you!” I answered; “can such advice be necessary—do I not ever think of you? And yet mine are not thoughts; you live within my soul. This very morning I was sitting in the spot where, a few days ago, you descended from the carriage, and—.” She immediately changed the subject, to prevent me from pursuing it further. My dear friend, my energies are all prostrated; she can do with me what she pleases.

November 15th.

I thank you, Wilhelm, for your cordial sympathy, for your excellent advice, and I implore you to be quiet. Leave me to my sufferings. In spite of my wretchedness, I have still strength enough for endurance. I revere religion—you know I do. I feel that it can impart strength to the feeble, and comfort to the afflicted; but does it affect all men equally? Consider this vast universe; you will see thousands for whom it has never existed, thousands for whom it will never exist, whether it be preached to them

or not; and must it then necessarily exist for me? Does not the Son of God himself say, that they are his whom the Father has given to him? Have I been given to him? What if the Father will retain me for himself, as my heart sometimes suggests? I pray you do not misinterpret this. Do not extract derision from my harmless words. I pour out my whole soul before you. Silence were otherwise preferable to me: but I need not shrink from a subject of which few know more than I do myself. What is the destiny of man, but to fill up the measure of his sufferings, and to drink his allotted cup of bitterness? And if that same cup proved bitter to the God of Heaven, under a human form, why should I affect a foolish pride and call it sweet? Why should I be ashamed of shrinking at that fearful moment, when my whole being will tremble between existence and annihilation; when a remembrance of the past, like a flash of lightning, will illuminate the dark gulf of futurity, when everything shall dissolve around me, and the whole world vanish away? Is not this the voice of a creature oppressed beyond all resource, self-deficient, about to plunge into inevitable destruction, and groaning deeply at its inadequate strength—"My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" And should I feel ashamed to utter the same expression? Should I not shudder at a prospect which had its fears, even for Him who spread out the heavens like a garment?



artist: c. bosch

AT THE HARPSICHORD.

charlotte and werther

November 21st.

She does not feel, she does not know, that she is preparing a poison which will destroy us both; and I drink deeply of the draught which is to prove my destruction. What mean those looks of kindness with which she often—often—no, not often, but sometimes regards me,—that complacency with which she hears the involuntary sentiments which frequently escape me, and the tender pity for my sufferings which appears in her countenance?

Yesterday, when I took leave, she seized me by the hand and said, "Adieu, dear Werther!" Dear Werther!—It was the first time she ever called me dear; the sound

sunk deep into my heart. I have repeated it a hundred times, and yesterday night, on going to bed, and talking to myself of various things, I suddenly said, "Good-night, dear Werther!" I recollected myself and laughed.

November 22d.

I cannot pray for strength to renounce her, for she seems to belong to me. I cannot pray that she may be given to me, for she is the property of another. In this way I affect mirth over my troubles, and if I had time I could compose a whole litany of antitheses.

November 24th.

She is sensible of my sufferings. This morning her look pierced my very soul. I found her alone, and she was silent; she steadfastly surveyed me. I no longer saw in her face the charms of beauty or the fire of genius—these had disappeared. But I was affected by an expression much more touching—a look of the deepest sympathy and of the softest pity. Why was I afraid to throw myself at her feet? Why did I not dare to take her in my arms, and answer her by a thousand kisses? She had recourse to her piano for relief, and in a low and sweet voice accompanied the music with delicious sounds. Her lips never appeared so lovely; they seemed but just to open that they might imbibe the sweet tones which issued from the instrument, and return the heavenly vibration from her lovely mouth. Oh! who can express my sensations? I was quite overcome, and bending down, pronounced this vow: "Beautiful lips, which the angels guard, never will I seek to profane your purity with a kiss." And yet, my friend, oh, I wish—but my heart is darkened by doubt and indecision—could I but taste felicity and then die to expiate the sin. What sin?

November 26th.

Oftentimes I say to myself, "Thou alone art wretched; all other mortals are happy—none are distressed like thee! Then I read a passage in an ancient poet, and I seem to understand my own heart. I have so much to endure! Have men before me ever been so wretched?"

November 30th.

I shall never be myself again! Wherever I go some fatality occurs to distract me. Even to-day—alas, for our destiny! alas, for human nature!

About dinner-time I went to walk by the river side, for I had no appetite. Everything around seemed gloomy; a cold and damp easterly wind blew from the mountains, and black heavy clouds spread over the plain. I observed a man at a distance in a tattered coat; he was wandering among the rocks, and seemed to be looking for plants. When I approached he turned round at the noise, and I saw that he had an interesting countenance, in which a settled melancholy, strongly marked by benevolence, formed the principal feature. His long black hair was divided, and flowed over his shoulders. As his garb betokened a person of the lower order, I thought he would not take it ill if I inquired about his business, and I therefore asked what he was seeking for. He

replied, with a deep sigh, that he was looking for flowers and could find none. "But it is not the season," I observed, with a smile. "Oh, there are so many flowers," he answered, as he came nearer to me. "In my garden there are roses and honeysuckles of two sorts: one sort was given to me by my father; they grow as plentifully as weeds; I have been looking for them these two days and cannot find them. There are flowers above there, yellow, blue and red, and that centaury has a very pretty blossom; but I can find none of them." I observed his peculiarity, and therefore asked him, with an air of indifference, what he intended to do with his flowers. A strange smile overspread his countenance. Holding his finger to his mouth, he expressed a hope that I would not betray him, and he then informed me that he had promised to gather a nosegay for his mistress. "That is right," said I. "Oh," he replied, "she possesses many other things as well; she is very rich." "And yet," I continued, "she likes your nosegays." "Oh, she has jewels and crowns!" he exclaimed. I asked who she was. "If the States-General would but pay me," he added, "I should be quite another man. Alas! there was a time when I was so happy, but that is past, and I am now—" He raised his swimming eyes to heaven. "And you were happy once?" I observed. "Ah, would I were so still!" was his reply. "I was then as gay and contented as a man can be." An old woman, who was coming towards us, now called out, "Henry, Henry! where are you? We have been looking for you everywhere: come to dinner." "Is he your son?" I inquired, as I went towards her. "Yes," she said, "he is my poor, unfortunate son. The Lord has sent me a heavy affliction." I asked whether he had been long in this state. She answered, "He has been as calm as he is at present for about six months. I thank Heaven that he is so far recovered; he was for one whole year quite raving, and chained down in a madhouse. Now he injures no one, but talks of nothing else than kings and queens. He used to be a very good, quiet youth, and helped to maintain me; he wrote a very fine hand; but all at once he became melancholy, was seized with a violent fever, grew distracted, and is now as you see. If I were only to tell you, sir—" I interrupted her by asking what period it was in which he boasted of having been so happy. "Poor boy!" she exclaimed, with a smile of compassion, "he means the time when he was completely deranged—a time he never ceases to regret—when he was in the madhouse, and unconscious of everything." I was thunderstruck: I placed a piece of money in her hand, and hastened away.

"You were happy!" I exclaimed, as I returned quickly to the town—"as gay and contented as a man can be!" God of Heaven! and is this the destiny of man? Is he only happy before he has acquired his reason, or after he has lost it! Unfortunate being! and yet I envy your fate—I envy the delusion to which you are a victim. You go forth with joy to gather flowers for your princess—in winter—and grieve when you can find none, and cannot understand why they do not grow. But I wander forth without joy, without hope, without design, and I return as I came. You fancy what a man you would be if the States-General paid you. Happy mortal, who can ascribe your wretchedness to an earthly cause! You do not know, you do not feel, that in your own distracted heart, and disordered brain, dwells the source of that unhappiness, which all the potentates on earth cannot relieve.

Let that man die unconsolated who can deride the invalid for undertaking a journey to distant healthful springs, where he often finds only a heavier disease and a more painful death, or who can exult over the despairing mind of a sinner, who, to obtain

peace of conscience and an alleviation of misery, makes a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre! Each laborious step which galls his wounded feet in rough and untrodden paths pours a drop of balm into his troubled soul, and the journey of many a weary day brings a nightly relief to his anguished heart. Will you dare call this enthusiasm, ye crowd of pompous declaimers? Enthusiasm! O God! thou seest my tears. Thou hast allotted us our portion of misery; must we also have brethren to persecute us, to deprive us of our consolation, of our trust in thee, and in thy love and mercy? For our trust in the virtue of the healing root, or in the strength of the vine, what is it else than a belief in thee, from whom all that surrounds us derives its healing and restoring powers? Father, whom I know not—who wert once wont to fill my soul, but who now hidest thy face from me—call me back to thee; be silent no longer; thy silence shall not delay a soul which thirsts after thee. What man, what father, could be angry with a son for returning to him suddenly, for falling on his neck, and exclaiming, “I am here again, my father! forgive me if I have anticipated my journey, and returned before the appointed time! The world is everywhere the same—a scene of labor and of pain, of pleasure and reward; but what does it all avail? I am happy only where thou art; and in thy presence am I content to suffer or enjoy.” And would'st thou, heavenly Father, banish such a child from thy presence?

December 1st.

Wilhelm, the man about whom I wrote to you—that man so enviable in his misfortunes—was secretary to Charlotte's father; and an unhappy passion for her which he cherished, concealed, and at length discovered, caused him to be dismissed from his situation. This made him mad. Think, whilst you peruse this plain narration, what an impression the circumstance has made upon me. But it was related to me by Albert, with as much calmness as you will probably peruse it.

December 4th.

I implore your attention. It is all over with me. I can support this state no longer! To-day I was sitting by Charlotte. She was playing upon her piano a succession of delightful melodies, with such intense expression! Her little sister was dressing her doll upon my lap. The tears came into my eyes. I leaned down and looked intently at her wedding-ring—my tears fell—immediately she began to play that favorite, that divine air, which has so often enchanted me. I felt comfort from a recollection of the past, of those bygone days when that air was familiar to me, and then I recalled all the sorrows and the disappointments which I had since endured. I paced with hasty strides through the room; my heart became convulsed with painful emotions. At length I went up to her, and with eagerness exclaimed, “For Heaven's sake, play that air no longer!” She stopped and looked steadfastly at me. She then said, with a smile which sunk deep into my heart, “Werther, you are ill; your dearest food is distasteful to you. But go, I entreat you, and endeavor to compose yourself.” I tore myself away. God, thou seest my torments, and wilt end them!

December 6th.

How her image haunts me! Waking or asleep, she fills my entire soul! Soon as I close my eyes, here—in my brain, where all the nerves of vision are concentrated—her dark eyes are imprinted. Here—I do not know how to describe it, but if I shut my eyes, hers are immediately before me. Dark as an abyss, they open upon me and absorb my senses.

And what is man—that boasted demigod? Do not his powers fail when he most requires their use? And whether he soar in joy or sink in sorrow, is not his career in both inevitably arrested? And whilst he fondly dreams that he is grasping at infinity, does he not feel compelled to return to a consciousness of his cold, monotonous existence?

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THE EDITOR TO THE READER.

IT is a matter of extreme regret that we want original evidence of the last remarkable days of our friend, and we are therefore obliged to interrupt the progress of his correspondence, and to supply the deficiency by a connected narration.

I have felt it my duty to collect accurate information from the mouths of persons well acquainted with his history. The story is simple, and all the accounts agree, except in some unimportant particulars. It is true that, with respect to the characters of the persons spoken of, opinions and judgments vary.

We have only then to relate conscientiously the facts which our diligent labor has enabled us to collect, to give the letters of the deceased, and to pay particular attention to the slightest fragment from his pen, more especially as it is so difficult to discover the real and correct motives of men who are not of the common order.

Sorrow and discontent had taken deep root in Werther's soul, and gradually imparted their character to his whole being. The harmony of his mind became completely disturbed; a perpetual excitement and mental irritation, which weakened his natural powers, produced the saddest effects upon him, and rendered him at length the victim of an exhaustion against which he struggled, with still more painful efforts than he had displayed even in contending with his other misfortunes. His mental anxiety weakened his various good qualities, and he was soon converted into a gloomy companion—always unhappy and unjust in his ideas the more wretched he became. This was at least the opinion of Albert's friends. They assert, moreover, that the character of Albert himself had undergone no change in the meantime; he was still the same being whom Werther had loved, honored and respected from the commencement. His love for Charlotte was unbounded; he was proud of her, and desired that she should be recognized by every one as the noblest of created beings. Was he, however, to blame for wishing to avert from her every appearance of suspicion, or for his unwillingness to share his rich prize with another, even for a moment, and in the most innocent manner? It is asserted that Albert frequently retired from his wife's apartment during Werther's visits; but this did not arise from hatred or aversion to his friend, but only from a feeling that his presence was oppressive to Werther.

Charlotte's father, who was confined to the house by indisposition, was accustomed to send his carriage for her, that she might take excursions in the neighborhood. One day the weather had been unusually severe, and the whole country was covered with snow.

Werther went for Charlotte the following morning, in order that, if Albert were absent, he might conduct her home.

The beautiful weather produced but little impression upon his troubled spirit. A heavy weight lay upon his soul; deep melancholy had taken possession of him, and his mind knew no change save from one painful thought to another.

As he now never enjoyed internal peace, the condition of his fellow-creatures was to him a perpetual source of trouble and distress. He believed he had interrupted the happiness of Albert and his wife; and whilst he censured himself strongly for this, he began to entertain a secret dislike to Albert.

His thoughts were directed occasionally to this point. "Yes," he would repeat to himself, with ill-concealed dissatisfaction—"yes, this is, after all, the extent of that confiding, dear, tender and sympathetic love, that calm and eternal fidelity. What do I behold but satiety and indifference? Does not every frivolous engagement attract him more than his charming and lovely wife? Does he know how to prize his happiness? Can he value her as she deserves? He possesses her, it is true; I know that, as I know much more, and I have become accustomed to the thought that he will drive me mad, or perhaps murder me. Is his friendship towards me unimpaired? Does he not view my attachment to Charlotte as an infringement upon his rights, and consider my attention to her as a silent rebuke to himself? I know, and indeed feel, that he dislikes me—that he wishes for my absence—that my presence is hateful to him."

He often paused on his way to visit Charlotte, stood doubtfully still, and seemed desirous of returning, but he nevertheless proceeded; and, engaged in such thoughts and soliloquies as we have described, he finally reached the hunting-lodge with a sort of involuntary consent.

Upon one occasion he entered the house, and inquiring for Charlotte he observed that the inmates were in unusual confusion. The eldest boy informed him that a dreadful misfortune had occurred at Walheim — that a peasant had been murdered! But this made little impression upon him. Entering the apartment, he found Charlotte engaged reasoning with her father, who, in spite of his infirmity, insisted on going to the scene of the crime in order to institute an inquiry. The criminal was unknown—the victim had been found dead at his own door that morning. Suspicions were excited; the murdered man had been in the service of a widow, and the person who had previously filled the situation had been dismissed from her employment.

As soon as Werther heard this he exclaimed, with great excitement, "Is it possible! I must go to the spot—I cannot delay a moment!" He hastened to Walheim; every incident returned vividly to his remembrance, and he entertained not the slightest doubt that that man was the murderer to whom he had so often spoken, and for whom he entertained so much regard. His way took him past the well-known lime trees, to the house where the body had been carried, and his feelings were greatly excited at the sight of the fondly recollected spot. That threshold where the neighbors' children had so often played together was stained with blood; love and attachment, the noblest feelings of human nature, had been converted into violence and murder. The huge trees around were bare and leafless; the beautiful hedgerows which surrounded the old churchyard-wall were withered, and the grave-stones, half covered with snow, were visible through the openings.

As he approached the little inn, near to which the whole village was assembled, there suddenly arose a wild cry. A troop of armed peasants was seen approaching, and a general shout arose that the criminal had been apprehended. Werther looked, and was not long in doubt. The prisoner was no other than the servant who had been formerly so attached to the widow, and whom he had met prowling about, with that suppressed anger and ill-concealed despair which we have before described.

“What have you done, unfortunate man?” inquired Werther, as he advanced towards the prisoner. The latter turned his eyes upon him in silence, and then replied with perfect composure, “No one will now marry her, and she will marry no one.” The prisoner was secured in the inn, and Werther left the place.

The mind of Werther was fearfully excited by this shocking occurrence. He ceased, however, to be oppressed by his usual feeling of melancholy, moroseness and indifference to everything that passed around him. He entertained a strong degree of pity for the prisoner, and was seized with an indescribable anxiety to save him from his impending fate. He considered him so unfortunate, he deemed his crime so excusable, and thought his own condition so nearly similar, that he felt convinced he could make every one else view the matter in the light in which he saw it himself. He now became anxious to undertake his defence, and commenced composing an eloquent speech for the occasion, and on his way to the hunting-lodge he could not refrain from speaking aloud the statement which he resolved to make to the judge.

Upon his arrival he found Albert had been before him, and he was a little perplexed by this meeting; but he soon recovered himself, and expressed his opinion with much warmth to the judge. The latter shook his head doubtingly; and although Werther urged his case with the utmost zeal, feeling and determination in defence of his client, yet, as we may easily suppose, the judge was not much influenced by his appeal. On the contrary, he interrupted him in his address, reasoned with him seriously, and even administered a rebuke to him for becoming the advocate of a murderer. He demonstrated that, according to this precedent, every law might be violated, and the public security utterly destroyed. He added, moreover, that in such a case he could himself do nothing without incurring the greatest responsibility; that everything must follow in the usual course and pursue the ordinary channel.



Werther, however, did not abandon his enterprise, and even besought the judge to connive at the flight of the prisoner. But this proposal was peremptorily rejected. Albert, who had taken some part in the discussion, coincided in opinion with the judge. At this Werther became enraged, and took his leave in great anger, after the judge had more than once assured him that the prisoner could not be saved!

The excess of his grief at this assurance may be inferred from a note we have found amongst his papers, and which was doubtless written upon this very occasion.

“Unhappy being! you cannot be saved! I see clearly that we cannot be saved!”

Werther was highly incensed at the observations which Albert had made to the judge in this matter of the prisoner. He thought he could detect therein a little bitterness towards himself personally; and although, upon reflection, it could not escape his sound judgment that their view of the matter was correct, he felt the greatest possible reluctance to make such an admission.

A memorandum of Werther's upon this point, expressive of his general feelings towards Albert, has been found amongst his papers.

“What is the use of my continually repeating that he is a good and estimable man? He is an inward torment to me—and I am incapable of being just towards him.”

One fine evening in winter, when the weather seemed inclined to thaw, Charlotte and Albert were returning home together. The former looked from time to time about her, as if she missed Werther's company. Albert began to speak of him, and censured him for his prejudices. He alluded to his unfortunate attachment, and wished it were possible to discontinue his acquaintance. “I desire it on our own account,” he added, “and I request you will compel him to alter his deportment towards you, and to visit you less frequently. The world is censorious, and I know that here and there we are spoken of.” Charlotte made no reply, and Albert seemed to feel her silence. At least, from that time, he never again spoke of Werther, and when she introduced the subject he allowed the conversation to die away, or else he directed the discourse into another channel.

The vain attempt which Werther had made to save the unhappy murderer was the last feeble glimmering of a flame about to be extinguished. He sank almost immediately afterwards into a state of gloom and inactivity, until he was at length brought to perfect distraction by learning that he was to be summoned as a witness against the prisoner, who asserted his complete innocence.

His mind now became oppressed by the recollection of every misfortune of his past life. The mortification he had suffered at the ambassador's, and his subsequent troubles, were revived in his memory. He became utterly inactive. Destitute of energy, he was cut off from every pursuit and occupation which compose the business of common life, and he became a victim to his own susceptibility, and to his restless passion for the most amiable and beloved of women, whose peace he destroyed. In this unvarying monotony of existence his days were consumed, and his powers became exhausted without aim or design, until they brought him to a sorrowful end.

A few letters which he left behind, and which we here subjoin, afford the best proofs of his anxiety of mind and of the depth of his passion, as well of his doubts and struggles and of his weariness of life.

December 12th.

Dear Wilhelm! I am reduced to the condition of those unfortunate wretches who believe they are pursued by an evil spirit. Sometimes I am oppressed—not by apprehension or fear—but by an inexpressible internal sensation, which weighs upon my heart and impedes my breath! Then I wander forth at night, even in this tempestuous season, and feel pleasure in surveying the dreadful scenes around me.

Yesterday evening I went forth. A rapid thaw had suddenly set in; I had been informed that the river had risen, that the brooks had all overflowed their banks, and that the whole vale of Walheim was under water! Upon the stroke of twelve I hastened forth. I beheld a fearful sight. The foaming torrents rolled from the mountains in the moonlight,—fields and meadows, trees and hedges, were confounded together, and the entire valley was converted into a deep lake, which was agitated by the roaring wind! And when the moon shone forth and tinged the black clouds with silver, and the impetuous torrent at my feet foamed and resounded with awful and grand impetuosity, I was overcome by a mingled sensation of apprehension and delight. With extended arms I looked down into the yawning abyss and cried, “Plunge!” For a moment my senses forsook me, in the intense delight of ending my sorrows and my sufferings by a plunge into that gulf! And then I felt as if I were rooted to the earth, and incapable of seeking an end to my woes! But my hour is not yet come; I feel it is not. O Wilhelm, how willingly could I abandon my existence to ride the whirlwind or to embrace the torrent! and then might not rapture perchance be the portion of this liberated soul?

I turned my sorrowful eyes towards a favorite spot, where I was accustomed to sit with Charlotte beneath a willow, after a fatiguing walk. Alas! it was covered with water, and with difficulty I found even the meadow. And the fields around the hunting-lodge, thought I!—has our dear bower been destroyed by this un pitying storm? And a beam of past happiness streamed upon me, as the mind of a captive is illumined by dreams of flocks and herds and bygone joys of home! But I am free from blame. I have courage to die! Perhaps I have—but I still sit here, like a wretched pauper who collects fagots and begs her bread from door to door, that she may prolong for a few days a miserable existence, which she is willing to resign.

December 15th.

What is the matter with me, dear Wilhelm? I am afraid of myself! Is not my love for her of the purest, most holy and most brotherly nature? Has my soul ever been sullied by a single sensual desire—but I will make no protestations. And now, ye nightly visions, how truly have those mortals understood you, who ascribe your various contradictory effects to some invincible power! This night—I tremble at the avowal—I held her in my arms, locked in a close embrace; I pressed her to my bosom, and covered with countless kisses those dear lips, which murmured in reply soft protestations of love. My sight became confused by the delicious intoxication of her eyes. Heavens! is it sinful to revel again in such happiness, to recall once more those rapturous moments with intense delight? Charlotte! Charlotte! I am lost! My senses are bewildered, my recollection is confused, mine eyes are bathed in tears—I am ill, and yet I am well—I wish for nothing—I have no desires—it were better I were gone!

Under the circumstances narrated above, a determination to quit this world had now taken fixed possession of Werther's soul. Since Charlotte's return, this thought had been the final object of all his hopes and wishes; but he had resolved that such a step should not be taken with precipitation, but with calmness and tranquillity, and with the most perfect deliberation.

His doubts and internal struggles may be understood from the following fragment, which was found, without any date, amongst his papers, and appears to have formed the beginning of a letter to Wilhelm.

“Her presence, her fate, her sympathy for me, have power still to extract tears from my withered brain.

“One lifts up the curtain, and passes to the other side,—that is all! And why all these doubts and delays? Because we know not what is behind—because there is no returning—and because our mind infers that all is darkness and confusion where we have nothing but uncertainty.”

His appearance at length became quite altered by the effect of his melancholy thoughts, and his resolution was now finally and irrevocably taken, of which the following ambiguous letter, which he addressed to his friend, may appear to afford some proof.

December 20th.

I am grateful to your love, Wilhelm, for having repeated your advice so seasonably. Yes, you are right; it is undoubtedly better that I should depart! But I do not entirely approve your scheme of returning at once to your neighborhood; at least, I should like to make a little excursion on the way, particularly as we may now expect a continued frost, and consequently good roads. I am much pleased with your intention of coming to fetch me, only delay your journey for a fortnight, and wait for another letter from me. One should gather nothing before it is ripe, and a fortnight sooner or later makes a great difference. Entreat my mother to pray for her son, and tell her I beg her pardon for all the unhappiness I have occasioned her. It has ever been my fate to give pain to those whose happiness I should have promoted. Adieu, my dearest friend! May every blessing of Heaven attend you! Farewell.

We find it difficult to express the emotions with which Charlotte's soul was agitated during the whole of this time, whether in relation to her husband or to her unfortunate friend, although we are enabled, by our knowledge of her character, to understand their nature.

It is certain that she had formed a determination, by every means in her power, to keep Werther at a distance; and if she hesitated in her decision, it was from a sincere feeling of friendly pity, knowing how much it would cost him—indeed, that he would find it almost impossible to comply with her wishes. But various causes now urged her to be firm. Her husband preserved a strict silence about the whole matter, and she

never made it a subject of conversation, feeling bound to prove to him by her conduct that her sentiments agreed with his.

The same day, which was the Sunday before Christmas, after Werther had written the last-mentioned letter to his friend, he came in the evening to Charlotte's house, and found her alone. She was busy preparing some little gifts for her brothers and sisters, which were to be distributed to them on Christmas day. He began talking of the delight of the children, and of that age when the sudden appearance of the Christmas tree, decorated with fruit and sweetmeats, and lighted up with wax candles, causes such transports of joy. "You shall have a gift, too, if you behave well," said Charlotte, hiding her embarrassment under a sweet smile. "And what do you call behaving well? What should I do—what can I do, my dear Charlotte," said he. "Thursday night," she answered, "is Christmas eve; the children are all to be here, and my father, too: there is a present for each;—do you come likewise, but do not come before that time." Werther started. "I desire you will not—it must be so," she continued. "I ask it of you as a favor—for my own peace and tranquillity. We cannot go on in this manner any longer." He turned away his face, walked hastily up and down the room, muttering indistinctly, "We cannot go on in this manner any longer!" Charlotte, seeing the violent agitation into which these words had thrown him, endeavored to divert his thoughts by different questions, but in vain. "No, Charlotte!" he exclaimed: "I will never see you any more." "And why so?" she answered; "we may—we must see each other again, only let it be with more discretion. Oh, why were you born with that excessive, that ungovernable passion for everything that is dear to you?" Then, taking his hand, she said, "I entreat of you to be more calm; your talents, your understanding, your genius, will furnish you with a thousand resources. Be a man, and conquer an unhappy attachment towards a creature who can do nothing but pity you." He bit his lips, and looked at her with a gloomy countenance. She continued to hold his hand. "Grant me but a moment's patience, Werther," she said; "do you not see that you are deceiving yourself,—that you are seeking your own destruction? Why must you love me—me only, who belong to another? I fear, I much fear, that it is only the impossibility of possessing me which makes your desire for me so strong." He drew back his hand, whilst he surveyed her with a wild and angry look. "'Tis well," he exclaimed, "'tis very well; did not Albert furnish you with this reflection?—it is profound, a very profound remark." "A reflection that any one might easily make," she answered; "and is there not a woman in the whole world who is at liberty and has the power to make you happy? Conquer yourself; look for such a being, and believe me when I say that you will certainly find her. I have long felt for you, and for us all; you have confined yourself too long within the limits of too narrow a circle. Conquer yourself; make an effort; a short journey will be of service to you. Seek and find an object worthy of your love; then return hither, and let us enjoy together all the happiness of the most perfect friendship."

"This speech," replied Werther, with a cold smile—"this speech should be printed for the benefit of all teachers. My dear Charlotte, allow me but a short time longer, and all will be well." "But, however, Werther," she added, "do not come again before Christmas." He was about to make some answer, when Albert came in. They saluted each other coldly, and with mutual embarrassment paced up and down the room. Werther made some common remarks; Albert did the same; and their conversation

soon dropped. Albert asked his wife about some household matters, and finding that his commissions were not executed he used some expressions which, to Werther's ear, savored of extreme harshness. He wished to go, but had not power to move; and in this situation he remained till eight o'clock, his uneasiness and discontent continually increasing. At length the cloth was laid for supper, and he took up his hat and stick. Albert invited him to remain, but Werther, fancying that he was merely paying a formal compliment, thanked him coldly, and left the house.

Werther returned home, took the candle from his servant, and retired to his room alone. He talked for some time with great earnestness to himself, wept aloud, walked in a state of great excitement through his chamber, till at length, without undressing, he threw himself on the bed, where he was found by his servant at eleven o'clock, when the latter ventured to enter the room and take off his boots. Werther did not prevent him, but forbade him to come in the morning till he should ring.

On Monday morning, the 21st of December, he wrote the following letter to Charlotte, which was found, sealed, on his bureau after his death, and was given to her. I shall insert it in fragments, as it appears, from several circumstances, to have been written in that manner.

“It is all over, Charlotte; I am resolved to die! I make this declaration deliberately and coolly, without any romantic passion, on this morning of the day when I am to see you for the last time. At the moment you read these lines, O best of women! the cold grave will hold the inanimate remains of that restless and unhappy being who, in the last moments of his existence, knew no pleasure so great as that of conversing with you. I have passed a dreadful night, or rather let me say, a propitious one, for it has given me resolution—it has fixed my purpose. I am resolved to die. When I tore myself from you yesterday, my senses were in tumult and disorder; my heart was oppressed, hope and pleasure had fled from me forever, and a petrifying cold had seized my wretched being. I could scarcely reach my room. I threw myself on my knees, and Heaven, for the last time, granted me the consolation of shedding tears. A thousand ideas, a thousand schemes arose within my soul; till at length one last, fixed, final thought took possession of my heart. It was to die. I lay down to rest, and in the morning—in the quiet hour of awakening, the same determination was upon me. To die! It is not despair—it is conviction that I have filled up the measure of my sufferings—that I have reached my appointed term, and that I must sacrifice myself for thee. Yes, Charlotte, why should I not avow it? One of us three must die—it shall be Werther. O beloved Charlotte! this heart, excited by rage and fury, has often conceived the horrid idea of murdering your husband—you—myself. The lot at length is cast! And in the bright, quiet evening of summer, when you sometimes wander towards the mountains, let your thoughts then turn to me; recollect how often you have watched me coming to meet you from the valley—then bend your eyes upon the churchyard, which contains my grave, and by the light of the setting sun mark how the evening breeze waves the tall grass which grows above my tomb. I was calm when I began this letter, but the recollection of these scenes makes me weep like a child.”



About ten in the morning Werther called his servant, and, whilst he was dressing, told him that in a few days he intended to set out upon a journey, and bade him therefore lay his clothes in order, and prepare them for packing up, call in all his accounts, fetch home the books he had lent, and give two months' pay to the poor dependents who were accustomed to receive from him a weekly allowance.

He breakfasted in his room, and then mounted his horse, and went to visit the steward, who however was not at home. He walked pensively in the garden, and seemed anxious to renew all the ideas that were most painful to him.

The children did not suffer him to remain long alone. They followed him, skipping and dancing before him, and told him that after to-morrow—and to-morrow—and one day more, they were to receive their Christmas gift from Charlotte; and they then recounted all the wonders of which they had formed ideas in their little imaginations. "To-morrow—and to-morrow," said he—"and one day more!"—and he kissed them tenderly. He was going—but the younger boy stopped him to whisper something in his ear. He told him that his elder brothers had written splendid New-Year's wishes—so large!—one for papa, and another for Albert and Charlotte, and one for Werther, and they were to be presented early in the morning on New-Year's day. This quite overcame him; he made each of the children a present, mounted his horse, left his compliments for papa and mamma, and, with tears in his eyes, rode away from the place.

He returned home about five o'clock, ordered his servant to keep up his fire, desired him to pack his books and linen at the bottom of the trunk, and to place his coats at the top. He then appears to have made the following addition to his letter to Charlotte.

"You do not expect me. You think I will obey you, and not visit you again till Christmas eve. O Charlotte, to-day or never! On Christmas eve you will hold this paper in your hand; you will tremble, and moisten it with your tears. I will—I must! Oh, how happy I feel to be determined!"

In the meantime Charlotte was in a pitiable state of mind. After her last conversation with Werther she found how painful it would be to herself to decline his visits, and knew how severely he would suffer from their separation.

She had mentioned casually, in conversation with Albert, that Werther would not return before Christmas eve; and soon afterwards Albert rode over to a person in the neighborhood, with whom he had some business to transact, which would detain him from home all night.

Charlotte was sitting alone. None of her family were near, and she abandoned herself to the reflections which silently took possession of her mind. She was eternally united to a husband whose love and fidelity she had proved, to whom she was heartily devoted, and who seemed to be a special gift from Heaven to insure her happiness. On

the other hand, Werther had become dear to her; from the very first hour of their acquaintance there was a cordial unanimity of sentiment between them, and their long association and repeated interviews had made an indelible impression upon her heart. She had been accustomed to communicate to him every thought and feeling which interested her, and his absence threatened to open a void in her existence which it might be impossible to fill. How heartily she wished that she might convert him into a brother—that she could induce him to marry one of her own friends—or that she could re-establish his intimacy with Albert.

She passed all her intimate friends in review before her mind, but found something objectionable in each, and could decide upon none to whom she would consent to give him.

Amid all these considerations she felt deeply but indistinctly that her own real but unexpressed wish was to retain him for herself; and her pure and amiable heart felt from this thought a sense of oppression which seemed to forbid a prospect of happiness. She was wretched—a dark cloud obscured her mental vision.

It was now half-past six o'clock, and she heard Werther's step upon the stairs; she immediately recognized his voice, inquiring if she was at home. Her heart beat audibly—we could almost say for the first time—at his arrival. It was too late to deny herself, and, as he entered, she exclaimed, with a sort of ill-concealed confusion, "You have not kept your word." "I did not promise anything," he answered. "But you should have complied at least for my sake," she continued. "I implore it of you, for both our sakes."



She scarcely knew what she said or what she did, and sent for some one of her female friends, that she might not be left alone with Werther. He placed some books down, which he had brought with him, then made inquiries about some others, until she began to hope that her friends might shortly arrive, entertaining at the same time a desire that they might remain away.

At one moment she felt anxious that the servant should remain in the adjoining room, then she wished differently. Werther meanwhile walked impatiently backwards and forwards. She went to the piano, and determined not to retire. She then collected her thoughts and sat down quietly at Werther's side, who had taken his usual place upon the sofa.

"Have you brought nothing to read?" she inquired. He had nothing. "There in my drawer," she continued, "you will find your own translation of some of the songs of Ossian. I have not yet read them, as I have still hoped to hear you recite them; but for some time past I have not been able to accomplish such a wish." He smiled, and went

to fetch the manuscript, and with a shudder he took it up. He sat down, and with eyes swimming in tears he began to read.

“Star of descending night! fair is thy light in the west! thou liftest thy unshorn head from thy cloud; thy steps are stately on thy hill. What dost thou behold in the plain? The stormy winds are laid. The murmur of the torrent comes from afar. Roaring waves climb the distant rock. The flies of evening are on their feeble wings; the hum of their course is on the field. What dost thou behold, fair light? But thou dost smile and depart. The waves come with joy around thee: they bathe thy lovely hair. Farewell, thou silent beam! Let the light of Ossian's soul arise.

“And it does arise in its strength. I behold my departing friends. Their gathering is on Lora, as in the days of other years. Fingal comes like a watery column of mist: his heroes are around: and see the bards of song, gray-haired Ullin! stately Rhyno! Alpin with the tuneful voice! the soft complaint of Minona! How are ye changed, my friends, since the days of Selma's feast! when we contended like gales of Spring as they fly along the hill, and bend by turns the feebly-whistling grass.

“Minona came forth in her beauty with downcast look and tearful eye. Her hair flew slowly on the blast that rushed unfrequent from the hill. The souls of the heroes were sad when she raised the tuneful voice. Oft had she seen the grave of Salgar, the dark dwelling of white-bosomed Colma. Colma left alone on the hill with all her voice of song! Salgar promised to come: but the night descended around. Hear the voice of Colma when she sat alone on the hill!

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Colma.

“It is night; I am alone, forlorn on the hill of storms. The wind is heard on the mountain. The torrent pours down from the rock. No hut receives me from the rain: forlorn on the hill of winds!

“Rise, moon, from behind thy clouds! Stars of the night, arise! Lead me, some light, to the place where my love rests from the chase alone! His bow near him unstrung, his dogs panting around him! But here I must sit alone by the rock of the mossy stream. The stream and the wind roar aloud. I hear not the voice of my love! Why delays my Salgar; why the chief of the hill his promise? Here is the rock and here the tree! here is the roaring stream! Thou didst promise with night to be here. Ah! whither is my Salgar gone? With thee I would fly from my father, with thee from my brother of pride. Our race have long been foes: we are not foes, O Salgar!

“Cease a little while, O wind! stream, be thou silent awhile! let my voice be heard around! let my wanderer hear me! Salgar! it is Colma who calls. Here is the tree and the rock. Salgar, my love, I am here! Why delayest thou thy coming? Lo! the calm moon comes forth. The flood is bright in the vale. The rocks are gray on the steep. I see him not on the brow. His dogs come not before him with tidings of his near approach. Here I must sit alone!

“Who lie on the beach beside me? Are they my love and my brother? Speak to me, O my friends. To Colma they give no reply. Speak to me: I am alone! My soul is tormented with fears. Ah, they are dead! Their swords are red from the fight. O my brother! my brother! why hast thou slain my Salgar? Why, O Salgar! hast thou slain my brother? Dear were ye both to me! what shall I say in your praise? Thou wert fair on the hill. Among thousands he was terrible in fight! Speak to me! hear my voice! hear me, sons of my love! They are silent! silent forever! Cold, cold, are their breasts of clay. Oh, from the rock on the hill, from the top of the windy steep, speak, ye ghosts of the dead! Speak, I will not be afraid! Whither are ye gone to rest? In what cave of the hill shall I find the departed? No feeble voice is on the gale: no answer half drowned in the storm!

“I sit in my grief: I wait for morning in my tears! Rear the tomb, ye friends of the dead. Close it not till Colma come. My life flies away like a dream. Why should I stay behind? Here shall I rest with my friend, by the streams of the sounding rock. When night comes on the hill—when the loud winds arise, my ghost shall stand in the blast, and mourn the death of friends. The hunter shall hear from his booth; he shall hear, but love my voice! For sweet shall my voice be for my friends: pleasant were her friends to Colma.

“Such was thy song, Minona, softly-blushing daughter of Torman. Our tears descended for Colma, and our souls were sad! Ullin came with his harp; he gave the song of Alpin. The voice of Alpin was pleasant, the soul of Rhyno was a beam of fire! But they had rested in the narrow house; their voice had ceased in Salma! Ullin had

returned one day from the chase before the heroes fell. He heard their strife on the hill: their song was soft, but sad! They mourned the fall of Morar, first of mortal men! His soul was like the soul of Fingal: his sword like the sword of Oscar. But he fell, and his father mourned: his sister's eyes were full of tears. Minona's eyes were full of tears, the sister of car-borne Morar. She retired from the song of Ullin, like the moon in the west, when she foresees the shower and hides her fair head in a cloud. I touched the harp with Ullin: the song of mourning rose!

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Rhyno.

“The winds and the rain are past, calm is the noon of day. The clouds are divided in heaven. Over the green hills flies the inconstant sun. Red through the stony vale comes down the stream of the hill. Sweet are thy murmurs, O stream! but more sweet is the voice I hear. It is the voice of Alpin, the son of song, mourning for the dead! Bent is his head of age: red his tearful eye. Alpin, thou son of song, why alone on the silent hill? why complainest thou, as a blast in the wood—as a wave on the lonely shore?

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Alpin.

“My tears, O Rhyno! are for the dead—my voice for those that have passed away. Tall thou art on the hill; fair among the sons of the vale. But thou shalt fall like Morar: the mourner shall sit on thy tomb. The hills shall know thee no more: thy bow shall lie in thy hall unstrung!

“Thou wert swift, O Morar! as a roe on the desert: terrible as a meteor of fire. Thy wrath was as the storm. Thy sword in battle as lightning in the field. Thy voice was a stream after rain, like thunder on distant hills. Many fell by thy arm: they were consumed in the flames of thy wrath. But when thou didst return from war, how peaceful was thy brow. Thy face was like the sun after rain: like the moon in the silence of night: calm as the breast of the lake when the loud wind is laid.

“Narrow is thy dwelling now! dark the place of thine abode! With three steps I compass thy grave, O thou who wast so great before! Four stones, with their heads of moss, are the only memorial of thee. A tree with scarce a leaf, long grass which whistles in the wind, mark, to the hunter's eye, the grave of the mighty Morar. Morar! thou art low indeed. Thou hast no mother to mourn thee, no maid with her tears of love. Dead is she that brought thee forth. Fallen is the daughter of Morglan.

“Who on his staff is this? Who is this whose head is white with age, whose eyes are red with tears, who quakes at every step? It is thy father, O Morar! the father of no son but thee. He heard of thy fame in war, he heard of foes dispersed. He heard of Morar's renown, why did he not hear of his wound? Weep, thou father of Morar! Weep, but thy son heareth thee not. Deep is the sleep of the dead,—low their pillow of dust. No more shall he hear thy voice—no more awake at thy call. When shall it be morn in the grave, to bid the slumberer awake? Farewell, thou bravest of men! thou conqueror in the field! but the field shall see thee no more, nor the dark wood be lightened with the splendor of thy steel. Thou hast left no son. The song shall preserve thy name. Future times shall hear of thee—they shall hear of the fallen Morar!

“The grief of all arose, but most the bursting sigh of Armin. He remembers the death of his son, who fell in the days of his youth. Carmor was near the hero, the chief of the echoing Galmol. Why bursts the sigh of Armin? he said. Is there a cause to mourn? The song comes with its music to melt and please the soul. It is like soft mist that, rising from a lake, pours on the silent vale; the green flowers are filled with dew, but the sun returns in his strength, and the mist is gone. Why art thou sad, O Armin, chief of sea-surrounded Gorma?

“Sad I am! nor small is my cause of woe! Carmor, thou hast lost no son; thou hast lost no daughter of beauty. Colgar the valiant lives, and Annira, fairest maid. The boughs of thy house ascend, O Connar! but Armin is the last of his race. Dark is thy bed, O Daura! deep thy sleep in the tomb! When shalt thou wake with thy songs?—with all thy voice of music?

“Arise, winds of Autumn, arise: blow along the heath. Streams of the mountains, roar; roar, tempests in the groves of my oaks! Walk through broken clouds, O moon! show thy pale face at intervals; bring to my mind the night when all my children fell, when Arindal the mighty fell—when Daura the lovely failed. Daura, my daughter, thou wert fair, fair as the moon on Fura, white as the driven snow, sweet as the breathing gale. Arindal, thy bow was strong, thy spear was swift in the field, thy look was like mist on the wave, thy shield a red cloud in a storm! Armar, renowned in war, came and sought Daura's love. He was not long refused; fair was the hope of their friends.

“Erath, son of Odgal, repined: his brother had been slain by Armar. He came disguised like a son of the sea: fair was his cliff on the wave, white his locks of age, calm his serious brow. Fairest of women, he said, lovely daughter of Armin! a rock not distant in the sea bears a tree on its side: red shines the fruit afar. There Armar waits for Daura. I come to carry his love! she went—she called on Armar. Nought answered but the son of the rock. Armar, my love, my love! why tormentest thou me with fear? Hear, son of Armar, hear! it is Daura who calleth thee. Erath, the traitor, fled laughing to the land. She lifted up her voice—she called for her brother and her father. Arindal! Armin! none to relieve you, Daura.



artist: c. bosch.

CHARLOTTE AND WERTHER.

“Her voice came over the sea. Arindal, my son, descended from the hill, rough in the spoils of the chase. His arrows rattled by his side; his bow was in his hand, five dark-gray dogs attended his steps. He saw fierce Erath on the shore; he seized and bound him to an oak. Thick wind the thongs of the hide around his limbs; he loads the wind with his groans. Arindal ascends the deep in his boat to bring Daura to land. Armar came in his wrath, and let fly the gray-feathered shaft. It sung, it sunk in thy heart, O Arindal, my son! for Erath the traitor thou diest. The oar is stopped at once: he panted on the rock, and expired. What is thy grief, O Daura, when round thy feet is poured thy brother's blood. The boat is broken in twain. Armar plunges into the sea to rescue his Daura, or die. Sudden a blast from the hill came over the waves; he sank, and he rose no more.

“Alone on the sea-beat rock, my daughter was heard to complain; frequent and loud were her cries. What could her father do? All night I stood on the shore: I saw her by the faint beam of the moon. All night I heard her cries. Loud was the wind; the rain beat hard on the hill. Before morning appeared her voice was weak; it died away like the evening breeze among the grass of the rocks. Spent with grief, she expired, and left thee, Armin, alone. Gone is my strength in war, fallen my pride among women. When the storms aloft arise, when the north lifts the wave on high, I sit by the sounding shore, and look on the fatal rock.

“Often by the sitting moon I see the ghosts of my children; half viewless they walk in mournful conference together.”

A torrent of tears which streamed from Charlotte's eyes, and gave relief to her bursting heart, stopped Werther's recitation. He threw down the book, seized her hand, and wept bitterly. Charlotte leaned upon her hand, and buried her face in her handkerchief; the agitation of both was excessive. They felt that their own fate was pictured in the misfortunes of Ossian's heroes—they felt this together, and their tears redoubled. Werther supported his forehead on Charlotte's arm; she trembled, she wished to be gone, but sorrow and sympathy lay like a leaden weight upon her soul. She recovered herself shortly, and begged Werther, with broken sobs, to leave her—implored him with the utmost earnestness to comply with her request. He trembled; his heart was ready to burst: then taking up the book again, he recommenced reading, in a voice broken by sobs.

“Why dost thou waken me, O Spring? Thy voice woos me, exclaiming, I refresh thee with heavenly dews; but the time of my decay is approaching, the storm is nigh that shall wither my leaves. To-morrow the traveller shall come,—he shall come, who beheld me in beauty; his eye shall seek me in the field around, but he shall not find me.”

The whole force of these words fell upon the unfortunate Werther. Full of despair he threw himself at Charlotte's feet, seized her hands, and pressed them to his eyes and to his forehead. An apprehension of his fatal project now struck her for the first time. Her senses were bewildered; she held his hands, pressed them to her bosom; and leaning towards him, with emotions of the tenderest pity, her warm cheek touched his. They lost sight of everything. The world disappeared from their eyes. He clasped her in his arms, strained her to his bosom, and covered her trembling lips with passionate kisses. “Werther!” she cried with a faint voice, turning herself away—“Werther!” and with a feeble hand she pushed him from her. At length, with the firm voice of virtue, she exclaimed, “Werther!” He resisted not, but tearing himself from her arms, fell on his knees before her. Charlotte rose and with disordered grief, in mingled tones of love and resentment, she exclaimed, “It is the last time, Werther!—you shall never see me more!” then casting one last tender look upon her unfortunate lover, she rushed into the adjoining room, and locked the door. Werther held out his arms, but did not dare to detain her. He continued on the ground, with his head resting on the sofa for half an hour, till he heard a noise which brought him to his senses. The servant entered. He then walked up and down the room, and when he was again left alone, he went to Charlotte's door, and in a low voice said, “Charlotte, Charlotte! but one word more—one last adieu!” She returned no answer. He stopped, and listened, and entreated—but all was silent. At length he tore himself from the place, crying, “Adieu, Charlotte! adieu, forever!”

Werther ran to the gate of the town. The guards, who knew him, let him pass in silence. The night was dark and stormy—it rained and snowed. He reached his own door about eleven. His servant perceived, as he entered the house, that he was without a hat, but did not venture to say anything; and as he undressed his master he found that his clothes were wet. His hat was found afterwards upon the point of a rock

which overhangs the valley; and it is inconceivable how he could have climbed to the summit on such a dark, tempestuous night without losing his life.

He retired to bed, and slept to a late hour. The next morning his servant, upon being called to bring his coffee, found him writing. He was adding what we here annex to Charlotte's letter.

“For the last, last time, I open these eyes. Alas! they will behold the sun no more. It is covered by a thick, impenetrable cloud. Yes, Nature! put on mourning; your child, your friend, your lover, draws near his end! This thought, Charlotte! is without parallel, and yet it seems like a mysterious dream, when I repeat—this is my last day! The last! Charlotte, no word can adequately express this thought! The last!—To-day I stand erect, in all my strength—to-morrow, cold and stark, I shall lie extended upon the ground. To die! What is death? We do but dream in our discourse upon it. I have seen many human beings die, but so straitened is our feeble nature we have no clear conception of the beginning or the end of our existence. At this moment I am my own—or rather I am thine—thine—my adored!—and the next, we are parted—severed—perhaps forever! No, Charlotte, no—how can I—how can you be annihilated? We exist. What is annihilation? A mere word, an unmeaning sound, that fixes no impression on the mind. Dead, Charlotte! laid in the cold earth, in the dark and narrow grave!—I had a friend once, who was everything to me in early youth—she died. I followed her hearse, I stood by her grave when the coffin was lowered—and when I heard the creaking of the cords as they were loosened and drawn up—when the first shovelful of earth was thrown in, and the coffin returned a hollow sound, which grew fainter and fainter till all was completely covered over, I threw myself on the ground—my heart was smitten, grieved, shattered, rent—but I neither knew what had happened, nor what was to happen to me. Death!—the grave!—I understand not the words.—Forgive! oh, forgive me! Yesterday—ah! that day should have been the last of my life. Thou angel!—for the first—first time in my existence, I felt rapture glow within my inmost soul. She loves, she loves me! Still burns upon my lips the sacred fire they received from thine. New torrents of delight overwhelm my soul. Forgive me! oh, forgive!

“I knew that I was dear to you; I saw it in your first entrancing look, knew it by the first pressure of your hand; but when I was absent from you, when I saw Albert at your side, my doubts and fears returned.

“Do you remember the flowers you sent me when at that crowded assembly you could neither speak nor extend your hand to me? Half the night I was on my knees before those flowers, and I regarded them as the pledges of your love; but those impressions grew fainter, and were at length effaced.

“Everything passes away: but a whole eternity could not extinguish the living flame which was yesterday kindled by your lips, and which now burns within me. She loves me! these arms have encircled her waist; these lips have trembled upon hers. She is mine! Yes, Charlotte, you are mine forever!

“And what do they mean by saying Albert is your husband? He may be so for this world; and in this world it is a sin to love you—to wish to tear you from his embrace. Yes, it is a crime, and I suffer the punishment—but I have enjoyed the full delight of my sin. I have inhaled a balm that has revived my soul. From this hour you are mine; yes, Charlotte, you are mine! I go before you. I go to my Father, and to your Father. I will pour out my sorrows before Him, and He will give me comfort till you arrive. Then will I fly to meet you. I will claim you, and remain in your eternal embrace, in the presence of the Almighty.

“I do not dream; I do not rave. Drawing nearer to the grave my perceptions become clearer. We shall exist; we shall see each other again; we shall behold your mother; I shall behold her, and expose to her my inmost heart. Your mother, your image!”

About eleven o'clock Werther asked his servant if Albert had returned. He answered, “Yes;” for he had seen him pass on horseback; upon which Werther sent him the following note, unsealed.

“Be so good as to lend me your pistols for a journey. Adieu.”

Charlotte had slept little during the past night. All her apprehensions were realized in a way that she could neither foresee nor avoid. Her blood boiled in her veins, and a thousand painful sensations rent her pure heart. Was it the ardor of Werther's passionate embraces that she felt within her bosom? Was it anger at his daring? Was it the sad comparison of her present condition with former days of innocence, tranquillity and self-confidence? How could she approach her husband, and confess a scene which she had no reason to conceal, and which she yet felt nevertheless unwilling to avow? They had preserved so long a silence towards each other—and should she be the first to break it by so unexpected a discovery? She feared that the mere statement of Werther's visit would trouble him, and his distress would be heightened by her perfect candor. She wished that he could see her in her true light, and judge her without prejudice,—but was she anxious that he should read her inmost soul? On the other hand, could she deceive a being, to whom all her thoughts had ever been exposed as clearly as crystal, and from whom no sentiment had ever been concealed? These reflections made her anxious and thoughtful. Her mind still dwelt on Werther, who was now lost to her, but whom she could not bring herself to resign, and for whom she knew nothing was left but despair, if she should be lost to him forever.

A recollection of that mysterious estrangement which had lately subsisted between herself and Albert, and which she could never thoroughly understand, was now beyond measure painful to her. Even the prudent and the good have, before now, hesitated to explain their mutual differences, and have dwelt in silence upon their imaginary grievances, until circumstances have become so entangled, that in that critical juncture, when a calm explanation would have saved all parties, an understanding was impossible. And thus if domestic confidence had been earlier established between them, if love and kind forbearance had mutually animated and expanded their hearts, it might not, perhaps, even yet have been too late to save our friend.

But we must not forget one remarkable circumstance. We may observe from the character of Werther's correspondence, that he had never affected to conceal his anxious desire to quit this world. He had often discussed the subject with Albert, and between the latter and Charlotte it had not unfrequently formed a topic of conversation. Albert was so opposed to the very idea of such an action, that, with a degree of irritation unusual in him, he had more than once given Werther to understand that he doubted the seriousness of his threats, and not only turned them into ridicule, but caused Charlotte to share his feelings of incredulity. Her heart was thus tranquillized when she felt disposed to view the melancholy subject in a serious point of view, though she never communicated to her husband the apprehensions she sometimes experienced.

Albert upon his return home was received by Charlotte with ill-concealed embarrassment. He was himself out of humor, his business was unfinished, and he had just discovered that the neighboring official, with whom he had to deal, was an obstinate and narrow-minded personage. Many things had occurred to irritate him.

He inquired whether anything had happened during his absence, and Charlotte hastily answered that Werther had been there on the evening previously. He then inquired for his letters, and received for answer that several packages had been left in his study. He thereupon retired, and Charlotte remained alone.

The presence of the being whom she loved and honored produced a new impression upon her heart. The recollection of his generosity, his kindness and his affection, had calmed her agitation; a secret impulse prompted her to follow him; she took her work and went to his study, as was often her custom. He was busily employed in opening and reading his letters. It seemed as if the contents of some were disagreeable. She asked some questions; he gave short answers, and sat down to write.

Several hours passed over in this manner, and Charlotte's feelings became more and more melancholy. She felt the extreme difficulty of explaining to her husband, under any circumstances, the weight that lay upon her heart, and her depression became every moment greater, in proportion as she endeavored to hide her grief and to conceal her tears.

The arrival of Werther's servant occasioned her the greatest embarrassment. He gave Albert a note, which the latter coldly handed to his wife, saying, at the same time, "Give him the pistols. I wish him a pleasant journey," he added, turning to the servant. These words fell upon Charlotte like a thunderstroke; she rose from her seat, half fainting, and unconscious of what she did. She walked mechanically towards the wall, with a trembling hand took down the pistols, slowly wiped off the dust from them, and would have delayed longer had not Albert hastened her movements by an impatient look. She then delivered the fatal weapons to the servant, without being able to utter a word. As soon as he had departed she folded up her work, and retired at once to her room, her heart overcome with the most fearful forebodings. She anticipated some dreadful calamity. She was at one moment on the point of going to her husband, throwing herself at his feet, and acquainting him with all that had happened on the previous evening—that she might acknowledge her fault, and explain

her apprehensions; then she saw that such a step would be useless, as she would certainly be unable to induce Albert to visit Werther. Dinner was served, and a kind friend, whom she had persuaded to remain, assisted to sustain the conversation, which was carried on by a sort of compulsion, till the events of the morning were forgotten.

When the servant brought the pistols to Werther, the latter received them with transports of delight upon hearing that Charlotte had given them to him with her own hand. He ate some bread, drank some wine, sent his servant to dinner, and then sat down to write as follows:—

“They have been in your hands—you wiped the dust from them. I kiss them a thousand times—you have touched them. Yes, Heaven favors my design—and you, Charlotte, provide me with the fatal instruments. It was my desire to receive my death from your hands, and my wish is gratified. I have made inquiries of my servant. You trembled when you gave him the pistols, but you bade me no adieu. Wretched, wretched that I am—not one farewell! How could you shut your heart against me in that hour which makes you mine forever? O Charlotte, ages cannot efface the impression—I feel you cannot hate the man who so passionately loves you!”

After dinner he called his servant, desired him to finish the packing up, destroyed many papers, and then went out to pay some trifling debts. He soon returned home, then went out again notwithstanding the rain, walked for some time in the Count's garden, and afterwards proceeded farther into the country. Towards evening he came back once more, and resumed his writing.

“Wilhelm, I have for the last time beheld the mountains, the forests and the sky. Farewell! And you, my dearest mother, forgive me! Console her, Wilhelm. God bless you! I have settled all my affairs! Farewell! We shall meet again, and be happier than ever.”

“I have requited you badly, Albert; but you will forgive me. I have disturbed the peace of your home. I have sowed distrust between you. Farewell! I will end all this wretchedness. And oh, that my death may render you happy! Albert, Albert! make that angel happy, and the blessing of Heaven be upon you!”

He spent the rest of the evening in arranging his papers; he tore and burned a great many; others he sealed up, and directed to Wilhelm. They contained some detached thoughts and maxims, some of which I have perused. At ten o'clock he ordered his fire to be made up and a bottle of wine to be brought to him. He then dismissed his servant, whose room, as well as the apartments of the rest of the family, was situated in another part of the house. The servant lay down without undressing, that he might be the sooner ready for his journey in the morning, his master having informed him that the post horses would be at the door before six o'clock.

“Past eleven o'clock! All is silent around me, and my soul is calm. I thank thee, O God, that thou bestowest strength and courage upon me in these last moments. I approach the window, my dearest of friends, and through the clouds, which are at this moment driven rapidly along by the impetuous winds, I behold the stars which

illumine the eternal heavens! No, you will not fall, celestial bodies! the hand of the Almighty supports both you and me! I have looked for the last time upon the constellation of the Greater Bear; it is my favorite star; for when I bade you farewell at night, Charlotte, and turned my steps from your door, it always shone upon me. With what rapture have I at times beheld it! How often have I implored it with uplifted hands to witness my felicity? and even still—. But what object is there, Charlotte, which fails to summon up your image before me? Do you not surround me on all sides? and have I not, like a child, treasured up every trifle which you have consecrated by your touch?

“Your profile, which was so dear to me, I return to you, and I pray you to preserve it. Thousands of kisses have I imprinted upon it, and a thousand times has it gladdened my heart on departing from, and returning to my home.



“I have implored your father to protect my remains. At the corner of the churchyard, looking towards the fields, there are two lime trees—there I wish to lie. Your father can, and doubtless will, do thus much for his friend. Implore it of him. But perhaps pious Christians will not choose that their bodies should be buried near the corpse of a poor unhappy wretch like me. Then let me be laid in some remote valley, or near the highway, where the priest and Levite may bless themselves as they pass by my tomb, whilst the Samaritan will shed a tear for my fate.

“See, Charlotte, I do not shudder to take the cold and fatal cup, from which I shall drink the draught of death. Your hand presents it to me, and I do not tremble. All, all is now concluded; the wishes and the hopes of my existence are fulfilled. With cold, unflinching hand I knock at the brazen portals of Death.

“Oh, that I had enjoyed the bliss of dying for you! how gladly would I have sacrificed myself for you, Charlotte! And could I but restore peace and joy to your bosom, with what resolution, with what joy would I not meet my fate! But it is the lot of only a chosen few to shed their blood for their friends, and by their death to augment, a thousand times, the happiness of those by whom they are beloved.

“I wish, Charlotte, to be buried in the dress I wear at present; it has been rendered sacred by your touch. I have begged this favor of your father. My spirit soars above my sepulchre. I do not wish my pockets to be searched. The knot of pink ribbon which you wore on your bosom the first time I saw you, surrounded by the children!—Oh, kiss them a thousand times for me, and tell them the fate of their unhappy friend. I think I see them playing around me. The dear children! How warmly have I been attached to you, Charlotte! Since the first hour I saw you, how impossible have I found it to leave you. This ribbon must be buried with me; it was a

present from you on my birthday. How confused it all appears! Little did I then think that I should journey this road. But, peace! I pray you, peace!

“They are loaded—the clock strikes twelve. I say amen. Charlotte, Charlotte! farewell, farewell!”

A neighbor saw the flash, and heard the report of the pistol, but as everything remained quiet he thought no more of it.

In the morning, at six o'clock, the servant went into Werther's room with a candle. He found his master stretched upon the floor, weltering in his blood, and the pistols at his side. He called, he took him in his arms, but received no answer. Life was not yet quite extinct. The servant ran for a surgeon, and then went to fetch Albert. Charlotte heard the ringing of the bell; a cold shudder seized her. She wakened her husband, and they both rose. The servant, bathed in tears, faltered forth the dreadful news. Charlotte fell senseless at Albert's feet.

When the surgeon came to the unfortunate Werther, he was still lying on the floor, and his pulse beat, but his limbs were cold. The bullet, entering the forehead over the right eye, had penetrated the skull. A vein was opened in his right arm; the blood came, and he still continued to breathe. From the blood which flowed from the chair it could be inferred that he had committed the rash act sitting at his bureau, and that he afterwards fell upon the floor. He was found, lying on his back, near the window. He was in full-dress costume.

The house, the neighborhood, and the whole town were immediately in commotion. Albert arrived. They had laid Werther on the bed; his head was bound up, and the paleness of death was upon his face. His limbs were motionless; but he still breathed, at one time strongly, then weaker—his death was momentarily expected.

He had drunk only one glass of the wine. “Emilia Galotti” lay open upon his bureau.

I shall say nothing of Albert's distress, or of Charlotte's grief.

The old steward hastened to the house immediately upon hearing the news; he embraced his dying friend amid a flood of tears. His eldest boys soon followed him on foot. In speechless sorrow they threw themselves on their knees by the bedside, and kissed his hands and face. The eldest, who was his favorite, hung over him till he expired, and even then he was removed by force. At twelve o'clock Werther breathed his last. The presence of the steward, and the precautions he had adopted, prevented a disturbance; and that night, at the hour of eleven, he caused the body to be interred in the place which Werther had selected for himself.

The steward and his sons followed the corpse to the grave. Albert was unable to accompany them. Charlotte's life was despaired of. The body was carried by laborers. No priest attended.



[*] A Thessalian witch consulted by Pompey.

[*] Noth and Tod, the German equivalents for Need and Death, form a rhyme. As this cannot be rendered in English, I have introduced a slight alteration into my translation.

[*] The play of words contained in the original cannot be reproduced in translation, the German for moat being Graben, and for grave Grab.

[*] The reader need not take the trouble to look for the place thus designated. We have found it necessary to change the names as they stood in the original.

[*] We feel obliged to suppress the passage in the letter to prevent any one from feeling aggrieved; although no author need pay much attention to the opinion of a mere girl, or that of an unsteady young man.

[*] Though the names are omitted, yet the authors mentioned deserve Charlotte's approbation, and will feel it in their hearts when they read this passage. It concerns no other person.