

sinking from one gloomy mood to another, at length resolves on suicide, but is saved from this act by the sound of Easter bells and songs of rejoicing upon his ear and softening his heart once more toward the world. A little later Faust and his famulus Wagner, a perfect representative of that class of beings who think that memorizing catalogues is true learning, walk forth to enjoy the sunshine and the scenes of the sacred morning. Towards evening a black poodle joins the two and returns with them to the study. Faust after Wagner's departure sits down and begins to translate and comment upon the Gospel of John; but is continually interrupted by the poodle, which at last through the master's exorcism comes forth Mephistopheles in the guise of a travelling student. In answer to Faust's question he says he is—

“Part of that power not always understood,  
That ever wills the bad and ever works the good,”

that is in spite of himself.

Mephistopheles is not Satan, but an intellectual devil; the embodiment of the evil tendencies of our nature; and he tempts by trains of reasoning which Faust cannot overcome because they are the echoes of his own doubts; and as Bayard Taylor says, “his cunning, his subtlety, his scathing ridicule and his savage cynicism form a compound which is a little more than human and not completely infernal.”

A compact is made between him and Faust by which the latter is to enjoy through the demon's agency, a feeling of such perfect happiness, that to the passing moment he will exclaim,

“Thou art so beautiful, Oh! still delay.”

And in return he must yield his soul to the Evil One. That is: Faust is to lose his soul through perfect happiness, and Mephistopheles is to produce that happiness by agencies perfectly evil. A strange paradox, and though the demon sees it not; in the solution of the riddle, he is to carry out the character first assigned himself; that of working evil and producing good.

All being ready he takes Faust out into the world, into contact with fellow beings, to charm him with the delights of the senses, and renews his youth, thus preparing him for the part he is to play. Before long Faust meets and falls in love with a young, innocent and beautiful maiden named Margaret, and his love is soon returned. But good is still in him, and her beauty and innocence stirs it to life. Then to avoid being the cause of her destruction he flies from her presence. But by the subtle persuasions of the demon who represents her as dying of sorrow for his absence he at last returns, works her ruin, and in a duel kills, her brother, the soldier Valentine, whose character is distinctly drawn in a single scene. The two then vanish; and we next find them at an inferno—a human carnival held by witches and wizards on May-day night in the Harty Mountain, and presenting