A Kalmus Classic Edition

Arrigo

BOITO

MEPHISTOPHELES

PROLOGUE IN THE HEAVENS

VOCAL SCORE
with Italian and English text

K 06088A

Kalmus

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PART I.		PART II.	
MEPHISTOPHELES	*Bass.*	HELEN	*Soprano.*
FAUST	*Tenor.*	FAUST	*Tenor.*
MARGARET	*Soprano.*	MEPHISTOPHELES	*Bass.*
MARTHA	*Contralto.*	PANTALIS	*Contralto.*
WAGNER	*Tenor.*	NEREUS	*Tenor.*

CHORUS: Spirits, Chorus Mysticus, Cherubs, Penitents, Promenaders, Archers, Huntsmen, Students, Peasants, Burghers, Witches, Wizards, Syrens, Greek Coryphées, Warriors.

SILENT CHARACTERS: Promenaders, Witches, Sprites, Wizards, Pages, Soldiers, Nobles, Dignitaries, Fauns, a Buffoon, a Public Crier, a Juggler, a Zany, a Brewer, the Elector, the Executioner, a Beggar.

DANCES: Act I., Scene 1, Dance of Peasants. Act II., Scene 2, Round of Witches. Act IV., Scene 2, Choric Dances.

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PROLOGUE IN THE HEAVENS.

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NOTES.

Prologue.—Mephistophilis, wrote Marlowe in his "Doctor Faustus"; Mephostophilus, wrote Shakespeare in his "Merry Wives of Windsor"; Mephostofiles, wrote Widman in his legend of "Faust"; Mephisto and Mephistophola are often found in the "complaintes," and ballads and romances of the sixteenth century. John Pfitzer, in 1726, established the actual form "Mephistopheles," which was afterwards adopted by Goethe, Lenau, &c.

Duntzer in his "Faustsage" gives this name a Greek derivation, from "méphotophilos," an enemy of Light.

ACT I.

We know that Goethe has here introduced a "water-dog" instead of a "grey friar," but on the other hand in the old legends and descriptions of Faust we find the Grey Friar. We have followed the legendary tradition. (W. Widman, "Life of Faust.")

ACT II.

"Saboé har Sabbah?" Les initiés chantaient Saboé et les sorcières au Sabbat criaient à tue-tête "har Sabbah!" (See Le Loyer, "Des Spectres," l. vii., c. 3.)

ACT IV.

The fourth Act and the Epilogue of the present Opera are taken from Goethe's "Second Faust," which is the continuation and necessary complement of the first. Without this continuation the drama remains imperfect in its highly moral scope and development. A bargain between Heaven and the Devil is the starting-point of Goethe's poem; if the action ceases at Margaret's death the bargain has never been fulfilled, nor the scheme of the drama properly evolved.

The struggle must therefore be prolonged until the death of Faust, who is the subject of the bargain.

The Night of the Classical Sabbath.—In this all-classical part of the tragedy we have tried the experiment of transporting into the Italian language the Greek system of versification, so as to give an air of greater poetic truth to the scene.

Rhyme, the discovery of the Romantic poets, was unknown to the Greek Muse. Helen, still singing in classic verse, seeks the secret of this "rhyme," "this ineffable echo," and loves in learning it. Here is a myth both deep and beautiful. Helen and Faust represent Classic and Romantic Art gloriously wedded, Greek beauty and Germanic beauty gleaming under the same aureole, glorified in one embrace, and generating an ideal poesy, eclectic, new, and powerful.

EPILOGUE.

Goethe places around Faust at the commencement of this scene four ghostly figures who utter strange and obscure words. What Goethe has placed on the stage we place in the orchestra, submitting sounds instead of words, in order to render more incorporeal and impalpable the hallucinations that trouble Faust on the brink of death.

Goethe was a great admirer of "form," and his poem terminates in the same way that it commences—the first and last words of "Faust" are uttered in heaven. "Le motif glorieux," writes M. Blaze de Bury, "que les immortelles phalanges chantent dans l'introduction de la première partie de 'Faust,' revient à la fin enveloppée d'harmonie et de vapeurs mystiques. Goethe a fait cette fois comme les musiciens, comme Mozart, qui ramène à la dernière scène de 'Don Juan' la phrase imposante de l'ouverture." We have tried to realise in sounds this musical aspiration of Goethe's, and hence we have repeated in the Epilogue the theme of the Prologue, seeking, as much as possible, to fulfil the conception of the poet. (See Baron Blaze de Bury, "Essai sur Goethe."

MEPHISTOPHELES.

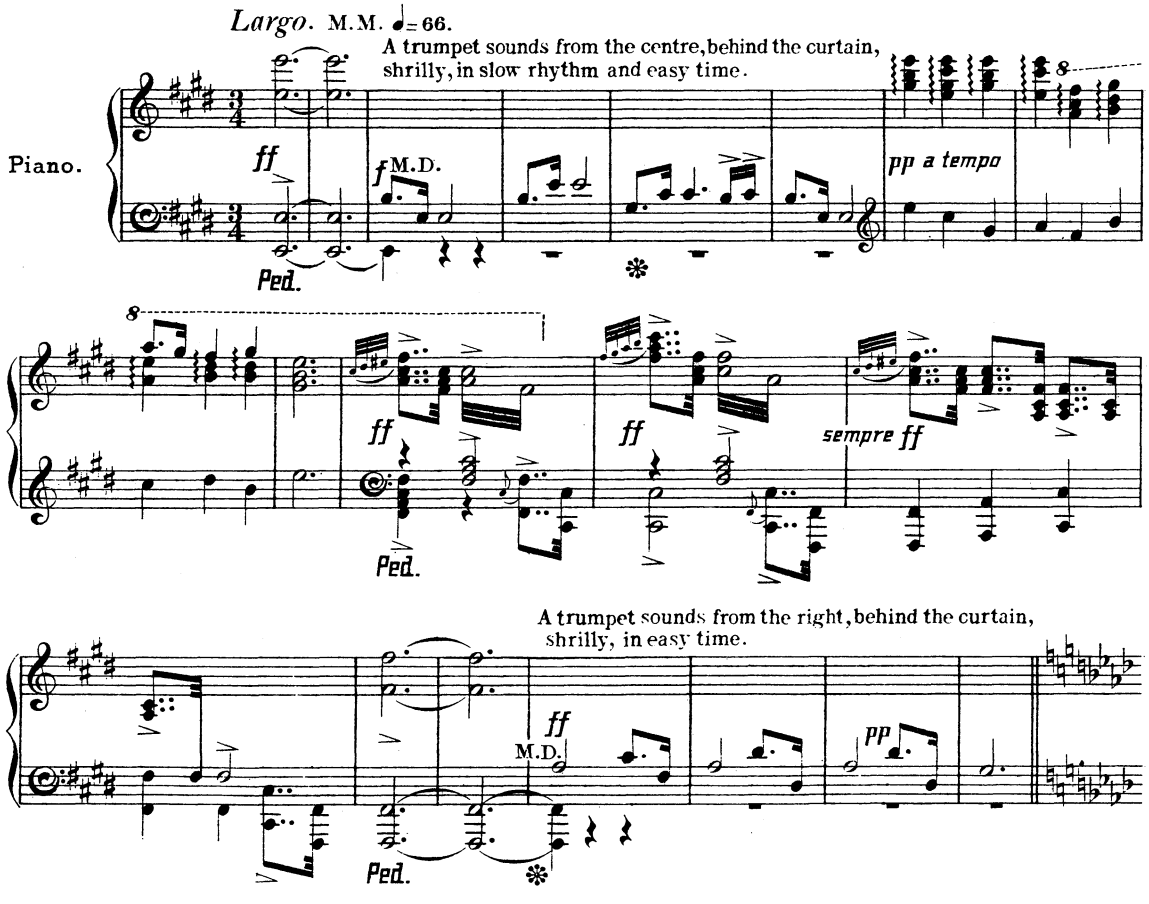
OPERA BY

ARRIGO BOITO.

Prologue in the Heavens.

Knowest thou Faust?
(GÖTHE.)

I° TEMPO.

PRELUDE and CHORUS.

Clouds and mist. Flourish of Trumpets. Thunder. Voices behind the clouds, invisible. MYSTIC CHOIR. CHERUBS. The PENITENTS. Then MEPHISTOPHELES alone in the shadows.