

## Goethes Faust: In Two Parts, Vol. 1 of 2 (Classic Reprint)



Having been invited by my publisher to complete my version of Faust, by translating the second part, I willingly applied myself to the task, and at the same time availed myself of the opportunity thus afforded to revise my translation of the first part, which was published more than a quarter of a century ago. No one can be more fully sensible of the shortcomings of a translation than the translator; nevertheless I cannot subscribe to the opinion which has recently found several powerful advocates, namely, that verse translations of good poetry are a mistake, and consequently that prose is the most appropriate medium for its reproduction. Mr. Hayward informs us, in his recent volume on Goethe, that there are now more than forty English translations of Faust in verse, many by persons of taste, cultivation, and accomplishment; but the highest praise that can be justly claimed for the best is, that they approximate to the original in parts. The cause of such a succession of failures may be found in the nature of the task. Mr. Lewes, with reference to the inadequacy of metrical translation, says, A translation may be good as a translation, but it cannot be an adequate reproduction of the original. It may be a good imitation, it may be a good imitation of another poem, it may be better than the original, but it cannot be an adequate reproduction, it cannot be the same thing in another language, producing the same effect on the mind. And the cause lies deep in the nature of poetry. This is perfectly true, and were the original accessible to all, translation would, of course, be superfluous, if the choice lies, however, not between the original and a translation, but between foreign classics for English readers. (Typographical errors above are due to OCR software and do not occur in the book.) About the Publisher Forgotten Books is a publisher of historical writings, such as: Philosophy, Classics,

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