

CHARLES LAMB

I thoroughly agree with you as to the German *Faust*, as far [as] I can do justice to it from an English translation. 'Tis a disagreeable canting tale of Seduction, which has nothing to do with the Spirit of Faustus – Curiosity. Was the dark secret to be explored to end in the seducing of a weak girl, which might have been accomplished by earthly agency? When Marlow gives *his* Faustus a mistress, he flies him at Helen, flower of Greece, to be sure, and not at Miss Betsy, or Miss Sally Thoughtless.

Cut is the branch that bore the goodly fruit,
And wither'd is Apollo's laurel tree:
Faustus is dead.*

What a noble natural transition from metaphor to plain speaking! as if the figurative had flagged in description of such a Loss, and was reduced to tell the fact simply.

(from a letter to W. Harrison Ainsworth dated 9 December 1823, in *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ed. E. V. Lucas, 7 vols (1903-5) VII 631)

J. W. VON GOETHE

(reported by H. Crabb Robinson)

I mentioned Marlowe's *Faust*. He burst out into an exclamation of praise. 'How greatly is it all planned!' He had thought of translating it. He was fully aware that Shakespeare did not stand alone.

(from *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson*, ed. T. Sadler, 3 vols (1869) II 434)

JAMES BROUGHTON

THE beauties of this play have been eloquently expatiated upon by numerous writers, and though defective as a whole, it

* Lamb evidently made his quotation from memory.