~~Blanche M. Alexander~~

1889

Eugene H. Anderson.

GERMANY

By MADAME

THE BARONESS DE STAËL-HOLSTEIN

WITH

NOTES AND APPENDICES

BY

O. W. WIGHT, A. M.

IN TWO VOLUMES

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CHAPTER XXV.

VARIOUS PIECES OF THE GERMAN AND DANISH THEATRE.

THE dramatic works of Kotzebue[1] have been translated into several languages. It would therefore be superfluous to employ ourselves in making them known. I shall only observe, that no impartial judge can deny him a perfect understanding of theatrical effects. *The Two Brothers*, *Misanthropy and Repentance*, *The Hussites*, *The Crusaders*, *Hugo Grotius*, *Jane of Montfaucon*, *The Death of Rolla*, etc., excite the most lively interest wherever they are performed. It must still be con-

[1] "August von Kotzebue, born at Weimar in 1761, was the son of a counsellor of legation, but lost his father before he was two years old. At sixteen he went to the university of Jena to study jurisprudence, and established himself as solicitor at Weimar. The law had, however, no attractions for him; he wrote several dramatic pieces, and had the gratification of seeing his productions favorably received by the public. But, having written some satirical poems against some ladies at Weimar, he found himself under the necessity of leaving the place. He went to Petersburg, where he was first engaged as private secretary to General Bauer of the engineers, and subsequently became director of the German theatre. Kotzebue was now in his true vocation; but when soon afterwards the general died, the empress named him a judge of the court of appeals at Reval. In the following year, in his twenty-third year, he married a daughter of the wealthy General Essen, a lady of great beauty and high mental attainments, and he was raised to nobility. He established a theatre of amateurs at Reval, for which he wrote several plays. His *Menschenhass und Reue*, known

fessed, that Kotzebue knows not how to give to his personages either the color of the times in which they lived, or national features, or the character that history assigns them. These personages, to whatever age or country they belong, always

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to the English public by the title of *the Stranger*, and *Die Indianer in England*, procured him great celebrity. His declining health about this time, induced him to return to Germany; he went to Weimar, where he had the misfortune to lose his wife after a union of six years. With the view of finding some relief in a change of scene, he went to Paris, and after some years returned to Esthland, and married a second time. He lived, however, retired from public life on his estate, and continued to write dramatic pieces. Two years after, he was invited to Vienna, to undertake the management of the Imperial theatre, which, however, he resigned after the expiration of the first year. He went again to Weimar, but some controversies with Goethe, who hated his obtrusive manners, and more particularly with the two Schlegels, caused him to return to Russia. Arrived here, he was, by order of the Emperor Paul, arrested, charged with being a spy, and exiled to Siberia, but after the lapse of two years restored to liberty, and created a privy counsellor. He again undertook the management of the theatre. After Paul's death he left Petersburg for Berlin, where he continued his literary labors for the stage. Here he published several of his larger works, and a collection of novels and tales; and began his *Ancient History of Prussia*. The war with France breaking out shortly after, he retired to Russia; upon the defeat of the French he followed the Emperor Alexander in the quality of privy counsellor, and edited in Berlin his *Russo-German Gazette*, in which his constant aim was to increase the hatred against the French. He was subsequently made Russian consul at Königsberg, but a few years afterwards recalled to Petersburg and desired by the emperor to fix himself at Weimar, in order to make from thence weekly reports upon new productions in the arts and sciences, both in Germany and France. But he had the mortification to find himself looked upon as a Russian spy; he was called a traitor to his country, and the hatred against him increased, when in a severe satire he declared himself an enemy to the then prevailing spirit of Germanism among the youths of Germany. In order to enjoy the society of some friends, he went to Manheim, and was preparing for his journey to Russia, where he intended to spend the remainder of his days in quiet and retirement, when, on the 23d of March, 1819, he was stabbed to death by Charles Sand, a German student. When requested to declare his motives for such a deed, Sand thus wrote: 'Kotzebue was the seducer of our youth, the calumniator of our history, and a betrayer of our country in the pay of Russia.'

"Kotzebue's plays are most numerous. In most cases his principal attention is given to stage-effect. He had little conception of the ideal, but great shrewdness in discovering the foibles of the human heart. His chief care was to court the ephemeral applause of the day by pandering to the vitiated taste promoted by himself."—*Ed.*

appear to be contemporaries and fellow-countrymen; they are invested with the same philosophical opinions, the same modern manners, and whether he is painting a man of our own days, or a Virgin of the Sun, nothing is to be discovered in either but a picture of the present times, at once natural and pathetic. If the theatrical genius of Kotzebue, which is unique in Germany, could be joined to the talent of painting characters such as history transmits them to us, and if his style of poetry elevated itself to the height of those situations of which he is the ingenious inventor, the success of his pieces would be equally lasting and brilliant.

Besides, nothing is so rare as to find united in the same individual the two faculties which constitute a great dramatic author —dexterity in his trade, if we may so term it, and the genius whose point of view is universal: this problem is the great difficulty of human nature itself; and it is always easy to distinguish among men, those in whom the talent of conception and that of execution predominate; those who stand in relation with all times, and those who are exclusively the portion of their own: nevertheless, it is in the union of opposite qualities that phenomena of every description consist.

The greater number of Kotzebue's pieces are distinguished for some situations of striking beauty. In *the Hussites*, when Procopius, the successor of Ziska, besieges Nuamburg, the magistrates come to the resolution of sending all the children out of the town to the enemy's camp, to ask mercy for the inhabitants. These poor children must go alone, to implore the compassion of fanatic soldiers, who spare neither age nor sex. The burgomaster is the first to offer his four sons, the eldest of whom is only twelve years old, for this perilous expedition. The mother entreats that one at least may remain with her; the father appears to consent, and sets himself about summing up the faults of each of his children in succession, that the mother may declare who are those for which she feels herself the least interested; but whenever he begins to throw blame upon either of them, the mother assures him that that is the one which she prefers to all the rest, and the unhappy woman

is at last forced to agree that the cruel choice is impossible, and that it is better they should all share the same lot.

In the second act, we are introduced into the camp of the Hussites; all the soldiers, of menacing figures, repose in their tents. A slight noise awakens their attention; they perceive in the plain a crowd of children, marching in procession, with oaken boughs in their hands; they cannot conceive the signification of this, and taking their lances, place themselves at the entrance of the camp to defend the approach. The children advance fearlessly in front of the lances, and the Hussites involuntarily recoil, angry at finding themselves affected, and unable to comprehend what it is they experience. Procopius comes out of his tent; he causes the burgomaster, who had followed his children at a distance, to be brought before him, and orders him to point out which are his. The burgomaster refuses; Procopius's soldiers lay their hands on him, and immediately the four children rush into their father's arms. "You know them now," says the burgomaster to Procopius, "they have named themselves." The piece ends happily, and the third act is full of congratulations; but it is the second that affords the greatest theatrical interest.

Scenes fit for a novel constitute all the merit of the play of *the Crusaders.* A young girl, believing her lover to have perished in the wars, has taken the veil at Jerusalem in a religious order consecrated to the care of the sick. A knight, dangerously wounded, is brought to the convent. She enters, veiled, and, without lifting up her eyes to look upon him, kneels to dress his wound. The knight, in this moment of anguish, articulates the name of his mistress; and the unfortunate object of his love thus recognizes her lover. He forms the design of eloping with her; the abbess discovers the plan, and the consent of her nun to its accomplishment. She condemns her, in her rage, to be buried alive; and the unhappy knight, wandering in vain round the church, hears the organ and the voices which are performing, underground, the burial service of one who is still alive, and who loves him. This situation is harrowing to the soul; but all ends, in like manner,

happily. The Turks, led by the young knight, come to the deliverance of the victim. An Asiatic convent in the thirteenth century is treated in the same manner as the *cloistered victims* during the French Revolution; and a few sentiments, which are very gentle, but a little too easy, terminate the piece to the satisfaction of all the spectators.

Kotzebue has composed a drama from the historical anecdote of the imprisonment of Grotius by the Prince of Orange, and his deliverance by his friends, who discover the means of conveying him out of the fortress where he is confined, hid in a chest of books. There are some situations in this piece worthy of notice: a young officer, in love with the daughter of Grotius, learns of her that she is trying to procure the escape of her father, and promises to assist her in this project; but the governor, his friend, being obliged to quit his charge for twenty-four hours, commits the keys of the citadel to his care. The governor is himself liable to the pain of death, if his prisoner escapes during his absence. The young lieutenant, in this manner made responsible for the life of his friend, prevents his mistress's father from saving himself, by forcing him back into his prison at the moment when he was ready to enter the boat prepared for his deliverance. The sacrifice made by this young lieutenant, in thus exposing himself to his mistress's indignation, is truly heroic; when the governor returns, and the officer no longer fills the place of his friend, he finds means of drawing on himself, by a noble falsehood, the capital punishment denounced against those who shall have attempted, a second time, to rescue Grotius, and have at last succeeded in it. The joy of the young man, when his sentence of death insures him the return of his mistress's esteem, is of the most affecting beauty; but, in the conclusion, there is so much magnanimity in Grotius (who returns to deliver himself up again to save the young man's life), in the Prince of Orange, in the daughter, and in the author himself, that all we can do is to say *amen* to the whole. The situations of this piece have been transferred to a French play, but they are there ascribed to unknown characters, and neither Grotius, nor the Prince of Orange, is

named in it. This is wisely done, for there is nothing in the German original that agrees in a particular manner with the characters of these two personages, such as history has represented them to us.

Jane of Montfaucon being a chivalrous adventure of Kotzebue's own invention, he has used more freedom in that than in any other of his pieces, in the manner of treating his subject. A charming actress, Madame Unzelmann, used to play the principal part; and the manner in which she defended her heart and her castle against a discourteous knight produced a very agreeable impression on the stage. By turns warlike and desponding, her helmet and her dishevelled locks alike seemed to embellish her; but situations of this description are better suited to pantomime than to dialogue, and the words answer no other purpose than that of filling up the action.

The Death of Rolla is of a merit superior to any that I have yet cited; the celebrated Sheridan has made a play from it entitled *Pizarro*, which was attended with the greatest success in England; a single expression at the conclusion of the piece produces an admirable effect. Rolla, the chief of the Peruvians, has for a long time fought against the Spaniards; he loved Cora, a Virgin of the Sun, and has nevertheless generously labored to vanquish the obstacles that separated her from Alonzo. A year after their marriage, the Spaniards carry off the infant son of Cora; Rolla exposes himself to every danger to recover him, and brings him back at last, covered with blood, in his cradle; Rolla observes the mother's terror at the sight. "Calm yourself," he says to her, "this blood is mine!" and he expires.

Some German writers have not, I think, done justice to the dramatic talent of Kotzebue; but it is fit to acknowledge the estimable motives of this prejudice: Kotzebue has not always paid sufficient respect, in his plays, to strict virtue and positive religion; he has indulged himself in this error, not from adherence to system, as I conceive, but merely to produce, occasionally, a more powerful effect on the stage. It is not less true, however, that he deserves to be censured in this respect

by rigid critics. He seems himself, for some years past, to have conformed to more regular principles, and so far from his genius losing by that conformity, it has in reality been considerably the gainer. Elevation and strength of sentiment always hold by some secret ties to the purity of morals.[1]

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[1] "The German Parnassus," says Carlyle, in his article on German Playwrights, "as one of its own denizens remarks, has a rather broad summit: yet only two Dramatists are reckoned, within the last half century, to have mounted thither—Schiller and Goethe; if we are not, on the strength of his *Minna von Barnhelm* and *Emilia Galotti*, to account Lessing of the number. On the slope of the Mountain may be found a few stragglers of the same brotherhood; among these, Tieck and Maler Müller, firmly enough stationed at considerable elevations; while, far below, appear various honest persons climbing vehemently, but against precipices of loose sand, to whom we wish all speed. But the reader will understand that the bivouac we speak of, and are about to enter, lies not on the declivity of the Hill at all, but on the level ground close to the foot of it; the essence of a Playwright being that he works not in Poetry, but in Prose, which more or less cunningly resembles it. And here, pausing for a moment, the reader observes that he is in a civilized country; for there, on the very boundary line of Parnassus, rises a gallows, with the figure of a man hung in chains! It is the figure of August von Kotzebue, and has swung there for many years as a warning to all too audacious Playwrights, who nevertheless, as we see, pay little heed to it. Ill-fated Kotzebue, once the darling of theatrical Europe! This was the prince of all Playwrights, and could manufacture Plays with a speed and felicity surpassing even Edinburgh novels. For his muse, like other doves, hatched twins in the month; and the world gazed on them with an admiration too deep for mere words. What is all past or present popularity to this? Were not these Plays translated into almost every language of articulate-speaking men; acted, at least, we may literally say, in every theatre from Kamtschatka to Cadiz? Nay, did they not melt the most obdurate hearts in all countries, and, like the music of Orpheus, draw tears down iron cheeks? We ourselves have known the flintiest men, who professed to have wept over them, for the first time in their lives. So was it twenty years ago; how stands it to-day? Kotzebue, lifted up on the hollow balloon of popular applause, thought wings had been given him that he might ascend to the Immortals: gay he rose, soaring, sailing, as with supreme dominion; but, in the rarer azure deep, his windbag burst asunder, or the arrows of keen archers pierced it; and so at last we find him a compound-pendulum, vibrating in the character of scarecrow, to guard from forbidden fruit! O ye Playwrights, and literary quacks of every feather, weep over Kotzebue and over yourselves! Know that the loudest roar of the million is not fame; that the windbag, are ye mad enough to mount it, *will* burst, or be shot through with arrows, and your bones too shall act as scarecrows."—(*Essays*, p. 129.)—*Ed.*

Kotzebue, and the greater part of the German writers, had borrowed the opinion of Lessing, that prose is the language proper for the theatre, and that tragedy should be brought as nearly as possible to the style of common life; Goethe and Schiller, by their latter works, and the writers of the new School, have overturned this system: these writers may rather be reproached with the contrary excess, that is, a poetry too exalted, and which turns aside the imagination from theatrical effect. In those dramatic authors who, like Kotzebue, adopted the principles of Lessing, we almost always meet with simplicity and interest; *Agnes of Bernau*, *Julius of Tarentum*, *Don Diego*, and *Leonora*, have been represented with great and deserved success; as these pieces have been translated in the collection of Friedel, it is useless to quote from them. It seems to me that *Don Diego*, and *Leonora* particularly, might, with some alterations, succeed upon the French stage. It would be necessary to preserve the touching picture of that deep and melancholy passion which forebodes misfortune, even before any reverse had announced it: the Scots call these presentiments of the heart a man's *second sight;* they are wrong in calling it the second, it is the first, and perhaps the only true sight.

Among the prose tragedies that are elevated above the rank of melodrama, some essays of Gerstenberg deserve to be noticed. It has entered into his imagination to choose the death of Count Ugolino for the subject of a tragedy; the unity of place is there of necessity, since the piece begins and ends in the tower where Ugolino perishes with his three sons; as for the unity of time, more than twenty-four hours are needed to make a man die of hunger; but in the other respects the event is the same, and its progress is only marked by the increase of horror. There is nothing more sublime in Dante than the picture of this unhappy father, who has seen his three sons perish by his side, and who gluts himself in hell with feeding on the skull of the ferocious enemy who made him his victim; but this episode is not fit for the subject of a dramatic piece; a catastrophe is not enough to furnish out a

tragedy.[1] The piece of Gerstenberg contains energetic beauties, and the moment when we hear the prison walled up, causes the most terrible impression that the mind is capable of experiencing, it is that of living death; but despair cannot sustain five acts; the spectator must either die or admit consolation; and we may apply to this tragedy what an intelligent American, Mr. G. Morris, said of the French in 1790: *They have passed the bounds of Liberty.* To pass the bounds of the pathetic, that is, to carry it beyond that degree of emotion which the soul is capable of supporting, is the same as to destroy the effect.

Klinger, known by other writings, full of depth and sagacity, has composed a very interesting tragedy, called *the Twins.* The rage experienced by him who passes for the younger of the two brothers, his rebellion against the right of primogeniture, the effect of an instant, is admirably painted in this piece: some writers have pretended that to this species of jealousy is to be ascribed the destiny of the Iron Mask; however that may be, it is easy to comprehend how the hatred which this right of primogeniture is capable of exciting, may be more violent between twins. The two brothers go out together on horseback; their return is waited for; the day passes without their reappearing, but in the evening the horse of the elder is discovered returning alone to the paternal mansion: a circumstance so simple as this can hardly be found in any of our tragedies, and yet it freezes the blood in our veins: the brother has slain his brother, and the father, in his indignation, revenges the death of one son on the only survivor. This tragedy, full of warmth and eloquence, would produce a prodigious effect, I conceive, if made to relate to celebrated personages; but one finds a difficulty in conceiving passions so violent exerting themselves for the birthright of a castle on the banks of the Tiber. It cannot be too often repeated, that tragedy requires historical subjects or religious traditions which awa-

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[1] Gervinus calls *Ugolino* "a piece without plan, exhibiting a hangman's fantasy."—(*Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung*, Vierter Band, S. 369.)—*Ed.*

ken great recollections in the minds of the spectators; for in fictions, as well as in real life, imagination falls back on the past, however eager she may be after the future.

The writers of the new school in Germany have more of the grandiose than all others, in the manner of conceiving the fine arts; and all their productions, whether successful upon the stage or not, are combined according to reflections and thoughts, of which the analysis is interesting; but men do not analyze in the theatre, and it is in vain to demonstrate that such a piece ought to succeed; if the spectator remains cold, the dramatic battle is lost; success, with some few exceptions, is the test of genius in the arts; the public is almost always a very sensible judge, when its opinion is not influenced by passing circumstances.

The greater part of those German tragedies which are not destined even by their authors for representation, are nevertheless very beautiful poems. One of the most remarkable is *Geneviève of Brabant*, of which Tieck[1] is the author: the

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[1] "Ludwig Tieck was born at Berlin, in 1773. At the age of nineteen he visited the university at Halle, and subsequently went to Göttingen. On his return to Berlin, where he resided for several years, he became acquainted with Nicolai, the bookseller, and soon after, on his travels, saw the two Schlegels, with whom he formed a close intimacy. Their joint labors produced a new era in German poetry, which was styled 'the romantic school.' In the year 1798, he went to Hamburg, where he married the daughter of Alberti, a clergyman. Thence he went to Jena, which in 1801 he left for Dresden, where he devoted himself exclusively to the study of art. From Dresden he retired to a poetical solitude near Frankfort on the Oder, and remained there for some time. In 1806, we find him at Rome, busily engaged in the study of the old German manuscripts, with which the library of the Vatican abounds. On his return to Germany, he led, on the whole, an unsettled life, till, 1825, he was appointed to the superintendence of the theatre at Dresden. It was under the patronage of Nicolai, the bookseller, that Tieck was ushered into public notice with his first works, *Abdallah* (1793), and *William Lovell* (1795). Some years after, he became one of the leaders of the romantic school, who, in their fondness of the middle ages, were apt to despise and ridicule modern light as unpoetical, and to become converts to Popery. Nicolai, the friend of Lessing, was thus, under the name of Nestor, exposed to laughter by Tieck, in his novel, *Prince Zerbino* (1799). Tieck's adhesion to the romantic school had first been evidenced by his *Peter Lebrechts Volksmärchen*, by *Blaubart*, and

ancient legend, that makes this saint live for ten years in a desert on herbs and fruits, without any other support for her child than the milk of a faithful doe, is admirably well treated in this romance in dialogue. The pious resignation of Geneviève is painted in the colors of sacred poetry, and the character of the man who accuses, after having attempted in vain to seduce her, is traced with a master's hand: this guilty person preserves, amid all his crimes, a sort of poetical imagination, which gives a gloomy originality to his actions, as well as his remorse. The exposition of this piece is made by St. Boniface, who relates the subject of it, and begins in these terms: "I am St. Boniface, who come hither to tell you," etc. It is not by chance that the author adopted this form; he shows too much depth and too much art in his other writings, and particularly in the very work which opens in this manner, not to show us clearly that it was his intention to render himself simple, like a contemporary of Geneviève; but, by dint of pretending to revive ancient times, we attain a certain affectation of simplicity, which only makes people laugh, whatever sober reason we may give them for being touched. Without doubt, we should know how to transport ourselves into the age the manners of which it is our intention to paint; yet we must not altogether forget our own. The perspective of pictures, whatever be the object they represent, should always be taken according to the point of view in which they are to be contemplated.

Among the authors who have remained constant to the imitation of the ancients, Collin deserves the first rank. Vienna prides herself in this poet, one of the most highly esteemed

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by *Der Gestiefelte Kater*, all of which appeared in 1797. His *Kaiser Octavian* and *Genofeva* are written in the same spirit, likewise his *Phantasus*, published in 1812. At a later period, he wrote *Der Aufruhr in den Cevennen*, and *Vittoria Accorombona*, novels of a less fanciful cast. His translation of Cervantes' Don Quixote, and, conjointly with W. Schlegel, of Shakspeare, are deemed the best that Germany possesses. In 1842, the King of Prussia invited him to his palace of Sanssouci. Though generally believed to be a convert to the Romish creed, he died as a Protestant, at Berlin, April 29th, 1853."—*Ed.*

in Germany, and perhaps, for a long while past, the only poet of Austria. His tragedy of *Regulus* would succeed in France if it were known there. In Collin's manner there is a mixture of elevation and sensibility, of Roman austerity and religious mildness, that seems made expressly to reconcile the taste of the ancients with that of the moderns. That scene in his tragedy of *Polyxena* in which Calchas commands Neoptolemus to sacrifice the daughter of Priam on the tomb of Achilles, is one of the finest things that has ever been heard. The appeal of the infernal deities, demanding a victim to appease the ghosts of the slain, is expressed with a gloomy strength, a subterraneous terror, that seems to lay open to us the abysses underneath our feet. No doubt we are continually recalled to the admiration of ancient subjects, and up to the present time, all the efforts of the moderns to draw out of their own funds sufficient to place them on an equality with the Greeks, have never succeeded; it is, nevertheless, desirable to reach that noble emulation; for not only does the principle of imitation exhaust itself, but the spirit of our age makes itself constantly felt in the manner of our treating the fables or the facts of antiquity. Collin himself, for instance, though he has conducted his play of *Polyxena* with great simplicity through the former acts, renders it complicated towards the conclusion, by a diversity of incidents. The French have incorporated the gallantry of the age of Louis XIV with subjects taken from antiquity; the Italians often treat them with pompous affectation; the English, always natural, have imitated only the Romans on their stage, because they perceived in them some relation with themselves. The Germans introduce the philosophy of metaphysics, or a variety of romantic events into their tragedies, founded on Grecian subjects. No writer of our days will ever attain to the composition of ancient poetry. It would be better, then, that our religion and our manners should create for us a modern poetry, whose beauty should consist in its own peculiar nature, like that of the ancients.

A Danish writer, Œhlenschläger, has himself translated his own plays into German. The analogy between the two lan-

guages admits the possibility of writing equally well in both, and Baggesen, also a Dane, had already given the example of a great genius for versification in a foreign idiom. A fine dramatic imagination discovers itself in the tragedies of Œhlenschläger. They are said to have met with great success on the stage of Copenhagen: in the closet, they are calculated to excite interest under two principal relations: first, because the author has sometimes found the means of reconciling the regularity of the French drama with the diversity of situations which the German taste requires; and secondly, because he has represented, in a manner at once true and poetical, the history and the fables of ancient Scandinavia.

We are little acquainted with the North, which touches upon the confines of the habitable world; the long nights of the northern countries, during which only the reflection of the snow seems to enlighten the earth; the darkness which bounds the horizon in the distance, even when the vault of heaven is illuminated by the stars, all seem to give the idea of unknown space, of a nocturnal universe by which our world is encircled. The air, so piercing as to congeal the breath, drives all warmth backwards on the soul, and nature herself, in these climates, appears made only to concentrate man within himself.

The heroes of northern poetical fiction have something gigantic in them. In their character, superstition is united to strength, while everywhere else it seems to partake of weakness. Images, drawn from the rigor of the climate, characterize the poetry of the Scandinavians; they call vultures the wolves of the air; the boiling lakes formed by volcanoes preserve during winter the birds that seek refuge in the atmosphere by which these lakes are surrounded; in these regions of cloud, every thing is impressed with a character of grandeur and gloom.

The Scandinavian nations possessed a sort of physical strength that seemed to exclude deliberation, and impelled the will, like a rock precipitating itself to the bottom of the mountain. The iron men of Germany cannot make us suffi-

ciently comprehend these inhabitants of the extremity of the earth: they unite the irritability of passion to the persevering coldness of resolution; and nature herself has not disdained to paint them with a poet's pencil, when she placed in Iceland a volcano which vomits torrents of fire from a bosom of eternal snow.

Œhlenschläger has created for himself an entirely new career, in taking for the subjects of his plays the heroic traditions of his country; and, by following this example, the literature of the North may one day become equally celebrated with that of Germany.

It is here that I choose to terminate the review which I meant to give of those pieces of the German theatre which partake in any degree of the character of tragedy. I shall not sum up the defects and beauties which this *tableau* may present to us. There is so much diversity of genius and of system among the dramatic poets of Germany, that the same judgment cannot apply to all. Besides, the greatest praise that can be bestowed upon them is that very diversity; for, in the empire of literature, as in others, unanimity is almost always a sign of servitude.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF COMEDY.

The Ideal of tragic character consists, says W. Schlegel, *in the victory obtained by the will over destiny, or over our passions; that of comedy, on the contrary, expresses the empire of physical over moral existence: whence it follows that gluttony and poltroonery are, in all places, an inexhaustible subject of pleasantry.* The love of life appears to man the most ridiculous and the most vulgar of feelings, and the laughter which seizes upon mortal beings, when contemplating the object of

one of their fellow-mortals suffering under the apprehension of death, is a noble attribute of the soul.

But when we quit the circle, a little too common, of these universal pleasantries, when we arrive at the ridiculous extravagances of self-love, we find that they partake of an infinite variety, according to the habits and tastes of each nation. Gayety may flow either from natural inspiration, or social relations; in the former case, it is suitable to men of all countries; in the latter, it differs with the difference of times, places, and customs; for the efforts of vanity being always directed towards making an impression on others, it is necessary to know what is attended with most success at such an epoch, and in such a place, in order to ascertain to what particular object those efforts should be applied: there are countries in which fashion renders ridiculous even fashion itself, which appears to have for its object to place every man out of the reach of ridicule, by giving to all a similar mode of existence.

In the German comedies, the great world is, in general, but badly described; there are few good models to be imitated in this respect: society does not attract distinguished characters, and its greatest charm, which consists in the agreeable art of reciprocal pleasantry, would not succeed among them; it would soon dash in pieces the self-love which is accustomed to enjoy itself in tranquillity, and it might easily also wither that virtue which would take offence even at an innocent pleasantry.

The Germans seldom bring forward on the stage objects of ridicule taken from the manners of their own nation; they do not observe others, and are still less capable of examining themselves, under external relations; they would fancy that in so doing, they were in a manner wanting to the fidelity which they owe to themselves. Besides, susceptibility, which is one of the characteristic features of their nature, renders it very difficult to them to handle pleasantry with lightness; they frequently do not understand it, and, when they do understand it, it vexes them, and they dare not make use of it in their turn; it is like a gun, which they are afraid of seeing burst in their hands.

There are not, then, many specimens in Germany of that species of comedy which has the absurdities of society for its object. Natural originality would be better perceived among them; for every man lives after his own fashion in a country where the despotism of custom does not hold its sittings in a great capital; but, although there is a greater freedom of opinion in Germany than in England itself, English originality is invested with more lively colors, because the movement that exists in the political state in England, gives better opportunity to every man to display himself as he is.

In the south of Germany, particularly at Vienna, a sufficient vein of gayety is discoverable in the farces. The Tyrolese buffoon, Casperle, has a character peculiar to himself; and in all these pieces, of somewhat low comedy, both authors and actors make it their rule to have no pretension to elegance, and establish themselves in the natural, with an energy and decision, which amply compensates the want of artificial refinements. The Germans prefer strong to delicate humor; they seek truth in their tragedies, and caricature in their comedies. All the intricacies of the heart are known to them; but the refinement of social wit does not excite them to gayety; the trouble that it costs them to comprehend, deprives them of the enjoyment of it.

I shall have occasion to speak elsewhere of Iffland, the first actor of Germany, and one of her most lively writers; he has composed several pieces, which are excellent in the delineation of character, and the representation of domestic manners; and these family pictures are rendered the more striking, by the personages of a truly comic cast that are always introduced into them: nevertheless, we may sometimes find with these comedies the fault of being too reasonable; they are too carefully adapted to fulfil the purpose of the motto in front of the stage: *to correct by laughing* (*corriger les mœurs en riant*). They have too many young people in debt, too many fathers of families who have become embarrassed. Moral lessons are not the province of comedy, and there is even some danger in admitting them into it; for when they prove fatiguing, it is too

possible that the impression produced at the theatre may become the habitual feeling of real life.

Kotzebue has borrowed from a Danish poet, Holberg, a comedy which has met with great success in Germany; it is entitled *Don Ranudo Colibrados;* it is a ruined gentleman, who tries to pass himself off for a man of fortune, and employs, in making a show, the little money he has, which is scarcely sufficient to keep himself and his family from starving. The subject of this piece serves as an appendage and contrast to Molière's *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, who wishes to pass for a gentleman; there are many lively, and some truly comic scenes in the *Poor Nobleman;* but it is a barbarous sort of comedy. The point of ridicule that Molière has seized is intrinsically gay, but there is real misery at the foundation of that which the Danish poet has adopted; no doubt, it almost always requires great intrepidity of genius to treat human life as a jest, and comic force supposes a character at least of indifference; but it would be wrong to push this force so far as to brave the feeling of compassion; art itself would suffer by it, to say nothing of delicacy; for the slightest impression of grief is sufficient to tarnish all that is poetical in the full abandonment of the soul to gayety.

The comedies of Kotzebue's own invention, in general, bear marks of the same talent as his tragic pieces, the knowledge of stage effect, and an imagination fruitful in the invention of striking situations. It has been for some time past pretended, that to laugh or cry proves nothing in favor either of comedy or tragedy; I am far from being of this opinion: the desire of lively emotions is the source of the greatest pleasures that can be derived from the fine arts; but we must not conclude from thence that tragedy should be changed into melodrama, or comedies into Bartholomew Fair farces, but real talent consists in composing in such a manner, as to produce, in the same play, or even in the same scene of a play, food for the tears or the laughter of the populace, and an inexhaustible subject for the reflections of the thinking part of the audience.

Parody, properly so called, can hardly be admitted on the

German stage; their tragedies almost always affording a mixture of heroic and subaltern personages, give little room to this species of humor. The pompous majesty of the French theatre is alone capable of giving force to the contrast of a burlesque. We remark in Shakspeare, and sometimes in the German writers also, a bold and singular manner of displaying, even in tragedy, the ridiculous side of human nature; and when the power of pathos can be set in opposition to this impression, the effect of the whole becomes greater. The French is the only theatre in which the boundaries of comedy and tragedy are distinctly marked; everywhere else, genius, like the lot of nature, employs gayety as the means of sharpening grief.

I have seen at Weimar some of Terence's plays literally translated into German, and played with masks, nearly resembling those of the ancients; these masks do not cover the whole countenance, they only substitute more comic or more regular features for the real features of the actor, and give tc his person an expression analogous to that of the character he is to perform. The physiognomy of a great actor is vastly superior to this; but the middling class of performers gains by it. The Germans seek to appropriate to themselves the ancient and modern inventions of all countries; nevertheless, they possess nothing really national, in respect of comedy, but popular buffoonery, and pieces in which the marvellous furnishes matter for pleasantry.

An example of this may be cited in an opera which is performed on all the stages from one end of Germany to the other, called *the Nymph of the Danube*, or *the Nymph of the Spree*, just as the piece happens to be played at Vienna or at Berlin. A knight has become the object of a fairy's passion, and is separated from her by circumstance; a long while after he marries, and chooses for his wife a very worthy woman, but who has nothing seductive, either of wit or imagination: the knight accomodates himself as well as he can to this situation, which appears to him so much the more natural, as it is common; for few persons understand that it is superiority of soul

and of intellect that most nearly approaches to the original of our nature. The fairy is unable to lose the remembrance of her lover, and pursues him by the wonders of her art; every time that he begins to establish himself in his domestic economy, she draws his attention by prodigies, and thus awakens in him the recollection of their past affection.

If the knight approaches the banks of a river, he hears its waves murmuring the lays which the fairy was accustomed to sing to him; if he invites guests to his table, winged genii place themselves at the board, and spread a general consternation among the prosaic friends and relatives of his wife. Wherever he goes, flowers, dances, and concerts spring up to harass, like phantoms, the life of the faithless lover; and on the other side malignant spirits amuse themselves in tormenting his servant, who, in his way also, desires nothing so much as never more to hear poetry spoken of: at last the fairy is reconciled to the knight, on condition that he shall pass three days with her in every year; and his wife willingly consents to let her husband derive from the society of the fairy that enthusiasm which seems so well to insure the enjoyment of what we love. The subject of this piece appears to be more ingenious than popular; but the marvellous scenes are mixed and varied in it with so much art, that it equally amuses all classes of spectators.

The new literary school, in Germany, has a system in comedy, as well as in every thing else; the delineation of manners does not suffice to excite its interest, it requires imagination in the conception of the subjects, and in the invention of the characters; the marvellous, allegory, history, no diversity of comic situations appears too much for it. The writers of this school have given the name of *the arbitrary comic* (*comique arbitraire*,) to that free range of all ideas without restraint and without determinate end. They rely, in this respect, on the example of Aristophanes, not assuredly because they approve the licentiousness of his pieces, but they are struck with the vein of gayety which they exhibit, and they would willingly introduce among the moderns that daring comedy which makes

sport of the universe, instead of confining itself to what is ridiculous in the different classes of society. The efforts of the new school tend, in general, to give more force and independence to the understanding in every province: and whatever successes they experience in this attempt, would be a victory for literature, and still more for the energy of the German character itself; but it is always difficult to influence, by general ideas, the spontaneous effusions of the imagination; and besides, a comedy calculated to lead the populace, like that of the Greeks, would never agree with the actual state of European society.

Aristophanes lived under a government so republican, that the people had a share in every part of it, and affairs of state were easily transferred from the forum to the theatre. He lived in a country where philosophical speculations were almost as familiar to all men as the *chefs-d'œuvre* of art, because the schools were held in the open air, and the most abstract ideas were clothed in the brilliant colors which the sky and nature lent to them; but how create anew all this animation of life amid the frosts of our atmosphere, and with our domestic habits of existence? Modern civilization has multiplied the means of observing the human heart; man is better acquainted with man; and the soul, as it were, disseminated, offers to the writer a thousand new shades of variety. Comedy takes advantage of these shades, and when able to give them the relief of dramatic situations, the spectator is delighted to recognize on the stage, characters such as he may easily meet with in the world; but the introduction of the people at large into comedy, of choruses into tragedy, of allegorical personages, of sects of philosophy, in short, of all that presents men *en masse*, and in an abstract manner, would never please the spectators of our times. They require specific names and individual characters; they seek the interest of romance even in comedy, and society on the stage.

Among the writers of the new school, Tieck possesses, most of all, the true feeling of pleasantry; not that he has composed a single comedy that can be acted, or that those he has writ-

ten are well arranged, but they display brilliant traces of very original humor. At first he seized, in a manner which reminds us of La Fontaine, the handle for pleasantry which animals are calculated to furnish. He has composed a comedy entitled *Puss in Boots*, which is admirable in this manner. I know not what effect would be produced on the stage by speaking animals; perhaps they are more amusing to be imagined than to be seen; but these animals personified, and acting like men, give, notwithstanding, an idea of the real comedy which nature inspires. All comic, that is, selfish and sensual characters, have a touch of the animal. It matters little, then, whether the comedy is the animal imitating man, or man imitating the animal.

Tieck also interests us by the direction he has known how to give to his talent for ridicule; he bends its whole force against a calculating and plodding spirit; and as most of the pleasantries of society have for their object to cast ridicule upon enthusiasm, we love the author who ventures himself, foot to foot against prudence, selfishness, all those qualities that pretend to the appellation of reason, behind which the middling sort of people think themselves securely placed to shoot their arrows against superior characters or abilities. They rely on what they call a just medium to censure every thing distinguished; and while elegance consists in the superfluous abundance of objects of external luxury, it seems as if this same elegance interdicted all luxury in the mind, all exultation in sentiments—in short, all that does not immediately tend to improve the prosperity of worldly affairs. Modern selfishness has found out the art of praising reserve and moderation in all things, so as to mask itself under the semblance of wisdom; and it was only at length perceived that such opinions might well annihilate genius, generosity, love, and religion: what would it leave that is worth the pain of living?

Two of Tieck's comedies, *Octavian* and *Prince Zerbino*, are, both of them, very ingeniously combined. A son of the Emperor Octavian (an imaginary personage placed by a fairy tale under the reign of King Dagobert), while yet an infant in the

cradle, is lost in a forest. A citizen of Paris finds him, brings him up with his own son, and makes himself pass for his father. At twenty years of age, the heroical inclinations of the young prince betray him under every circumstance, and nothing is more striking than the contrast between his character and that of his pretended brother, whose blood does not belie the education he has received. The efforts of the sage citizen to cram the head of his adopted son with lessons of domestic economy are altogether useless: he sends him to market to purchase some bullocks; the young man, on his return, sees a hawk in the hands of a huntsman, and, enchanted with its beauty, exchanges the bullocks for the hawk, and comes back quite proud of having obtained such a bird at such a price. Another time he meets a horse, and is transported with its warlike air: he inquires the price of it, and when he is informed, angry at their asking so little for so noble an animal, he pays twice the value for it.

The pretended father for a long time resists the young man's natural propensities, which animate him with ardor in the pursuit of danger and glory; but when he finds himself at last unable to prevent him from taking arms against the Saracens, who are besieging Paris, and when he hears his exploits made the subject of universal praise, the old citizen, on his side, is seized by a sort of poetical contagion; and nothing is more pleasant than the whimsical mixture of what he was, and of what he wishes to become, of his vulgar language, and the gigantic images with which his discourse is filled. At last the young man is recognized for the emperor's son, and each individual returns to the rank which is suitable to his character. This subject furnishes a number of scenes full of wit and true comic humor; and the contrast between common life and chivalrous sentiments was never better represented.

Prince Zerbino is a very lively painting of the astonishment of a whole court, at witnessing in its sovereign a propensity to enthusiasm, devotion, and all the noble imprudencies of a generous character. All the old courtiers suspect that he is mad, and advise him to travel, to set his ideas right as to things as

they really are. They assign to him a very reasonable man for his governor, to bring him back to the positive knowledge of life. One fine day in summer he is walking abroad with his pupil in a beautiful wood, while the birds are heard to sing, the wind gently stirs the leaves, and animated nature seems, on all side, to be addressing a prophetic language to man. The governor perceives in these vague and multiplied sensations nothing but noise and confusion; and when he returns to the palace, he congratulates himself on seeing the trees converted into household furniture, all the productions of nature rendered subservient to utility, and artificial order instead of the tumultuous movement of natural existence. The courtiers are reassured when, on his return from his travels, Prince Zerbino, enlightened by experience, promises to concern himself no longer about the fine arts, poetry, and exalted sentiments, or any thing else, in short, but what tends to the triumph of selfishness over enthusiasm.

What the generality of men are most afraid of, is the being taken for dupes, and who think it much less ridiculous to appear wrapped up in themselves, under every circumstance, than deceived even in one. There is, therefore, wit, and a noble employment of wit, in turning incessantly into ridicule all personal calculation; enough of it will always remain to keep the world in motion, while, one of these days, the very remembrance even of a nature truly elevated, may vanish altogether.

In Tieck's comedies is to be found a gayety arising out of characters, and not consisting in witty epigram, a gayety in which the imagination is inseparable from the pleasantry; but sometimes this very imagination sets comic humor at a distance, and brings back lyrical poetry into scenes where we expect to find only the ridiculous in motion. Nothing is so difficult to the Germans as to abstain from abandoning themselves, in all their works, to reverie; and yet comedy, and the theatre in general, are hardly proper for it, for of all impressions, reverie is precisely that which is the most solitary; we can hardly communicate its inspirations to the most intimate

friend: how is it possible, then, to associate with them an assembled multitude?

Among these allegorical pieces, must be reckoned *the Triumph of Sentimentality*, a little comedy of Goethe's in which he has very ingeniously availed himself of the double absurdity of affected enthusiasm and real inanity. The principal personage in this piece seems to be prepossessed with all the ideas which imply a strong imagination and a profound intellect; and yet he is in truth only a prince well educated, highly polished, and very obedient to the rules of propriety; he has taken it into his head to add to all this a sensibility at command, the affectation of which continually betrays him. He thinks he loves the gloom of forests, the moonlight, and starry nights; but, as he is afraid of cold and fatigue, he has scenes painted for him to represent these various objects, and never travels without being followed by a great wagon, in which all the beauties of nature are carried after him.

This sentimental prince also fancies himself in love with a woman, whose wit and genius have been highly extolled to him. This woman, to try him, puts in her place a veiled puppet, which, as we may suppose, says nothing in the least degree improper, and whose silence passes for the reserve of good taste, and the melancholy thoughtfulness of a tender soul.

The prince, enchanted with this companion, according to his wishes, asks the puppet in marriage, and only at last discovers that he is unhappy enough to have chosen a mere doll for his wife, while his court afforded him such a number of women, who might have united in themselves all the principal advantages of such a partner.

It cannot, however, be denied, that ingenious ideas are not enough to make a good comedy, and the French, in the quality of comic writers, have the advantage over all other nations. The knowledge of men, and the art of making use of that knowledge, secures to them the highest rank in this department; but we might perhaps sometimes wish, even in Molière's best pieces, that reasoning satire held less place, and

that imagination had more scope in them. The *Festin de Pierre* is, among all his comedies, that which has the nearest resemblance to the German system: a prodigy that makes one shudder, serves as the moving principle to the most comic situations; and the greatest effects of the imagination are mingled with the most lively shades of pleasantry. This subject, equally witty and poetical, is borrowed from the Spaniards. Bold conceptions are very rare in France; in literature, they like to work in safety: but whenever a fortunate circumstance has encouraged them to risk themselves, taste directs boldness with wonderful address; and a foreign invention, thrown into method by the art of a Frenchman, will always be a first-rate production of genius.

CHAPTER XXVII.

OF DECLAMATION.

THE art of declamation, leaving only recollections behind it, and being incapable of erecting any durable monument, it has followed that men have reflected but little upon what it is composed of. Nothing is so easy as the moderate exercise of this art, but it is not unjustly that in its perfection it excites so high a degree of enthusiasm, and, far from depreciating this impression as a transient emotion, I think that regular causes may be assigned to it. We seldom attain, in life, to penetrate the secret thoughts of men; affectation and falsehood, coldness and modesty, exaggerate, vary, restrain, or conceal whatever passes at the bottom of the heart. A great actor puts in evidence the signs of truth in sentiments and in characters, and discovers to us the certain marks of real inclinations and emotions. So many individuals pass through life without considering the danger of their passions and their strength, that the theatre often reveals man to man, and inspires him with a holy dread of the tempests of the soul. In fact, what words are capable of painting them like an accent,

a gesture, a look! Words tell us less than accent, accent less than physiognomy, and the inexpressible is precisely that with which a sublime actor brings us acquainted.

The same differences that exist between the tragic system of the Germans, and that of the French, are also to be found in their mode of declaiming; the Germans imitate nature as closely as they are able,—they have no affectation but that of simplicity; but even this may be an affectation in the fine arts. The German actors sometimes touch the heart deeply, and sometimes leave the spectator in a state of perfect frigidity; they then trust themselves to his patience, and are sure of not being deceived. The English have more of majesty than the Germans in their mode of reciting verses, but they nevertheless want the habitual pomp which the French nation, and above all French tragedy, require of their actors; our style will not admit of mediocrity, for it brings us back to the natural only by the very beauty of art itself. The second-rate actors in Germany are cold and quiet; they are often wanting in tragic effect, but are hardly ever ridiculous: it is the same on the German stage as in society; we meet with people who sometimes fatigue us, and that is all; while, on the French stage, we become impatient if our emotions are not excited: turgid and unnatural sounds then disgust us so entirely with tragedy, that there is no parody, however vulgar, which we do not prefer to the insipidity of mannerism.

The accessories of art, machinery, and decorations ought to be more attended to in Germany than in France, since these means are more frequently employed in the former nation. Iffland has been able to accomplish, at Berlin, all that can be desired in this respect; but at Vienna, they neglect even the necessary means for the good representation of the material parts of tragedy. Memory is infinitely more cultivated by the French than by the German actors. The prompter at Vienna used to furnish most of the actors with every word of their parts; and I have seen him following Othello from one side-scene to another, to prompt him with the verses which he had to pronounce at the bottom of the stage, on poniarding Desdemona.

The theatre at Weimar is infinitely better ordered in all respects.[1] The prince, himself an intelligent man, and the man of genius, the connoisseur in the arts, who preside there, have found the means of uniting taste and elegance to that boldness which encourages new adventures.

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[1] "'The Weimar School,' says Devrient,[2] who is here speaking *ex professo*, and is worth attending to, 'although it demanded of the artist "to produce something resembling nature," nevertheless set up a new standard of nobleness and beauty, by which every phenomenon in the region of art was to be tested. The tendency hitherto dominant had by no means neglected the beautiful, but it had sought only a *beautiful reality*,—now, with subtle distinction, *beautiful truth* was demanded from it. Hitherto, *living nature* had served as the standard; now, an *enlightened taste* was to be the rule. The actors were to disaccustom themselves to the native German manner, and find a freer, a more universal conception; they were to raise themselves out of the narrow limits of the special, of the individual, to the contemplation of the general, of the Ideal.

"'These were astoundingly new and hard demands on the actor. Hitherto a plain understanding, with vivid and sensitive feelings, had tolerably well sufficed to make this natural talent tell; for the problems lay within the actor's circle of vision. Now, appeal was principally made to his taste; he was required to have a refined instinct, and ennobled sentiments, which, to a certain degree, presupposed scientific and antiquarian culture; for, instead of *nature*, as hitherto, the antique was now the model of speech and feature. The actual culture of the histrionic class was not in the remotest degree adequate to these demands; what, then, was to be done? The Weimar School must content itself with *training*; it must seek to supply by external drilling what ought properly to have proceeded from a higher intellectual life, from an intrinsically ennobled nature. Nothing else remained to it. The spirit of our literature was pressing forward with unexampled power to that summit on which it could from thenceforth measure itself with that of all other nations; it carried along with it theatrical art, such as it was. If the attempt had been made to advance the culture of actors as far as was necessary, in order to bring it even with the victorious march of our literature, the moment would have been lost in which the stage could render immeasurable service to the national culture.

"'Goethe and Schiller had essentially this mission: to elevate poetry; to carry the intellectual life of the nation into higher ideal regions; literature was their *immediate* object, the stage only a secondary one; nay, it was with them only a means to an end. To work with entire devotion to dramatic art, solely for it and through it, as Molière and Shakspeare did, never occurred to them; nor would they imitate Lessing, who attached himself closely to art, to what it achieved, and could achieve. They placed

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[2] *Geschichte der deutschen Schauspiel Kunst*, p. 255.

On this stage, as on all others in Germany, the same actors play both comic and tragic parts. It is said that this diversity stands in the way of their ever becoming eminent in either. Yet the greatest of theatrical geniuses, Garrick and Talma,

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themselves and their poems on the standpoint of the independent *literary* drama. The old schism between the *genres* again presented itself, the scholarly in opposition to the popular drama; and poetic art again won the supremacy over dramatic. *Don Carlos* and *Wallenstein* were not conceived for the actual stage, and could only be adapted to it with great labor and sacrifice; in writing *Faust*, *Tasso*, and the *Natürliche Tochter*, Goethe did not contemplate their representation, which must be considered purely as a theatrical experiment. It was a natural consequence that, since the two great poets adapted their works to the theatre just as it was, and were by no means excessively fastidious in their mode of doing it, they, with the same sort of violence, pushed forward the art of representation, and here also had to content themselves with what could be achieved by merely external discipline. Dramatic art had not reached that point of culture which could prepare it perfectly to comprehend and master their poems, and reproduce them independently. . . . . Now if this new school was to make its authority in taste acknowledged, that authority must necessarily be exercised with a certain despotism;—with despotism towards the actors and the public, since both were deeply imbued with naturalism. Like the unfortunate Neuber, like Schroeder in his eightieth year, Schiller and Goethe placed themselves in decided opposition to the taste of the majority. They maintained a thoroughly aristocratic position with respect to the public, and defended the ideal principle with all the power of their pre-eminent genius; nay, they did not scorn to attack the prevalent taste with the sharpest weapons of satire. Their correspondence exhibits their contempt for the masses, and for the champions of the popular taste, in all that rudeness which seems inseparable from the enthusiasm of great souls for a more exalted humanity. Nowhere did they sue for the approbation of the multitude; nowhere did they accommodate themselves to the ruling taste, or even flatter it.

"'The despotic energy with which Goethe carried out the ideal principle, in spite of all difficulties, necessarily made itself felt in his direction of the theatre. He had to urge forward dramatic art, and to wring from the public a formal respect for the experiments of his school; a double task, which obliged him to surpass even Schroeder in the peremptoriness of his commands.

"'How great the difficulty which was here to be overcome, can scarcely be appreciated in the present day, when every variety of verse is current on the most insignificant stage. The language of poetry was lost; the attempt to restore the Alexandrines had everywhere failed; rhythmic feeling, which the higher development of the opera had certainly extended among artists, was not yet understood, not yet applied to language. That even Mannheim, where attempts had most frequently been made with

have united them both. The flexibility of organs, which transmits different impressions with equal facility, seems to me the seal of natural talent; and in fiction, as in reality, melancholy and gayety are possibly derived from the same source. Be-

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iambic verse, had remained far from clear as to its principle, was proved by Iffland's very defective treatise on this verse. Schroeder, in the representation of *Don Carlos* at Hamburg, true to his system, had laid no weight on the rhetorical side. Thus there existed difficulties similar to those which, at the end of the seventeenth century, hindered the spread of the Alexandrine verse, and the influence of the Silesian school of poets on literature. It was fortunate, therefore, that the poets who introduced the new metrical language were consummate masters in its use, and that they had opportunity and power enough to solve the problem practically. When this had once been done, imitation might be calculated upon, and the influential mediator, Iffland, offered himself readily for that purpose. But immediately another problem urged itself—namely, how to treat correctly the doggerel rhymes in *Wallenstein's Lager*. The great poets feared the danger which lay for the reciter in the irregularity of the rhyme—in the temptation to fall too perceptibly on the rhyme; but, remarkably enough, this point was soon settled. It was as if the mediæval popular verse lay in the German blood; it only required a summons to call it forth again naturally and flowingly, as in the time of Hans Sachs, and Jacob Ayrer. . . . . The system of direction which was introduced by Schroeder, and in which the highest value was attached to reading-rehearsals as the basis of all artistic execution, was adopted by Goethe; in this case, in which the rhetorical part of the representation was so new and so surpassingly important, these rehearsals must not only be multiplied, but converted into formal exercises in reading. And so difficult was it to give rhythm its due, that Goethe, in the zeal of demonstration, went so far as to seize the arm of a principal and popular actress, and to move it backwards and forwards in iambic measure, so as make the rhythm intelligible by the accompaniment of a resentfully accentuated *sch*. The solution of the new problem involved hard trials of patience on all sides, and many a custom which had become prevalent under the old system, was a hindrance to the work. Thus, Goethe writes to Schiller, after a reading-rehearsal: "Mlle. Teller read the Duchess yesterday so far well that she did not read falsely, but too feebly, and too much in rehearsal fashion. She assures me that all will be different on the stage. As this is a universal whim with actors, I cannot blame her in particular for it, though this folly is the principal cause that no important part is properly learned, and that at last so much depends on chance."'

"Not only were there difficulties of rhythm, but also of pronunciation to be overcome. The German language, harsh as it is at the best, becomes hideous in the careless licenses of pronunciation which various cities and classes adopt—as people who are too ugly to hope for any admiration of their persons, come at last entirely to neglect their appearance. The Sua-

sides, in Germany the pathetic and the humorous so often succeed and are mingled with each other in tragedies, that it is very desirable for the actors to possess the power of expressing both alike; and the best German actor, Iffland, has given the example of it with deserved success. I have not met in Germany with any good actors in high comedy, marquises, coxcombs, etc. What constitutes grace in this description of parts, is that which the Italians call the *disinvoltura*, and which the French would express by the *air dégagé*. The habit which the Germans possess, of giving importance to every thing, is precisely that which is most contrary to this easy lightness. But it is impossible to carry originality, the comic vein, and the art of painting characters, to a greater length than Iffland has done in his parts. I do not believe that we have ever seen on the French stage a genius more varied or more unexpected than his, or an actor who ventures to render natural defects and absurdities with so striking an expression. There are certain given models in comedy, avaricious fathers, spendthrift sons, knavish servants, duped guardians; but Iffland's parts, such as he conceives them, can enter into none of these moulds: each of them must be designated by its name; for they are so many individuals remarkably different from each other, and in all of whom Iffland appears to exist as in himself.

His manner of playing tragedy is also, in my opinion, of

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bians. Austrians, and especially the Weimarians, plagued Goethe terribly with their snorting of that 'language of horses,' as Charles V called it. 'One would scarcely believe that *b*, *p*, *d*, and *t*, are generally considered to be *four* different letters,' said the poet to Eckermann, 'for they only speak of a hard and a soft *b*, and of a hard and a soft *d*, and thus seem tacitly to intimate that *p* and *t* do not exist.[1] With such people, *pein* (pain) sounds like *bein* (leg), *pass* (pass) like *bass* (bass), and *teckel* (a terrier) like *deckel* (cover). Thus, an actor, in an impassioned moment bidding his mistress cease her reproaches, exclaimed, *O ente* (Oh, duck!) meaning *O ende* (Oh, cease!)"—(Lewes, *Life and Works of Goethe*, vol. ii. pp. 248–253.)—*Ed.*

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[1] "Ludecus, in his *Aus Goethe's Leben: Wahrheit und keine Dichtung*, tells a story of Graf, Schiller's favorite actor, who, on seeing the great Talma, exclaimed, '*Dalma ist ein Gott!*'"

grand effect. The calm simplicity of his declamation in the fine part of Wallenstein, can never be effaced from the memory. The impression he produces is gradual; it seems at first that his apparent coldness will prove incapable of exciting any emotion: but, as the play goes on, that emotion grows upon us in a continually accelerated progression, and the smallest word exercises a great power, when there reigns in the general tone a noble tranquillity, that sets off every shade, and constantly preserves the same color of character amid all the variations of passion.

Iffland, who is as superior in the theory as in the practice of his art, has published several remarkably sensible works on declamation; he gives at first a sketch of the different epochs of the history of the German theatre, the stiff and heavy imitation of the French, the *larmoyante* sensibility of dramas, of a nature so prosaic, as to have made the writers even forget the art of versifying; finally, the return to poetry and imagination that constitutes the prevailing taste in Germany at the present time. There is not an accent, not a gesture, of which Iffland has not been able to discover the cause as a philosopher and an artist.

One character in his pieces furnishes him with the most ingenious observations on comic performance; it is that of a man advanced in years, who all at once abandons his old sentiments and habits to clothe himself in the costume and opinions of the new generation. The character of this man has nothing wicked in it, and yet he is as much led astray by vanity, as if it had been intrinsically bad. He has suffered his daughter to contract a reasonable, though obscure alliance, and then, on a sudden, advises her to obtain a divorce. With some fashionable toy in his hand, smiling graciously, and balancing himself, now on one foot, then on the other, he proposes to his child to break the most sacred ties; but the existence of old age that discovers itself through a forced elegance, the real embarrassment struggling through his apparent indifference, these are traits which Iffland has seized with admirable sagacity.

In treating of Franz Moor, the brother of Schiller's Captain of the Robbers, Iffland examines in what manner the parts of villains should be played. "The actor," he says, "must take pains to make it appear by what motives the character has become what it is, what circumstances have contributed to the depravation of the soul; in short, the actor should become the sedulous defender of the part he represents." In fact, there can be no truth, even in villainy, unless we attend to the shades of character which evince that man becomes bad only by degrees.

Iffland reminds us also of the prodigious sensation excited, in the play of *Emilia Galotti*, by Eckhoff, formerly a very celebrated German actor. When Odoardo is informed by the prince's mistress that the honor of his daughter is threatened, he wishes to conceal from this woman, whom he despises, the indignation and grief that she excites in his soul, and his hands, unknown to himself, were employed in tearing the plume on his hat, with a convulsive motion that produced an effect truly terrible. The actors who succeeded Eckhoff took care to tear their plumes also; but they fell to the ground without anybody's remarking it; for genuine emotion was wanting, to give to the most indifferent actions that sublime truth which agitates the soul of the spectators.

Iffland's theory of gestures is very ingenious. He laughs at those arms of windmills that can answer no purpose but in the declamation of moral sentences, and he thinks that, in general, gestures few in number, and confined within narrow limits, give better indication of real passions; but in this respect, as in many others, there are two very distinct classes of talent—that which bears the character of poetical enthusiasm, and that which springs from the spirit of observation; the one or the other must predominate, according to the nature of the piece and of the parts. The gestures which are inspired by grace, and by the sentiment of the beautiful, are not those best adapted to characterize particular personages. Poetry expresses perfection in general, rather than a peculiar mode of existence or feeling. The art of the tragic actor consists then

in presenting in his attitudes the image of poetical beauty, without neglecting the distinguishing traits of character: the dominion of the arts always consists in the union of the ideal with the natural.

When I saw the play of *the Twenty-fourth of February* performed by two celebrated poets, A. W. Schlegel and Werner, I was singularly struck by their mode of declamation. They prepared their effects by long anticipation, and plainly discovered that they would have been vexed to be applauded at the beginning. The whole was always present to their thought; and a partial success, which might have injured that general effect, would have appeared to them only in the light of a fault. Schlegel made me first perceive, by his manner of acting in Werner's play, all the interest of a part which I had scarcely observed in the reading. It was the innocence of guilt, the unhappiness of a worthy man, who has committed a crime at the age of seven years, when he did not yet know what was crime; and who, although at peace with his conscience, has been unable to dissipate the uneasiness of his imagination. I judged the man who was represented before me, just as we penetrate a real character, by motions, looks, and accents, which betray it unconsciously. In France, the greater part of our actors never appear not to know what they are about; on the contrary, there is something studied in all the means they make use of, and the effect is always foreseen.

Schroeder, of whom all the Germans speak as an admirable actor, could not bear to have it said that he played well at such or such a moment, or that he spoke well such or such a verse. "Have I played the part well?" he would ask; "have I been the very person I represented?" And, in fact, his genius seemed to change its nature with every change ot part. In France they would not dare to recite tragedy, as he often did, in the ordinary tone of conversation. There is a general color, an established accent, which is of strict necessity in the Alexandrine verse; and the most impassioned movements rest on this pedestal as on an essential postulate of art. The French actors, in general, look to receive applause, and

deserve it, at almost every verse; the German actors pretend to it only at the conclusion of the piece, and scarcely ever obtain it sooner.

The diversity of scenes and of situations in the German pieces, necessarily gives room to much greater variety in the talents of the performers. The dumb show tells to more advantage; and the patience of the spectators permits a number of details which render the pathetic more natural. The wit of an actor, in France, consists almost entirely in declamation; in Germany there is a much greater number of accessories to this principal art; and even speech itself is sometimes hardly necessary to affect the audience.

When Schroeder, playing the part of King Lear, in a German translation, was brought sleeping upon the stage, it is said that this sleep of wretchedness and old age drew tears even before he was awakened, before his lamentations had made known his sufferings; and when he bore in his arms the body of his young daughter Cordelia, slain because she would not abandon him, nothing could be so fine as the strength given him by despair. A last hope supported him, he tried if Cordelia breathed still: he, so aged himself, could not believe that a being so young could have died already. A passionate grief, in an old man half consumed, produced the most distressing emotion.

The German actors, in general, may be justly censured for seldom putting in practice the knowledge of the arts of design, so largely spread abroad in their nation: their attitudes are not fine; the excess of their simplicity often degenerates into awkwardness, and they scarcely ever equal the French in the nobleness and elegance of their deportment and motions. However, for some time past, the German actresses have studied the art of attitude, and perfect themselves in that sort of grace, which is so necessary on the stage.

In Germany they never applaud till the end of the act, or very seldom interrupt the actor to testify to him the admiration he inspires. The Germans look upon it as a sort of barbarism to disturb, by tumultuous marks of approbation, the

deep emotion with which they love to be penetrated in silence. But this is an additional difficulty for the actors; for it requires an astonishing force of genius to dispense, in declaiming, with the encouragement of the public. In an art which is entirely of emotion, assemblies of spectators communicate an all-powerful electricity which nothing can supply.

From an habitual exercise in the practice of the art, it may happen that a good actor, in repeating a performance, shall pass over the same tracks, and employ the same methods, without the spectators animating him anew; but the first inspiration almost always proceeded from them. A singular contrast deserves to be remarked. In those fine arts, of which the creation is solitary and reflective, we lose whatever is natural when we think of the public, and it is self-love only that makes us think of it. In those which are of sudden impression, above all in declamation, the noise of the plaudits acts upon the soul like the sound of military music. This animating sound makes the blood circulate more swiftly, and it is not cold vanity that is satisfied by it.

When a man of genius appears in France, in whatever line, he attains almost always to a degree of perfection without example; for he unites the boldness that makes him deviate from the common road, with good taste, which it is of so much importance to preserve when the originality of talent does not suffer from it. It therefore seems to me that Talma[1] may be

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[1] "François Joseph Talma, an eminent French tragedian, was born in Paris, January 15, 1763. His father, who was a dentist, went to England shortly after the birth of his son, and practised his profession some years in London. At nine years of age young Talma returned to France, and was placed in a school at Chaillot, which was kept by Monsieur Lamarguière, a great admirer of the drama, who delighted to discover and encourage a similar taste in any of his pupils. A year after Talma had joined the school, he was entrusted with a part in an old tragedy, called 'Simois, Fils de Tamerlane,' which Monsieur Lamarguière had selected for performance by his scholars; and, so deeply did the future tragedian enter into the feeling of the character, that he burst into tears at the recital of the sorrows of the hero, whose brother he represented. At the age of twelve he wrote a little drama, in the composition of which he further developed his knowledge of the stage. He again visited London, and returned a

cited as a model of boldness and moderation, of nature and of dignity. He possesses all the secrets of the different arts; his attitudes recall the fine statues of antiquity; his *draperie*, when he least thinks about it, is folded in all his motions, as if he had had time to arrange it with the greatest care. The ex-

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second time to Paris at the latter end of the year 1781, when he commenced the study of logic in the Collège Mazarin. In 1783, he made a *coup d'essai* at the Théâtre de Doyen, in the character of Seide, in the tragedy of 'Mahomet.' A council of friends, appointed by himself, to judge of the performance, pronounced it a failure. 'He had not *le feu sacré*.' Talma deferred to this unfavorable opinion, and quietly returned to the study of his father's profession; but a few years afterwards, the same friends were called upon to reverse their judgment and confess their mistake. On the 21st of November, 1787, he made his *début* at the Théâtre Français, and in 1789, he created a great sensation by his performance of Charles IX. At the commencement of the French Revolution, he nearly fell a prey to a severe nervous disorder. On his recovery and the retirement of Larive, Talma became the principal tragic actor. He reformed the costume of the stage, and first played the part of Titus in a Roman toga. During the reign of Napoleon, he enjoyed the emperor's friendship; and was no less honored and esteemed by Louis XVIII. In 1825, he published some 'Reflections' on his favorite art; and on the 11th of June, 1826, appeared on the stage for the last time, in the part of Charles VI. During his last illness, the audiences of the Théâtre Français every evening called for an official account of the state of his health previously to the commencement of the performances. He died on the 19th of October following, and was buried in the cemetery of Père la Chaise, in the presence of an immense crowd. MM. Arnault, Jouy, and Lafour pronounced orations over his grave. The Théâtre Français remained closed for three evenings, and the Opéra Comique and Odéon were also closed on the day of his funeral. The actors of the Brussels Theatre (of which company he was an associate) wore mourning for him forty days, and a variety of honors were paid to his memory at the principal theatres throughout France and the Netherlands. Talma is said to have created seventy-one characters, among the most popular of which were those of Orestes, Œdipus, Nero, Manlius, Cæsar, Cinna, Augustus, Coriolanus, Hector, Macbeth, Hamlet, Othello, Leicester, Sylla, Regulus, Danville (in 'L'Ecole des Veillards'), Leonidas, Charles VI, and Henry VIII. He has been accused, remarks one of his biographers, of having spoken the verse of tragedy as though it were prose; but this avoidance of the jingle of rhyme was one of the greatest improvements which he introduced upon the French stage. In person he was about the middle height, square built, and with a most expressive and noble countenance. His voice was exceedingly fine and powerful, his attitudes dignified and graceful. In private life he was distinguished for his manly frankness, his kind disposition, and unaffected manners. He spoke English perfectly, and was a great admirer of England and her institutions.

pression of his countenance, that of his eye, ought to be studied by all painters. Sometimes he enters with his eyes only half open, and, on a sudden, feeling makes rays of light spring from them which seem to illuminate the whole theatre.

The sound of his voice agitates from the moment he speaks, before even the sense of the words he utters can have excited any emotion. Where any descriptive poetry accidentally finds place in a tragedy, he has brought out its beauties with as much feeling as if he were Pindar himself reciting the odes of his own composition. Others have need of time to excite emotion, and they do well to take time for the purpose; but in the voice of this man there is I know not what magic which, at its first accents, awakens all the sympathies of the heart. The charm of music, of painting, of sculpture, of poetry, and above all, of the language of the soul, these are the means he employs to develop in his auditor all the force of the generous or of the terrible passions.

What knowledge of the human heart he displays in his manner of conceiving his parts! he becomes their second author by his accents and his physiognomy. When Œdipus relates to Jocasta how he has killed Laius, without knowing him, his recital begins thus: *J'étais jeune et superbe.*[1] Most actors, before him, thought it necessary to act the word *superbe*, and used to draw up their heads as a sign of it; Talma, who feels that all the recollections of the proud Œdipus begin to affect him in the nature of remorse, pronounces in a timid voice these words, calculated to remind him of a confidence that he has lost. Phorbas arrives from Corinth at the moment when Œdipus has first conceived doubts respecting his birth; he demands a private conference with him. Other actors, before Talma, made haste to turn to their followers, and dismiss them with an air of majesty; Talma remains with his eyes fixed upon Phorbas: he cannot lose him from his sight, and only makes

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He was the friend and guest of John Kemble, and was present in Covent Garden Theatre when that great actor took his leave of the stage."—(*English Cylopædia.*)—*Ed.*

[1] "I was young and proud."

a sign by waving his hand to those around him. He has said nothing yet, but his bewildered motions betray the trouble of his soul; and when, in the last act, he exclaims, on quitting Jocasta,

"Oui, Laïus est mon père et je suis votre fils,"[1]

we think we see open before us the cavern of Tænarus, into which mortals are dragged by perfidious destiny.

In *Andromaque*, when Hermione, out of her senses, accuses Orestes of having assassinated Pyrrhus without her participation, Orestes answers,

"Et ne m'avez-vous pas
Vous-même, ici, tantôt, ordonné son trépas?"

It is said that Le Kain, in reciting this verse, laid an emphasis on every word, as if to recall to Hermione all the circumstances of the order he had received from her. This would be very well before a judge; but, before a woman one loves, the despair of finding her unjust and cruel, is the only sentiment that fills the soul. It is thus that Talma conceives the situation: an exclamation escapes from the heart of Orestes; he pronounces the first words with emphasis, and those that follow with a sound of voice gradually weakening: his arms fall, his countenance becomes in an instant pale as death, and the emotion of the spectator augments in proportion as he seems to lose the power of expressing himself.

The manner in which Talma recites the succeeding monologue is sublime. The kind of innocence that returns to the soul of Orestes only to torture it, when he repeats this verse—

"J'assassine à regret un roi que je révère,"[1]

inspires a compassion which the genius of Racine itself could hardly have foreseen altogether. Great actors have almost always made trial of themselves in the madness of Orestes; but it is there above all that the grandeur of gestures and of

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[1] "Yes, Laius is my father and I am your son."
[2] "I assassinate with regret a king that I revere."

features adds wonderfully to the effect of the despair. The power of grief is so much the more terrible, as it displays itself through the very repose and dignity of a noble nature.

In pieces taken from Roman history, Talma displays a talent of a very different nature, but not less remarkable in its way. We understand Tacitus better after having seen him perform the part of Nero; he manifests in that part a great sagacity; for it is only by sagacity that a virtuous mind seizes the symptoms of guilt; nevertheless, he produces a still stronger effect, I think, in those parts where we love to abandon ourselves, in listening to him, to the sentiments he expresses. He has done Bayard, in du Belloy's play, the service of setting him free from those airs of rodomontade which other authors had thought it necessary to bestow upon him: this Gascon hero is again become, thanks to Talma, as simple in tragedy as in history. His costume in this part, his plain and appropriate gestures, recall the statues of knights that we see in old churches, and we feel astonished that a man who possesses so truly the feeling of ancient art, has been able to transport himself also to the character of the middle ages.

Talma sometimes plays the part of Pharan in a tragedy by Ducis, on an Arabian subject, Abufar. A number of enchanting verses sheds a wonderful charm over this tragedy; the colors of the East, the pensive melancholy of the south of Asia, the melancholy which belongs to those regions where the sun consumes instead of embellishing nature, make themselves admirably felt in this work. The same Talma, the Grecian, the Roman, the chivalrous, becomes an Arab of the desert, full of energy and of love; his looks are guarded, as if to avoid the heat of the sun's rays; his gestures evince an admirable alternation of indolence and impetuosity; sometimes fate overwhelms him, sometimes he appears more powerful than nature herself, and seems to triumph over her: the passion which devours him, the object of which is a woman whom he believes to be his sister, is concealed in his bosom; one would say, by his uncertain pace, that he wishes to fly from himself; his eyes are averted from her he loves, his hands repel an image which

he thinks he always sees at his side; and when at last he presses Salema to his heart, with this simple word, *J'ai froid*,[1] he finds means of expressing at once the shudder of soul, and the devouring ardor which he endeavors to hide.

Many faults may be found in the plays of Shakspeare adapted to our theatre by Ducis; but it would be great injustice to deny them beauties of the first order; the genius of Ducis is in his heart, and it is there that he is great. Talma performs his characters like a friend to the talent of this noble old man. The scene of the witches, in Macbeth, is changed into recitation in the French play. Talma should be seen endeavoring to render something vulgar and uncouth in the accent of the witches, and to preserve at the same time, all the dignity exacted by our theatre.

> "Par des mots inconnus, ces êtres monstrueux
> S'appelaient tour à tour, s'applaudissaient entre eux,
> S'approchaient, me montraient avec un ris farouche ;
> Leur doigt mystérieux se posait sur leur bouche.
> Je leur parle, et dans l'ombre ils s'échappent soudain,
> L'un avec un poignard, l'autre un sceptre à la main ;
> L'autre d'un long serpent serrait le corps livide ;
> Tous trois vers ce palais ont pris un vol rapide,
> Et tous trois dans les airs, en fuyant loin de moi,
> M'ont laissé pour adieu ces mots : 'Tu seras roi.' "

The low and mysterious voice of the actor in pronouncing these verses, the manner in which he placed his finger on his mouth, like the statue of silence, his look, which altered to express a horrible and repulsive recollection,—all were combined to paint a species of the marvellous new to our theatre, and of which no former tradition could give any idea.

Othello has not latterly succeeded on the French stage; it seems as if Orosmane prevented our rightly understanding Othello; but when Talma performs this part, the fifth act occasions as strong an emotion as if the assassination actually passed before our eyes; I have seen Talma, in private company,

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[1] "I am cold."

declaim the last scene with his wife, whose voice and figure are so well suited to Desdemona; it was enough for him to pass his hand over his hair, and knit his brow, in order to become the Moor of Venice, and terror occupied all the distance of two paces from him, as if all the illusions of the theatre had encompassed him.

Hamlet is his glory among the tragedies of foreign style. The spectators do not see the ghost of Hamlet's father on the French stage, the apparition passes only in the physiognomy of Talma, and it is certainly not at all the less terrifying. When, in the midst of a calm and melancholy conversation, he all at once perceives the spectre, all his motions are followed in the eyes that contemplate him, and we cannot doubt the presence of the phantom attested by such a look.

When Hamlet enters alone in the third act, and recites in fine French verses the famous soliloquy, *To be or not to be*—

> "La mort, c'est le sommeil, c'est un réveil peut-être.
> Peut-être!—Ah! c'est le mot qui glace, epouvanté,
> L'homme, au bord du cercueil, par le doute arrêté;
> Devant ce vaste abîme, il se jette en arrière,
> Ressaisit l'existence, et s'attache à la terre,"

Talma used no gesture, he only sometimes shook his head as if to question earth and heaven respecting the nature of death. Without motion, the dignity of meditation absorbed all his being. He was one man, among two thousand silent spectators. interrogating thought concerning the destiny of mortals! In a few years all that was there will exist no longer; but others will assist in their turn at the same uncertainties, and will plunge, in like manner, into the abyss without knowing its depth.

When Hamlet wishes to make his mother swear on the urn that incloses the ashes of her husband, that she had no part in the crime which caused his destruction, she hesitates, is troubled, and ends by confessing her guilt. Then Hamlet draws the dagger which his father commands him to plunge into the maternal bosom; but at the moment when he is about to strike, tenderness and compassion overcome him, and,

turning back towards the shade of his father, he exclaims, *Grace, grace, mon père!* with an accent in which all the emotions of nature seem at once to escape from the heart, and throwing himself at the feet of his mother, who has swooned away, he speaks to her these two lines, which contain a sentiment of inexhaustible pity—

> "Votre crime est horrible, exécrable, odieux,
> Mais il n'est pas plus grand que la bonté des cieux."

To conclude, it is impossible to think of Talma without recalling *Manlius*. This piece produced little effect on the stage; it is the subject of Otway's *Venice Preserved*, applied to an event of Roman history. Manlius conspires against the senate of Rome; he confides his secret to Servilius, whom he has loved for fifteen years; he confides it to him in spite of the suspicions of his other friends, who distrust the weakness of Servilius, and his love for his wife, the consul's daughter. What the conspirators feared actually takes place. Servilius is unable to hide from his wife the danger to which her father's life is exposed; she immediately runs to reveal it to him. Manlius is arrested, his projects discovered, and the senate condemns him to be thrown headlong from the Tarpeian Hill.

Before Talma, people had scarcely discovered in this piece, which is feebly written, the passion of friendship which Manlius experiences for Servilius. When a note of the conspirator Rutilius gives to understand that the secret is betrayed, and betrayed by Servilius, Manlius enters with this note in his hand; he draws nigh to his guilty friend, already devoured by remorse, and showing him the lines which accuse him, pronounces these words,—*Qu'en dis-tu?*[1] I ask all who have heard them, can the countenance and the tone of the voice ever express, at one time, so many different impressions? that rage, softened by an inward feeling of pity—that indignation, rendered by friendship alternately more lively and more feeble

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[1] "What sayest thou of it?"

—how make them understood, if not by that accent which passes from soul to soul, without the intermediate office even of words! Manlius draws his dagger to strike Servilius with it; his hand seeks his heart, and trembles lest it should find it: the remembrance of so many years, during which Servilius was dear to him, raises as it were a cloud of tears between his revenge and his friend.

The fifth act has been less spoken of, and yet Talma is perhaps still more admirable in that than in the fourth. Servilius has encountered all hazards to expiate his fault and preserve Manlius. At the bottom of his heart he has resolved, if his friend should perish, to partake his lot. The grief of Manlius is softened by the regret of Servilius; nevertheless he dares not tell him that he forgives his frightful treason, but he takes the hand of Servilius in private, and presses it to his heart; his involuntary motions seek the guilty friend, whom he wishes to embrace once more before he parts from him forever. Nothing, or scarcely any thing in the play itself, pointed out this admirable beauty of a feeling soul still paying respect to ancient affection, in spite of the treason that has broken it. The parts of Pierre and Jaffier, in the English play, indicate this situation very forcibly. Talma has found means of giving to the tragedy of *Manlius* the energy it wants, and nothing does so much honor to his talent as the truth with which he expresses the invincibility of friendship. Passion may hate the object of its love; but when the tie is formed by the sacred relations of the soul, it seems that crime itself is incapable of destroying it, and that we look for remorse just as, after a long absence, we should look for the return.

In speaking somewhat in detail about Talma, I do not consider myself as having rested on a subject foreign to that of my work. This artist gives as much as possible to French tragedy of what, either justly or unjustly, the Germans accuse it of wanting—originality and nature. He knows how to characterize foreign manners in the different parts he represents, and no actor more frequently hazards great effects by simple expedients. In his mode of declaiming, he has artificially

combined Shakspeare and Racine together. Why should not dramatic writers endeavor also to unite in their compositions what the actor has been able to amalgamate so happily in his performance?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OF ROMANCES.

Of all fictions, romances being the easiest, there is no career in which the writers of modern nations have more generally essayed themselves. The romance constitutes what may be called the transition between real and imaginary existence. The history of every individual is, with some modifications, a romance sufficiently similar to those which are printed, and personal recollections often, in this respect, take place of invention. It has been attempted to give more importance to this species of compositions, by mixing with it poetry, history, and philosophy; but it seems to me that this is to alter its nature. Moral reflections and impassioned eloquence may find room in romances, but the interest of situations ought always to be the first principle of action in this sort of writings, and nothing can ever properly supply its place. If theatrical effect is the indispensable condition for all pieces for representation, it is equally true that a romance can be neither a good work, nor a happy fiction, unless it inspires a lively curiosity; it is in vain that we would supply the want of this by ingenious digressions: the expectation of amusement frustrated would cause an insurmountable fatigue.

The multitude of love romances published in Germany has somewhat turned into ridicule the light of the moon, the harps that resound at evening through the valley, in short, all known and approved methods of softly soothing the soul; and yet we have a natural disposition that is delighted with these easy sorts of reading, and it is the part of genius to avail itself of a

disposition which it would be in vain to think of combating. It is so sweet to love and to be loved, that this hymn of life is susceptible of infinite modulation, without the heart experiencing any lassitude; thus we return with pleasure to the first melody of a song embellished by brilliant variations. I shall not however dissemble that romances, even those which are most pure, do mischief; they have too well discovered to us the most secret recesses of sentiment. Nothing can be experienced that we do not remember to have read before, and all the veils of the heart have been rent. The ancients would never thus have made of the human soul a subject of fiction; it remained a sanctuary for them, into which their own looks would have feared to penetrate; but in fine, the class of romances once admitted, there must be interest in it; and it is, as Cicero said of action in the Orator, the condition trebly necessary.

The Germans, like the English, are very fertile in romances descriptive of domestic life. The delineation of manners is more elegant in the English, but more diversified in the German. There is in England, notwithstanding the independence of characters, a generality of manner inspired by good company; in Germany nothing of this sort is matter of convention. Many of these romances, founded on our sentiments and manners, which hold among books the rank of dramas in the theatre, deserve to be cited; but that which is without equal and without parallel is *Werther;* there we behold all that the genius of Goethe was capable of producing when impassioned. It is said that he now attaches little value to this work of his youth; the effervescence of imagination, which inspired him almost with enthusiasm for suicide, may now appear to him deserving of censure. In youth, the degradation of existence not having yet any commencement, the tomb appears only a poetical image, a sleep surrounded with figures weeping for us on their knees; it is no longer the same in middle life, and we then learn why religion, that science of the soul, has mingled the horror of murder with the attempt upon one's own existence.

Nevertheless, Goethe would be much in the wrong did he

despise the admirable talent that manifests itself in *Werther;* it is not only the sufferings of love, but the maladies of the imagination, so prevalent in our times, of which he has painted the picture; those thoughts that press into the mind, without our being able to change them into acts of the will; the singular contrast of a life much more monotonous than that of the ancients, and of an internal existence much more tumultuous, cause a sort of dizziness like that which we experience on the brink of a precipice, when the very fatigue of long contemplating the abyss below may urge us to throw ourselves into it. Goethe has been able to join to this picture of the inquietudes of the soul, so philosophical in its result, a fiction, simple, but of prodigious interest. If it has been thought necessary in all the sciences to strike the eyes by outward images, is it not natural to interest the heart, in order to impress it with great thoughts?[1]

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[1] "*Werther* is a masterpiece of style; we may look through German literature in vain for such clear, sunny, pictures, fulness of life, and delicately managed simplicity. Its style is one continuous strain of music, which, restrained within the limits of prose, fulfils all the conditions of poetry; dulcet as the sound of falling waters, and as full of sweet melancholy as an autumnal eve.

"Nothing can be simpler than the structure of this book, wherein, as M. Marmier well remarks,[2] every detail is so arranged as to lay bare the sufferings of a diseased spirit. Werther arrives at his chosen retreat, believing himself cured, and anticipating perfect happiness. He is painter and poet. The fresh spring mornings, the sweet cool evenings, soothe and strengthen him. He selects a place under the limes to read and dream away the hours. There he brings his pencil and his Homer. Every thing interests him—the old woman who brings his coffee, the children who play around him, the story of a poor family. In this serene convalescence he meets with Charlotte, and a new passion agitates his soul. His simple uniform existence becomes changed. He endeavors by bodily activity to charm away his desires. The days no longer resemble each other; now ecstatic with hope, now crushed with despair. Winter comes—cold, sad, gloomy. He must away. He departs and mingles with the world, but the world disgusts him. The monotony and emptiness of official life are intolerable to his pretensions; the parchment pride of the noblesse is insulting to his sense of superiority. He returns to the peaceful scene of his former contentment, and finds indeed Charlotte, the children, his favorite

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[2] *Etudes sur Goethe*, p. 11.

Romances by means of letters, always suppose more of sentiment than of fact; the ancients would never have thought of giving this form to their fictions; and it is only for two centuries past that philosophy has been sufficiently directed within

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woods and walks, but not the calmness which he seeks. The hopelessness of his position overwhelms him. Disgusted with the world—unsatisfied in his cravings—he dies by his own hand.

Rosenkrantz, in the true spirit of that criticism which seeks everywhere for meanings more recondite than the author dreamed of, thinks that Goethe exhibits great art in making Werther a diplomatist, because a diplomatist is a man of *shams* (*scheinthuer*); but the truth is, Goethe made him precisely what he found him. His art is truth. He is so great an artist that the simplest realities have to him significance. Charlotte cutting bread and butter for the children—the scene of the ball—the children clinging round Werther for sugar, and pictures of that kind, betray so little inventive power, that they have excited the ridicule of some English critics, to whom poetry is a thing of pomp and classicality, not the beautiful vesture of reality. The beauty and art of *Werther* is not in the incidents (a Dumas would shrug despairing shoulders over such invention), but in the representation. What *is* Art but Representation?

"The effect of *Werther* was prodigious. 'That nameless unrest,' says Carlyle, 'the blind struggle of a soul in bondage, that high, sad, longing discontent which was agitating every bosom, had driven Goethe almost to despair. All felt it; he alone could give it voice. And here lies the secret of his popularity; in his deep, susceptive heart he felt a thousand times more keenly what every one was feeling; with the creative gift which belonged to him as a poet, he bodied it forth into visible shape, gave it a local habitation and a name; and so made himself the spokesman of his generation. *Werther* is but the cry of that dim, rooted pain under which all thoughtful men of a certain age were languishing: it paints the misery, it passionately utters the complaint; and heart and voice all over Europe loudly and at once respond to it. True, it prescribes no remedy; for that was a far different, far harder enterprise, to which other years and a higher culture were required; but even this utterance of pain, even this little for the present is grasped at, and with eager sympathy appropriated in every bosom. If Byron's life-weariness, his moody melancholy, and mad, stormful indignation, borne on the tones of a wild and quite artless melody, could pierce so deep into many a British heart, now that the whole matter is no longer new—is indeed old and trite—we may judge with what vehement acceptance this *Werther* must have been welcomed, coming, as it did, like a voice from the unknown regions; the first thrilling peal of that impassioned dirge which, in country after country, men's ears have listened to till they were deaf to all else. For *Werther*, infusing itself into the core and whole spirit of literature, gave birth to a race of sentimentalists who have raged and wailed in every part of the world, till the better light dawned on them, or, at worst, exhausted nature laid herself to sleep, and it was

ourselves, to enable the analysis of our feelings to hold so great a place in our books. This manner of conceiving romances is certainly not so poetical as that which consists entirely in narration; but the human mind is now much less disposed to be gratified by events even the best combined, than by observations on what passes within the heart. This disposition is the consequence of those great intellectual changes that have taken place in man; he has in general a much greater tendency to fall back upon himself, and to seek religion, love, and sentiment, in the most inward recesses of his being.

Many German writers have composed tales of ghosts and witches, and think that there is more genius in these inventions, than in a romance founded on the circumstances of ordinary life: it is very well for those who are led to it by natural inclination; but, in general, verse is necessary for the marvellous, prose is inadequate to it. When ages and countries, very different from those we live in, are represented in fiction, the charm of poetry must supply the want of that pleasure which the resemblance to ourselves would make us experience. Poetry is the winged mediator that transports times past and foreign nations into a sublime region, where admiration fills the place of sympathy.

Romances of chivalry abound in Germany; but they should have been more scrupulous in fastening them to ancient traditions: at present, they take the trouble of investigating these precious sources, and in a book called *the Book of Heroes*,[1] they

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discovered that lamenting was unproductive labor. These funereal choristers, in Germany a loud, haggard, tumultuous, as well as tearful class, were named the *Kraftmänner*, or Powermen, but have long since, like sick children, cried themselves to rest.'

"Perhaps there never was a fiction which so startled and enraptured the world. Men of all kinds and classes were moved by it. It was the companion of Napoleon when in Egypt; it penetrated into China. To convey in a sentence its wondrous popularity, we may state that in Germany it became a people's book, hawked about the streets, printed on miserable paper, like an ancient ballad; and in the Chinese empire, Charlotte and Werther were modelled in porcelain."—(Lewes, *Life and Works of Goethe*, vol. i. pp. 221–224.)—*Ed.*

[1] *Heldenbuch.—Ed.*

have found a number of adventures related with force and *naïveté;* it is of importance to preserve the color of this ancient style and of these ancient manners, and not to prolong, by the analysis of sentiments, the recitals of times in which honor and love acted on the heart of man, like the fatality of the ancients, without their reflecting on the motives of actions, or admitting any uncertainty into their operations.[1]

Philosophical romance has, for some time past, taken the lead, in Germany, of all other sorts; it does not resemble that of the French; it is not, like Voltaire's, a general idea expressed by a fact in form of apologue, but it is a picture of human life altogether impartial, a picture in which no impassioned interest predominates; different situations succeed each other in all ranks, in all conditions, in all circumstances, and the writer is present to relate them. It is upon these princi-

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[1] "Of the *Heldenbuch*, tried on its own merits, and except as illustrating that other far worthier Poem, or at most as an old national, and still in some measure popular book, we should have felt strongly inclined to say, as the curate in *Don Quixote* so often did, *Al corral con ello*, Out of window with it! Doubtless there are touches of beauty in the work, and even a sort of heartiness and antique quaintness in its wildest follies; but on the whole that George-and-Dragon species of composition has long ceased to find favor with any one; and except for its groundwork, more or less discernible, of old Northern Fiction, this *Heldenbuch* has little to distinguish it from these. Nevertheless, what is worth remark, it seems to have been a far higher favorite than the *Nibelungen*, with ancient readers: it was printed soon after the invention of printing,—some think in 1472, for there is no place or date on the first edition; at all events, in 1491, in 1509, and repeatedly since; whereas the *Nibelungen*, though written earlier, and in worth immeasurably superior, had to remain in manuscript three centuries longer. From which, for the thousandth time, inferences might be drawn as to the infallibility of popular taste, and its value as a criterion for poetry. However, it is probably in virtue of this neglect, that the *Nibelungen* boasts of its actual purity; that it now comes before us, clear and graceful as it issued from the old singer's head and heart; not overloaded with Ass-eared Giants, Fiery Dragons, Dwarfs, and Hairy Women, as the *Heldenbuch* is, many of which, as charity would hope, may be the produce of a later age than that famed *Swabian Era*, to which these poems, as we now see them, are commonly referred. Indeed, one Casper von Roen is understood to have passed the whole *Heldenbuch* through his limbec, in the fifteenth century; but like other rectifiers, instead of purifying it, to have only drugged it with still fiercer ingredients to suit the sick appetite of the time."—(*Carlyle's Essays*, pp. 244, 245.)—*Ed.*

ples that Goethe has conceived his *Wilhelm Meister*, a work greatly admired in Germany, but little known elsewhere.

Wilhelm Meister[1] is full of ingenious and lively discussions; it would make a philosophical work of the first order, if the intrigue of a romance were not introduced into it, the interest of which is not worth what is sacrificed to it; we find in it very fine and minute pictures of a certain class of society, more numerous in Germany than in other countries; a class in which artists, players, and adventurers mix with those of the bourgeois who love an independent life, and with those of the nobility who esteem themselves the protectors of the arts: every picture, taken separately, is charming; but there is no other interest in the *tout-ensemble* but what we may feel in knowing the opinion of Goethe on every subject: the hero of his novel is an intruding third person whom he has placed, we know not why, between himself and his reader.

Amid all these personages in *Wilhelm Meister*, more intelligent than important, and these situations so much more natural than prominent, a charming episode is scattered through many parts of the work, in which is united all that the warmth and originality of genius of Goethe is capable of producing of most animated. A young Italian girl is the child of love, and of a criminal and frightful love, which has taken hold of a man consecrated by oath to the worship of the divinity; the lovers, already so culpable, discover after their marriage that they are brother and sister, and that incest has been rendered for them the punishment of perjury. The mother loses her reason, and the father runs over the world like an unhappy wanderer who refuses any shelter. The unfortunate fruit of this fatal love, without support from its birth, is carried away by a troop of rope-dancers; they exercise it to the age of ten years, in the wretched play which constitutes their own subsistence: the cruel treatment they make it undergo excites the interest of Wilhelm, and he takes into his service this young girl, in the dress of a boy, which she has worn ever since her birth.

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[1] It has been translated by Carlyle, and is within the reach of every one.—*Ed.*

There is developed in this extraordinary creature, a singular mixture of childishness and depth of understanding, of seriousness and imagination; ardent like the women of Italy, silent and persevering like a person of reflection, speech does not seem to be her natural language. The few words she utters, however, are solemn, and answerable to sentiments much stronger than those natural to her age, and of which she does not herself possess the secret. She becomes attached to Wilhelm with love and reverence; she serves him as a faithful domestic, she loves him as an impassioned wife: her life having been always unhappy, it seems as if she had never known childhood, and as if having been doomed to suffering in an age which nature has destined only for enjoyments, she existed only for one solitary affection with which the beatings of her heart begin and end.

The character of Mignon (this is the young girl's name) is mysterious like a dream; she expresses her longing for Italy in some enchanting verses which all people know by heart in Germany: "Dost thou know the land where citron-trees flourish?" etc. In the end, jealousy, that passion too strong for so tender organs, breaks the heart of the poor girl, who becomes a prey to grief before age has given her strength to struggle against it. To comprehend all the effect of this admirable picture, it would be necessary to enter into all the details of it. We cannot represent to ourselves without emotion the least of the feelings that agitate this young girl; there is in her I know not what of magic simplicity, that supposes abysses of thought and feeling; we think we hear the tempest moaning at the bottom of her soul, even while we are unable to fix upon a word or a circumstance to account for the inexpressible uneasiness she makes us feel.

Notwithstanding this beautiful episode, we perceive in *Wilhelm Meister* the singular system that has developed itself of late in the German school. The recitals of the ancients, even their poems, however internally animated, are calm in form; and we are persuaded that the moderns would do well to imitate the tranquillity of the ancient authors; but, in respect of

imagination, what is not prescribed in theory seldom succeeds in practice. Events like those of the Iliad interest of themselves, and the less the author's own sentiments are brought forward, the greater is the impression made by the picture; but if we set ourselves to describe romantic situations with the impartial calmness of Homer, the result would not be very alluring.[1]

Goethe has just produced a romance called *the Elective Affinities*, which is extremely obnoxious to the censure I have been remarking. A happy family has retired into the country; the husband and wife invite the one his friend, the other her niece, to partake their solitude; the friend falls in love with the wife, and the husband with the young girl, her niece. He abandons himself to the idea of recurring to a divorce in order to procure a union with the object of his attachment; the young girl is ready to consent: unfortunate events happen to bring her back to the feeling of duty; but as soon as she is brought to acknowledge the necessity of sacrificing her love, she dies of grief, and her lover shortly follows her.

The translation of *the Elective Affinities* has not met with

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[1] "I account it the most fortunate incident in my existence," says Schiller, "that I have lived to see the completion of this work; that it has taken place while my faculties are still capable of improvement; that I can yet draw from this pure spring; and the beautiful relation there is between us makes it a kind of religion with me to feel towards what is yours as if it were my own, and so to purify and elevate my nature, that my mind may be a clear mirror, and that I may thus deserve, in a higher sense, the name of your friend. How strongly have I felt, on this occasion, that the Excellent is a power; that by selfish natures it can be felt only as a power; and that only where there is disinterested love can it be enjoyed. I cannot describe to you how deeply the truth, the beautiful vitality, the simple fulness of this work has affected me. The excitement into which it has thrown my mind will subside when I shall have perfectly mastered it, and that will be an important crisis in my being. This excitement is the effect of the beautiful, and only the beautiful, and proceeds from the fact that my intellect is not yet entirely in accordance with my feelings. I understand now perfectly what you mean when you say that it is strictly the beautiful, the true, that can move you even to tears. Tranquil and deep, clear, and yet, like nature, unintelligible, is this work; and all, even the most trivial collateral incident, shows the clearness, the equanimity of the mind whence it flowed."—*Ed.*

success in France, because there is nothing characteristic in the general effect of the fiction, and it is difficult to comprehend with what view it was conceived: this uncertainty is not a matter for censure in Germany, as the events of this world often furnish only undecided results, people are satisfied to find in romances which pretend to describe them the same contradictions and the same doubts. Goethe's work contains a number of refined sentiments and observations; but it is true that the interest often languishes, and that we find almost as many vacancies in the novel as in the ordinary course of human life. A romance, however, ought not to resemble the memoirs of individuals; for every thing interests in what has really existed, while fiction can only equal the effect of truth by surpassing it, that is, by possessing greater strength, more unity, and more action.

The description of the Baron's garden, and the embellishments made in it by the Baroness, absorbs more than a third part of the whole story, and it does not dispose the reader to be moved by a tragic catastrophe: the death of the hero and heroine seems no more than a fortuitous accident, because the heart is not prepared long beforehand to feel and to partake the pain they suffer. This work affords a singular mixture of a life of convenience with stormy passions; an imagination full of grace and strength draws near to the production of grand effects to let them go all of a sudden, as if it were not worth the pain to produce them; one would say that the author has been injured by his own emotion, and that, by mere cowardice of heart, he lays aside the one half of his talent for fear of making himself suffer in trying to move his readers.

A more important question is, whether such a work is moral, that is, whether the impression derived from it is favorable to the improvement of the soul? The mere events of a fiction have nothing to do with this question; we so well know their dependence on the will of the author, that they can awaken the conscience of no man: the morality of a novel consists, therefore, in the sentiments it inspires. It cannot be denied that there is in Goethe's book a profound knowledge of the

human heart, but it is a discouraging knowledge; it represents life as at best very indifferent, in whatever manner it passes; when probed to the bottom, sad and mournful, only tolerably agreeable when slightly skimmed over, liable to moral diseases which must be cured if possible, and must kill if they cannot be cured.

The passions exist, the virtues also exist; there are some who assure us that the first must be counteracted by the second; others pretend that this cannot be; see and judge, says the writer who sums up with impartiality the arguments which fate may furnish for and against each method of viewing the subject.

It would be wrong to imagine, however, that this skepticism was inspired by the materialistic tendency of the eighteenth century; the opinions of Goethe are much more profound, but they do not present any greater consolation to the soul. His writings offer to us a contemptuous philosophy, that says to good as well as to evil: "It ought to be so because it is so;" a wonderful imagination, which rules over all the other faculties, and grows tired of genius itself, as having in it something too involuntary and too partial. In fine, what is most of all defective in this romance, is a firm and positive feeling of religion; the principal personages are more accessible to superstition than to faith; and we perceive that in their hearts religion, like love, is only the effect of circumstances, and liable to vary with them.

In the progress of this work, the author displays too much uncertainty; the forms he draws, and the opinions he indicates, leave only doubtful recollections: it must be agreed that, to think a great deal sometimes leads to the total unsettling of our fundamental ideas; but a man of genius like Goethe should serve as a guide to his admirers in an ascertained road. It is no longer time to doubt, it is no longer time to place, on every possible subject, ingenious ideas in each scale of the balance; we should now abandon ourselves to confidence, to enthusiasm, to the admiration which the immortal youth of the soul may always keep alive within us; this youth springs forth again out

of the very ashes of the passions; it is the golden bough that can never fade, and which gives entrance to the Sibyl into the Elysian fields.[1]

Tieck deserves to be mentioned in many different styles of

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[1] "Among the Jena friends whom Goethe saw with constant pleasure, was Frommann, the bookseller, in whose family there was an adopted child, by name Minna Herzlieb, strangely interesting to us as the original of Ottilie in the *Wahlverwandtschaften*. As a child she had been a great pet of Goethe's; growing into womanhood she exercised a fascination over him which his reason in vain resisted. The disparity of years was great: but how frequently are young girls found bestowing the bloom of their affections on men old enough to be their fathers! and how frequently are men at an advanced age found trembling with the passion of youth! In the Sonnets addressed to her, and in the novel of *Elective Affinities*, may be read the fervor of his passion, and the strength with which he resisted. Speaking of this novel, he says: 'No one can fail to recognize in it a deep, passionate wound, which shrinks from being closed by healing, a heart which dreads to be cured. . . . . In it, as in a burial-urn, I have deposited with deep emotion many a sad experience. The third of October, 1809 (when the publication was completed), set me free from the work; but the feelings it embodies can never quite depart from me.' If we knew as much of the circumstances out of which grew the *Elective Affinities* as we do of those out of which grew *Werther*, we should find his experience as clearly embodied in this novel as it is in *Werther;* but conjecture in such cases being perilous, I will not venture beyond the facts which have been placed at my disposal; and may only add, therefore, that the growing attachment was seen with pain and dismay, for no good issue could be found. At length it was resolved to send Minna to school, and this absolute separation saved them both.

"It is very curious to read *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* by the light of this history, and to see in it not only the sources of its inspiration, but the way in which Goethe dramatizes the two halves of his own character. Eduard and Charlotte loved each other in youth. Circumstances separated them; and each made a *mariage de convenance*, from which, after a time, they were released by death. The widower and the widow, now free to choose, naturally determine on fulfilling the dream of their youth. They marry. At the opening of the story we see them placidly happy. Although a few quiet touches make us aware of a certain organic disparity between them, not enough to create unhappiness, but enough to prevent perfect sympathy, the keenest eye would detect no signs which threatened the enduring stability of their happiness. Eduard has a friend, almost a brother, always called 'The Captain,' whom he invites to come and live with them. Charlotte has strongly opposed this at first, having a dim presentiment of evil; but she yields, the more so as she desires that her adopted daughter Ottilie should now be taken from school, and come to live with them.

"Thus are the four actors in the drama brought together on the stage;

composition; he is the author of a novel called *Sternbald*, which it is delightful to read; the events are but few, and even those few are not conducted to the *dénoûment;* but we can nowhere else, I believe, meet with so pleasing a picture of the

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and no sooner are they brought together than the natural *elective affinities* of their natures come into play. Charlotte and the Captain are drawn together; Eduard and Ottilie are drawn together. This is shown to be as inevitable as the chemical combinations which are made to illustrate it. A real episode in the tragedy of life is before us; felt to be inevitable; felt to be terrible; felt also to present a dilemma to the moral judgment, on which two parties will pronounce two opposite opinions.

"Those critics who reason about human life, and consequently about Art from the abstract point of view—who, disregarding fact and necessity, treat human nature as a chess-board on which any moves may be made which the player chooses, the player himself being considered an impersonal agent untroubled by rashness, incapable of overlooking what is palpable to the bystanders,—those critics, I say, will unhesitatingly pronounce the situation an immoral situation, which the poet should not have presented, and which in real life would at once have been put an end to, by the stern idea of Duty.

"Others again, whose philosophy is evolved from life as it *is*, not as it might be—who accept its wondrous complexity of impulses, and demand that art should represent reality—look upon this situation as terribly true, and although tragic, by no means immoral; for the tragedy lies in the collision of Passion and Duty—of Impulse on the one hand, and on the other of Social Law. Suppose Charlotte and Eduard unmarried, and these 'affinities' would have been simple impulses to marriage. But the fact of Marriage stands as a barrier to the impulses: the collision is inevitable.

"The divergence of opinion here indicated must necessarily exist among the two great classes of readers. Accordingly, in Germany and in England, the novel is alternately pronounced immoral, and profoundly moral. I do not think it is either the one or the other. When critics rail at it, and declare it saps the whole foundation of marriage, and when critics enthusiastically declare it is profoundly moral because it sets the sacredness of marriage in so clear a light, I see that both have drawn certain general conclusions from an individual case; but I do not see that they have done more than put *their* interpretations on what the author had no intention of being interpreted at all. Every work of art has its moral, says Hegel; but the *moral depends on him that draws it.* Both the conclusion against marriage, and the conclusion in favor of marriage, may therefore be drawn from this novel, and yet neither conclusion be correct, except as the private interpretation of the reader. Goethe was an artist, not an advocate; he painted a true picture, and because he painted it truly, he necessarily presented it in a form which would permit men to draw from it those opposite conclusions which the reality itself would permit. Suppose the story actually to have passed before our eyes, the judgments passed on it even by

life of an artist. The author places his hero in the fine age of the arts, and supposes him to be a scholar of Albert Durer, the contemporary of Raphael. He makes him travel in different countries of Europe, and paints with the charm of novelty

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those thoroughly acquainted with all the facts would have been diametrically opposite. It is not difficult to write a story carrying the moral legible in every page; and if the writer's object be primarily that of illustrating a plain moral, he need not trouble himself about truth of character. And for this reason: he employs character as a *means* to an end—he does not make the delineation of character his end; his purpose is didactic, not artistic. Quite otherwise is the artist's purpose and practice: for him human life is the end and aim; for him the primary object is character, which is, as all know, of a mingled woof, good and evil, virtue and weakness, truth and falsehood, woven inextricably together.

"Those who object to such pictures, and think that truth is no warrant, may reasonably consider Goethe blamable for having chosen the subject. But he chose it because he had experienced it. And once grant him the subject, it is difficult to blame his treatment of it, if we except one scene which, to English readers, will always be objectionable. Two of the actors represent Passion in its absorbing, reckless, irresistible fervor, rushing onwards to the accomplishment of its aims. The two other actors represent, with equal force, and with touching nobleness, the stern idea of Duty. Eduard and Ottilie love rapidly, vehemently, thoughtlessly. Not a doubt troubles them. Their feeling is so natural, it so completely absorbs them that they are like two children entering on a first affection. But, vividly as they represent Instinct, Charlotte and the Captain as vividly represent Reason; their love is equally profound, but it is the love of two rational beings, who, because they reason, reason on the cirumstances in which they are placed; recognize society, its arrangements and its laws; and sacrifice their own desires to this social necessity. They subdue themselves; they face suffering, upheld by Conscience, which dictates to them a line of conduct never dreamed of by the passionate Eduard and Ottilie.

"Eduard no sooner knows that he is loved than he is impatient for a divorce (allowable in Germany), which will enable him to marry Ottilie, and enable Charlotte to marry the Captain. Unfortunately, Charlotte, who has hitherto had no children by Eduard, feels that she is about to be a mother. This complicates a position which before was comparatively simple. Childless, she might readily have consented to a divorce. She cannot now. Every argument fails to persuade Eduard to relinquish the one purpose of his life; and he only consents to test by absence the durability of his passion.

"He joins the army, distinguishes himself in the field, and returns with passion as imperious as ever. Meanwhile, the Captain has also absented himself. Charlotte bears her fate meekly, nobly. Ottilie in silence cherishes her love for Eduard, and devotes herself, with intense affection, to Charlotte's child. This child, in accordance with a popular superstition

the pleasure that must be caused by external objects when we belong to no country and no station exclusively, but are at liberty to range through all nature in search of inspiration and example. This state of existence, wandering and at the same time contemplative, is thoroughly understood nowhere but in Germany. In French romances we always describe social manners and the intercourse of society; yet there is a great secret of enjoyment in this sort of imagination, which seems to hover over the earth while it traverses, and mixes not at all in the active interests of the world.

Unhappy mortals hardly ever receive from fate the blessing of a destiny in which the events succeed each other in the regular concatenation they desire; but insulated impressions are for the most part sufficiently gentle, and the present, when it can be contemplated apart from recollections and apprehensions, is still the happiest moment of life. There is a sort of poetical philosophy, then, of great wisdom in those instantaneous enjoyments which compose the artist's existence; the new points of view, the accidents of light which embellish them, are for him so many events that have their beginning and ending in the same day, and have nothing to do with the past or the future; the affections of the heart unveil the face

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(which, by the way, physiology emphatically discredits), resembles in a striking manner both Ottilie and the Captain, thus physically typifying the passion felt by Eduard for Ottilie, and the passion felt by Charlotte for the Captain.

"Charlotte, who feels strong enough to bear her fate, never relinquishes the hope that Eduard will learn to accept his with like fortitude. But he remains immovable. Opposition only intensifies his desire. At length, the child is drowned while under Ottilie's charge. In the depth of her affliction a light breaks in upon her soul; and now, for the first time, Ottilie becomes conscious of being wrong in her desire to be Eduard's wife. With this consciousness comes a resolution never to be his. The tragedy deepens. She wastes away. Eduard, whose passion was his life, lingers awhile in mute sorrow, and then is laid to rest by her side.

"Such, in its leading motives, is the terribly tragic drama which Goethe has worked out with indefatigable minuteness in *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*. The story moves slowly, as in life, through various episodes and circumstances, but if slow, it is always intelligible."—(Lewes, *Life and Works of Goethe*, vol. ii. pp. 372–377.)—*Ed.*

of nature, and we are astonished, in reading Tieck's novel, by all the wonders that surround us without our perceiving it.

The author has mingled in his work several detached pieces of poetry, some of which are extremely fine. When verses are introduced into a French novel, they almost always interrupt the interest, and destroy the harmony of the whole. It is not so in *Sternbald;* the story is so poetical in itself, that the prose seems like a recitative which follows the verse, or prepares the way for it. Among others, there are some stanzas on the spring, as enchanting as nature herself at that season. Infancy is represented in them under a thousand different shapes; man, the plants, the earth, the heaven, all things there are so young, all things so rich in hope, that the poet appears to be celebrating the first fine days, and the first flowers that ever attired the world.

We have, in French, several comic romances, and one of the most remarkable is *Gil Blas.* I do not think any work can be mentioned among the Germans, in which the affairs of life are so agreeably sported with. The Germans have hardly yet attained a real world, how can they be supposed capable already of laughing at it? That serious kind of gayety which turns nothing into ridicule, but amuses without intending it, and makes others laugh without laughing itself—that gayety which the English call *humor*—is to be found also in many of the German writers; but it is almost impossible to translate them. When the pleasantry consists in a philosophical sentiment happily expressed, as in Swift's *Gulliver*, the change of language is of no importance; but Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* loses almost all its beauty in French. Pleasantries, which consist in the forms of language, speak to the mind a thousand times more, perhaps, than ideas; and yet these impressions so lively, excited by shades so fine, are incapable of being transmitted to foreigners.

Claudius is one of the German authors who have most of that national gayety, the exclusive property of every foreign literature. He has published a collection of various detached pieces on different subjects; some are in bad taste, others unim-

portant, but there reigns in all of them an originality and a truth which render the least things attractive. This writer, whose style is clothed in a simple, and sometimes even in a vulgar habit, penetrates to the bottom of the heart by the sincerity of his sentiments. He makes you weep, as he makes you laugh, by exciting sympathy, and by giving you to recognize a fellow-creature and a friend in all he feels. Nothing can be extracted from the writings of Claudius; his talent acts like sensation, and to speak of it, it is necessary to have felt it. He resembles those Flemish painters who sometimes rise to the representation of what is most noble in nature, or to the Spanish Murillo, who paints poor beggars with the utmost exactness, and yet often gives them, unconsciously, some traits of a noble and profound impression. To mix the comic and the pathetic with success, it is necessary to be eminently natural in both; as soon as the artificial makes its appearance, all contrast vanishes; but a great genius full of simplicity may successfully represent a union, of which the only charm is on the countenance of childhood, a smile in the midst of tears.

Another writer, of later date and greater celebrity than Claudius, has acquired great reputation in Germany by works which might be called romances, if any known denomination could suit productions so extraordinary. Jean Paul Richter[1]

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[1] "John Paul Frederick Richter, commonly called Jean Paul, was born at Wunsiedel, near Baireuth, March 21, 1763, where his father was schoolmaster and organist, but whence he was soon after removed to a curacy at Södlitz, a neighboring village. Here Jean Paul, in common with the other boys, attended the village school until he was ten years old, and at the age of thirteen was intrusted to the care of the rector in the adjacent town of Hof. Jean Paul's father dying about this time, leaving his family in great indigence, his mother, with her four other sons, likewise removed to Hof. The love and veneration he felt for his widowed mother inspired him with greater zeal to apply himself to his studies, but it was with much difficulty that he obtained, as an author and tutor, sufficient means for the support of himself and his aged parent. At eighteen he went to Leipsic to study theology, to which he applied with great assiduity, his constant object being to provide for his revered mother and to assist in the education of his four younger brothers. At the age of nineteen he wrote a witty satire, *Gronländische Processe*, but could not, for several years, succeed in finding a publisher, and his necessities increased to such a degree, that he

is possessed of powers certainly more than sufficient to compose a work that would be as interesting to foreigners as to his own countrymen, and yet nothing that he has published can ever extend beyond the limits of Germany. His admirers

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saw himself at length obliged clandestinely to leave Leipsic in order to escape imprisonment for debt. At Hof, whither he had gone, he continued his studies, still, however, incapable to meet with a publisher of those works, which were afterwards so eagerly sought after. He continued at Hof, where he lived in a small room, together with his mother and brothers, supported, in a great measure, by contributions from some of his academical friends, and assisted in his studies by a clergyman of the name of Vogel, who provided him with books, when a landed proprietor in the vicinity engaged him as tutor to his children. His situation here was, however, very disagreeable, and he gladly accepted an offer of a similar situation at Schwarzenbach, where he had the satisfaction to find a publisher for his *Auswahl aus des Teufels Papieren.* It met, however, with but small success, and much as he tried to publish others of his compositions, he had the mortification of seeing himself everywhere coldly received, notwithstanding the active intercession on the part of Weisse, Meissner, Herder, and Wieland. At last he determined upon writing a novel, *Die unsichtbare Loge*, in which he interwove a history of his own life. This he sent to Moritz, professor and member of the Academy of Sciences at Berlin, through whose intercession he received one hundred ducats for his manuscript. He then returned to Hof, with a view of making his mother more comfortable, and composed his *Hesperus* and *Quintus Fizlein*, the former of which, in particular, contributed to spread his fame and place him in more easy circumstances. In the summer of 1796 he received an invitation to Weimar, where he was most enthusiastically received. Yet, much as he was courted there, he did not prolong his stay beyond three weeks. His personal appearance had little to recommend him; strongly built and sinewy as he appeared, he was still of a delicate constitution, but his eye had all the splendor of the great mind within. His conversation, as were his writings, was flowery and elevated, and his voice musical but rather weak; all his expressions bore the impress of his mind,—purity and innocence, veracity and warmth of sentiment, and love towards mankind. Herder, who was delighted with his new acquaintance, writes of him to Jacobi: 'I can only say of him, that he is all heart and soul, a finely-sounding note on the golden harp of mankind. . . .' In the summer of 1797 he lost his mother, and as nothing now retained him at Hof, he removed to Leipsic, which, a twelvemonth after, he left for Weimar, where he met with the same friendly reception as on his first visit. In the spring of 1800 he paid his first visit to Berlin, with which he was so much pleased, that he exchanged it for Weimar. In Berlin he made the acquaintance of his future wife, whom he married in 1801, when he went to settle at Meiningen. But although held in great respect here, and enjoying the intimate friendship of the reigning duke, his roving disposition induced him to

will say that this results from the originality even of his genius; I think that his faults are as much the cause of it as his excellencies. In these modern times, the mind should be European; the Germans encourage their authors too much in that wandering spirit of enterprise, which, daring as it seems, is not always void of affectation. Madame de Lambert said to her son: "My friend, indulge yourself in no follies that will not afford you a very high degree of pleasure." We might beg Jean Paul never to be singular except in spite of himself: whatever is said involuntarily always hits some natural feeling; but when natural originality is spoiled by the pretension to originality, the reader has no perfect enjoyment even of what is true, from the remembrance and the dread of what is otherwise.

Some admirable beauties are to be found, nevertheless, in the works of Jean Paul; but the arrangement and frame of his pictures are so defective, that the most luminous traits of genius are lost in the general confusion. The writings of Jean Paul deserve to be considered in two points of view, the humorous and the serious, for he constantly mixes both together. His manner of observing the human heart is full of delicacy and vivacity, but his knowledge of it is merely such as may be acquired in the little towns of Germany; and in his delineation of manners, confined as it is, there is frequently something too innocent for the age in which we live. Observations so delicate, and almost minute, on the moral affections, recall a little to our recollection the personage in the fairy tales who went by the name of *Fine-Ear*, because he could hear the grass grow. In this respect Sterne bears some analogy to Jean Paul; but if Jean Paul is very superior to him in the serious

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leave it in 1803 for Gotha, on account of its more agreeable situation; nor did he stop long here, but went to settle permanently at Baireuth. His circumstances were now in a flourishing condition, and he enjoyed a large pension till his death, which took place in 1825.

"His most celebrated works are (besides the above mentioned): *Das Campanerthal; Titan; Doctor Kazenbergers Badereife; Levana, oder Erziehungslehre für Töchter; Horschule zur Aesthetit; Flegeljahre.*"—*Ed.*

and poetical part of his works, Sterne has more taste and elegance in his humor, and we see that he has lived in societies less confined and more brilliant.

Thoughts extracted from the writings of Jean Paul would, however, form a very remarkable work; but we perceive, in reading them, his singular custom of collecting from every quarter, from obsolete books, scientific works, etc., his metaphors and allusions. The resemblances thus produced are almost always very ingenious; but when study and attention are required to enable us to find out a jest, scarcely any but the Germans would consent thus to laugh after a serious study, and give themselves as much trouble to understand what amuses them as what is calculated for their instruction.

At the bottom of all this we find a mine of new ideas, and if we reach it, we are enriched; but the author has neglected the stamp which should have been given to those treasures. The gayety of the French is derived from the spirit of society; that of the Italians from the imagination; that of the English from originality of character; the gayety of the Germans is philosophic. They jest with things and with books, rather than with men. Their heads contain a chaos of knowledge, which an independent and fantastic imagination combines in a thousand different ways, sometimes original, sometimes confused, but in which we always perceive great vigor of intellect and of soul.

The genius of Jean Paul frequently resembles that of Montaigne. The French authors of former times are in general more like the Germans, than writers of the age of Louis XIV; for it is since that time that French literature has taken a classical direction.

Jean Paul Richter is often sublime in the serious parts of his works, but the continued melancholy of his language sometimes moves till it fatigues us. When the imagination is kept too long in the clouds, the colors are confused, the outlines are effaced, and we retain of all that we have read rather a reverberation of the sound than a recollection of the substance. The sensibility of Jean Paul affects the soul, but does not suffi-

ciently strengthen it. The poetry of his style resembles the sounds of a harmonica, which delight us at first, but give us pain a few minutes afterwards, because the exaltation excited by them has no determinate object. We give too great an advantage to cold and insipid characters, when we represent sensibility to them as a disease, while, on the contrary, it is the most energetic of all our moral faculties, since it imparts both the desire and ability to devote ourselves to others.

Among the affecting episodes which abound in the writings of Jean Paul, where the principal subjects are seldom more than slight pretexts to introduce the episodes, I will now quote three, taken by chance, to give an idea of the rest. An English lord is blind in consequence of a double cataract; he has an operation performed on one of his eyes; it fails, and that eye is irretrievably lost. His son, without informing him of it, studies with an oculist, and at the end of a year he is judged capable of operating on the eye, which may yet be preserved. The father, ignorant of his son's intention, thinks he is placing himself in the hands of a stranger, and prepares himself with fortitude for the moment which is to decide whether the rest of his life is, or is not, to be passed in darkness; he even directs that his son should be sent from his chamber, that he may not be too much affected by being present at so important a decision. The son approaches his father in silence; his hand does not tremble, for the circumstance is too momentous to admit of the common signs of tenderness. All his soul is concentered in a simple thought, and even the excess of his sensibility gives that supernatural presence of mind, which would be succeeded by phrensy, if hope were lost. At length the operation succeeds, and the father, in recovering his sight, beholds the instrument of its restoration in the hand of his own son!

Another romance by the same author also presents a very affecting situation. A young blind man requests a description of the setting of the sun, whose mild and pure rays, he says, he feels in the atmosphere, like the farewell of a friend. The person whom he interrogates describes nature to him in all its

beauty; but he mingles in his painting an impression of melancholy, calculated to console the unfortunate being who is deprived of sight. He incessantly appeals to the Deity, as to the living source of the wonders of the world; and bringing every thing within the scope of that intellectual sight which the blind man probably enjoys in a more perfect manner than we do, he makes his soul perceive what his eyes can no longer behold.

I will now venture a translation of a very strange composition, but which will assist us in forming an opinion of the genius of Jean Paul.

Bayle has somewhere said, that *atheism does not shelter us from the fear of eternal suffering:* it is a grand thought, and it offers to us a wide field for reflection. The dream of Jean Paul which I am now about to cite, may be considered as this thought extended to action.

This dream in some measure resembles the delirium of a fever, and ought to be considered as such. In every respect, except that of displaying the powers of imagination, it is extremely liable to censure.[1]

"The purpose of this fiction," says Jean Paul, "is the excuse of its boldness. Men deny the Divine Existence with as little feeling as the most assert it. Even in our true systems we go on collecting mere words, playmarks, and medals, as the misers do coins; and not till late do we transform the words into feelings, the coins into enjoyments. A man may, for twenty years, believe the Immortality of the Soul; in the one-and-twentieth, in some great moment, he for the first time discovers with amazement the rich meaning of this belief, and the warmth of this Naphtha-well.

"A DREAM.

"If we hear, in childhood, that the dead, about midnight, when our *sleep reaches near the soul*, and darkens even our dreams, awake out of theirs, and in the church mimic the

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[1] We use the translation of Carlyle.—*Ed.*

worship of the living, we shudder at Death by reason of the dead, and in the night-solitude turn away our eyes from the long silent windows of the church, and fear to search in their gleaming, whether it proceed from the moon.

"Childhood, and rather its terrors than its raptures, take wings and radiance again in dreams, and sport like fire-flies in the little night of the soul. Crush not these flickering sparks! Leave us even our dark, painful dreams, as higher half-shadows of reality! And wherewith will you replace to us *those* dreams, which bear us away from under the tumult of the waterfall into the still heights of childhood, where the stream of life yet ran silent in its little plain, and flowed towards its abysses, a mirror of the Heaven?

"I was lying once, on a summer evening, in the sunshine; and I feel asleep. Methought I awoke in the churchyard. The down-rolling wheels of the steeple-clock, which was striking eleven, had awoke me. In the emptied night-heaven I looked for the Sun; for I thought an eclipse was veiling him with the Moon. All the Graves were open, and the iron doors of the charnel-house were swinging to and fro by invisible hands. On the walls flitted shadows, which proceeded from no one, and other shadows stretched upwards in the pale air. In the open coffins none now lay sleeping but the children. Over the whole heaven hung, in large folds, a gray sultry mist, which a giant shadow like vapor was drawing down, nearer, closer, and hotter. Above me I heard the distant fall of avalanches; under me, the first step of a boundless earthquake. The Church wavered up and down with two interminable Dissonances, which struggled with each other in it, endeavoring in vain to mingle in unison. At times, a gray glimmer hovered along the windows, and under it the lead and iron fell down molten. The net of the mist, and the tottering Earth, brought me into that hideous Temple, at the door of which, in two poison-bushes, two glittering Basilisks lay brooding. I passed through unknown Shadows, on whom ancient centuries were impressed. All the Shadows were standing round the empty Altar; and in all, not the heart, but the breast quivered

and pulsed. One dead man only, who had just been buried there, still lay on his coffin without quivering breast, and on his smiling countenance stood a happy dream. But at the entrance of one Living, he awoke, and smiled no longer; he lifted his heavy eyelids, but within was no eye; and in his beating breast there lay, instead of heart, a wound. He held up his hands, and folded them to pray; but the arms lengthened out and dissolved, and the hands, still folded together, fell away. Above, on the Church-dome, stood the dial-plate of *Eternity*, whereon no number appeared, and which was its own index: but a black finger pointed thereon, and the Dead sought to see the time by it.

"Now sank from aloft a noble, high Form, with a look of ineffaceable sorrow, down to the Altar, and all the Dead cried out, 'Christ! is there no God?' He answered, 'There is none!' The whole Shadow of each then shuddered, not the breast alone; and one after the other, all, in this shuddering, shook into pieces.

"Christ continued: 'I went through the Worlds, I mounted into the Suns, and flew with the Galaxies through the wastes of Heaven; but there is no God! I descended as far as Being casts its shadow, and looked down into the Abyss and cried, Father, where art thou? But I heard only the everlasting storm which no one guides, and the gleaming Rainbow of Creation hung without a Sun that made it, over the Abyss, and trickled down. And when I looked up to the immeasurable world for the Divine *Eye*, it glared on me with an empty, black, bottomless *Eye-socket;* and *Eternity* lay upon Chaos, eating it and ruminating it. Cry on, ye Dissonances; cry away the Shadows, for He is not!'

"The pale-grown Shadows flitted away, as white vapor which frost has formed with the warm breath disappears; and all was void. Oh, then came, fearful for the heart, the dead Children who had been awakened in the Churchyard into the temple, and cast themselves before the high Form on the Altar, and said, 'Jesus, have we no Father?' And he answered, with streaming tears, 'We are all orphans, I and you; we are without Father!'

"Then shrieked the Dissonances still louder,—the quivering walls of the Temple parted asunder; and the Temple and the Children sank down, and the whole Earth and the Sun sank after it, and the whole Universe sank with its immensity before us; and above, on the summit of immeasurable Nature, stood Christ, and gazed down into the Universe checkered with its thousand Suns, as into the Mine bored out of the Eternal Night, in which the Suns run like mine-lamps, and the Galaxies like silver veins.

"And as he saw the grinding press of Worlds, the torch-dance of celestial wildfires, and the coral-banks of beating hearts; and as he saw how world after world shook off its glimmering souls upon the Sea of Death, as a water-bubble scatters swimming lights on the waves, then majestic as the Highest of the Finite, he raised his eyes towards the Nothingness, and towards the void Immensity, and said: 'Dead, dumb Nothingness! Cold, everlasting Necessity! Frantic Chance! Know ye what this is that lies beneath you? When will ye crush the Universe in pieces, and me? Chance, knowest thou what thou doest, when with thy hurricanes thou walkest through that snow-powder of Stars, and extinguishest Sun after Sun, and that sparkling dew of heavenly light goes out as thou passest over it? How is each so solitary in this wide grave of the All! I am alone with myself! O Father, O Father! where is thy infinite bosom, that I might rest upon it? Ah, if each soul is its own father and creator, why can it not be its own destroyer too?

"'Is this beside me yet a Man? Unhappy one! Your little life is the sigh of Nature, or only its echo; a convex-mirror throws its rays into that dust-cloud of dead men's ashes down on the Earth, and thus you, cloud-formed wavering phantoms, arise! Look down into the Abyss, over which clouds of ashes are moving; mists full of Worlds reek up from the Sea of Death; the *Future* is a mounting mist, and the *Present* is a falling one. Knowest thou thy Earth again?'

"Here Christ looked down, and his eye filled with tears, and he said: 'Ah, I was once there; I was still happy then;

I had still my Infinite Father, and looked up cheerfully from the mountains into the immeasurable Heaven, and pressed my mangled breast on his healing form, and said, even in the bitterness of death, Father, take thy son from this bleeding hull, and lift him to thy heart! Ah, ye too happy inhabitants of Earth, ye still believe in *Him*. Perhaps even now your Sun is going down, and ye kneel amid blossoms, and brightness, and tears, and lift trustful hands, and cry with joy-streaming eyes to the opened Heaven: "Me too thou knowest, Omnipotent, and all my wounds; and at death thou receivest me, and closest them all!" Unhappy creatures, at death they will not be closed! Ah, when the sorrow-laden lays himself, with galled back, into the Earth, to sleep till a fairer Morning full of Truth, full of Virtue and Joy, he awakens in a stormy Chaos, in the everlasting Midnight,—and there comes no Morning, and no soft healing hand, and no Infinite Father! Mortal, beside me! if thou still livest, pray to *Him;* else hast thou lost him forever!'

"And as I fell down, and looked into the sparkling Universe, I saw the upborne Rings of the Giant-Serpent, the Serpent of Eternity, which had coiled itself round the All of Worlds,—and the Rings sank down, and encircled the All doubly;—and then it wound itself, innumerable ways, round Nature, and swept the Worlds from their places, and crashing, squeezed the Temple of Immensity together, into the Church of a Burying-ground,—and all grew strait, dark, fearful,—and an immeasurably extended Hammer was to strike the last hour of Time, and shiver the Universe asunder, ... WHEN I AWOKE.

"My soul wept for joy that I could still pray to God; and the joy, and the weeping, and the faith on him were my prayer. And as I arose, the Sun was glowing deep behind the full purpled corn-ears, and casting meekly the gleam of its twilight-red on the little Moon, which was rising in the East without an Aurora; and between the sky and the earth a gay, transient air-people was stretching out its short wings and living, as I did, before the Infinite Father; and from all Nature around me flowed peaceful tones as from distant evening-bells."

I shall add no observations on this singular essay, the effect of which must depend entirely on the species of imagination possessed by the reader. I was struck by the gloomy cast of the talents it displays, and it appeared to me a fine idea, thus to carry beyond the grave the horrible despair which every creature would necessarily feel if deprived of God.[1]

I should never lay down my pen if I were to analyze the multitude of witty and affecting romances to be found in Germany. Those of La Fontaine in particular, which are read at least once by every one with so much pleasure, are frequently

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[1] "Richter's intellectual and Literary character is, perhaps, in a singular degree the counterpart and image of his practical and moral character: his Works seem to us a more than usually faithful transcript of his mind; written with great warmth direct from the heart, and, like himself, wild, strong, original, sincere. Viewed under any aspect, whether as Thinker, Moralist, Satirist, Poet, he is a phenomenon; a vast, many-sided, tumultuous, yet noble nature; for faults, as for merits, 'Jean Paul the Unique.' In all departments, we find in him a subduing force; but a lawless, untutored, as it were, half-savage force. Thus, for example, few understandings known to us are of a more irresistible character than Richter's; but its strength is a natural, unarmed, Orson-like strength: he does not cunningly undermine his subject, and lay it open, by syllogistic implements, or any rule of art; but he crushes it to pieces in his arms, he treads it asunder, not without gay triumph, under his feet; and so in almost monstrous fashion, yet with piercing clearness, lays bare the inmost heart and core of it to all eyes. In passion, again, there is the same wild vehemence: it is a voice of softest pity, of endless, boundless wailing, a voice as of Rachel weeping for her children; or the fierce bellowing of lions amid savage forests. Thus, too, he not only loves Nature, but he revels in her; plunges into her infinite bosom, and fills his whole heart to intoxication with her charms. He tells us that he was wont to study, to write, almost to live, in the open air; and no skyey aspect was so dismal that it altogether wanted beauty for him. We know of no Poet with so deep and passionate and universal a feeling towards Nature: 'from the solemn phases of the starry heaven to the simplest floweret of the meadow, his eye and his heart are open for her charms and her mystic meanings.' But what most of all shadows forth the inborn, essential temper of Paul's mind, is the sportfulness, the wild heartfelt Humor, which, in his highest as in his lowest moods, ever exhibits itself as a quite inseparable ingredient. His Humor, with all its wildness, is of the gravest and kindliest, a genuine Humor; 'consistent with utmost earnestness, or rather, inconsistent with the want of it.' But on the whole, it is impossible for him to write in other than a humorous manner, be his subject what it may. His Philosophical Treatises, nay, his Autobiography itself, every thing that

more interesting in the detail than of the general plan or conception of the subject. To invent becomes daily more uncommon; and besides, romances which delineate manners, can with difficulty be rendered pleasing in different countries. The great advantage, therefore, which may be derived from the study of German literature, is the spirit of emulation which it imparts; we should rather seek in it the means of writing well ourselves, than expect from it works already written which may be worthy of being transmitted to other nations.

CHAPTER XXIX.

OF GERMAN HISTORIANS, AND OF J. VON MÜLLER IN PARTICULAR.

History is the portion of literature most nearly connected with the knowledge of public affairs; a great historian is almost a statesman; for it is scarcely possible to form a right judgment of political events, without being, in a certain degree, able also to conduct them; thus we see that the greater number of historians are well acquainted with the government of their country, and write only as they might have acted. In the first rank of historians we must reckon those of antiquity, because there is no period in which men of superior talents have exerted more influence over their country. The English historians occupy the second rank; but the appellation of great belongs rather to their nation, than to any particular individ-

comes from him, is encased in some quaint fantastic framing; and roguish eyes (yet with a strange sympathy in the matter, for his Humor, as we said, is heartfelt and true) look out on us through many a grave delineation. In his Novels, above all, this is ever an indispensable quality, and, indeed, announces itself in the very entrance of the business, often even on the title-page. Think, for instance, of that *Selection from the Papers of the Devil; Hesperus*, OR *the Dog-post-days; Siebenkas's Wedded-life, Death* AND *Nuptials!*"—(*Carlyle's Essays*, p. 212.)—*Ed.*

ual; and its historians are therefore less dramatic, but more philosophical than those of ancient times. The English affix more importance to general than to particular ideas. In Italy, Machiavelli is the only historian who has considered the events of his country in a comprehensive, though in a terrible manner; all the others have seen the world in their own city; but this patriotism, confined as it is, still imparts interest and spirit to the writings of Italy.[1] It has been always remarked that in France, memoirs are much better than histories; court-intrigues formerly determined the fate of the kingdom, it was therefore very natural that in such a country private anecdotes should contain the secret of history.

It is under a literary point of view that we should consider the German historians; the political existence of the country has not hitherto had power to give a national character to that class of writers. The talent peculiar to each individual, and the general principles of the historic art, have alone influenced this sort of production of the human mind. It appears to me that the various historical writings published in Germany, may be divided into three principal classes: learned history, philosophical history, and classical history, as far as the acceptation of that word is confined, as the ancients understood it to be, to the art of narration.

Germany abounds with learned historians, such as Mascou, Schöpflin, Schlözer, Gatterer, Schmidt, etc. They have made profound researches, and have given us works where every thing is to be found by those who know how to study them; but such writers are fit only to refer to, and their works would be beyond all others estimable and liberal, if their only object had been to spare trouble to men of genius, who are desirous of writing history.[2]

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[1] M. de Sismondi has, in his writings, revived the partial interests of the Italian republics, by connecting them with the great subjects of inquiry which are interesting to the whole human race.

[2] Niebuhr, Ranke, Neander, Bunsen, Mommsen, etc., are new names that indicate great changes in historical studies since Madame de Staël wrote.—*Ed.*

Schiller is at the head of the philosophical historians, that is, of those who consider facts as so many reasons for the support of their own opinions. The History of the Revolution in the Netherlands is written with as much warmth and interest, as if it were a plea in a court of justice. The Thirty Years' War is an epoch which called forth the energies of the German nation. Schiller has written its history with a sentiment of patriotism and love of knowledge and liberty, which does great credit both to his heart and his genius; the traits with which he characterizes the principal personages are of a very superior kind, and all his reflections are derived from the concentrations of an elevated mind; but the Germans reproach Schiller with not having sufficiently traced facts up to their sources; he could not entirely fill the great outlines chalked out by his uncommon talents; and the erudition on which his history is founded is not sufficiently extensive. I have frequently had occasion to observe, that the Germans were the first to feel all the advantages which imagination might derive from learning; circumstantial details alone give color and life to history; on the surface of our knowledge we scarcely find any thing more than a pretext for reason and argument.

Schiller's history was written in that part of the eighteenth century, when ideas were used only as weapons of hostile argument, and his style is a little tinctured with the polemical spirit so prevalent in almost all the writings of that period. But when the object aimed at is toleration and liberty, and that we advance towards it by means and sentiments so noble as those of Schiller, we are always sure of composing a fine work, even though more or less room might be desirable in the part assigned to facts and reflections.[1] By a singular contrast, it is Schiller, the great dramatic poet, who has mingled perhaps too much philosophy, and consequently too many general ideas in his narrations; and it is Müller, the most learned of historians, who has been truly a poet in his manner of describing both

[1] Among philosophical historians, we must not forget Heeren, who has just published *Thoughts on the Crusaders*, in which perfect impartiality is the result of uncommon knowledge and strength of judgment.

men and events. In the History of Switzerland we must distinguish the learned man and the able writer; and I think it is only by this means that we shall succeed in doing justice to Müller. He was a man of unparalleled knowledge, and his abilities, in that respect, really frightened those who were acquainted with them. We cannot conceive how the head of one man could contain such a world of facts and of dates. The six thousand years which are known to us, were perfectly arranged in his memory, and his studies had been so deep, that they were as fresh as if they were recollections. There is not a village in Switzerland, not a noble family, of which he did not know the history. One day, in consequence of a wager, he was requested to give the pedigree of the sovereign counts of Bugey; he repeated their names one after another immediately, only he did not clearly recollect whether one of those he mentioned had been regent, or sovereign in his own right, and he seriously reproached himself for this defect of memory. Men of genius among the ancients were not subjected to that immense labor of erudition which is augmenting with every century, and their imaginations were not fatigued by study. It costs much more to acquire distinction in our days, and we owe some respect to the persevering toil which is necessary in order to gain possession of the subject under investigation.

The death of Müller, of whose character there are various opinions, is an irreparable loss to literature, and it seems as if more than one man were taken from us, when such talents are extinguished.[1]

Müller, who may be considered as the true classical historian of Germany, constantly read both the Greek and Latin authors in the original; he cultivated literature and the fine arts as subservient to history. His unbounded erudition, far from

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[1] Among the disciples of Müller, the Baron von Hormayr, who wrote the *Austrian Plutarch*, should be considered as one of the first; we know that his history is composed, not from books, but from original manuscripts. Doctor Decarro, a learned Genevese settled at Vienna, by whose beneficent activity the discovery of vaccination has been carried into Asia, is about to publish a translation of these lives of the great men of Austria, which must excite great interest.

diminishing his natural vivacity, was rather the foundation from whence his imagination took its flight, and the striking truth of his pictures was the result of the scrupulous fidelity with which they were drawn; but though he made admirable use of his learning, he was ignorant of the art of laying it aside when necessary. His history is much too long; he has not sufficiently compressed the different parts of it together. Details are necessary to give interest to the recital of events; but we ought to choose among those events such as are worthy to be recited.

The work of Müller is an eloquent chronicle; if, however, all histories were thus conducted, the life of man would be entirely spent in reading the lives of men. It were much to be wished, therefore, that Müller had not suffered himself to be led astray even by the extent of his knowledge. Nevertheless, readers who have the more time at their command, because they make a better use of it, will always feel new pleasure in perusing those noble annals of Switzerland. The preliminary chapters are *chefs-d'œuvre* of eloquence. No one has known better than Müller how to display in his writings the most energetic patriotism; and now that he is no more, it is by his writings alone that we can appreciate him. He describes, with the skill of a painter, the scenes in which the principal events of the Helvetic confederation took place. It would be wrong to become the historian of a country we have never beheld. Situations, places, nature itself, are like the body of the picture; and facts, however well they may be related, have not the character of truth, if the external objects with which men are surrounded, are not, at the same time, brought forward to our view.

That erudition which led Müller to ascribe too much importance to every particular fact, is extremely useful to him, when the object is an event really deserving of being animated by the powers of imagination. He then relates it as if it had passed but yesterday, and knows how to give it all the interest which we should feel from a circumstance still present to us.

In history as well as in fiction, we ought, as much as possi-

ble, to leave to the reader the pleasure and opportunity of anticipating the characters of men and the progress of events. He is soon tired with what is told him, but he is delighted with what he himself discovers; and we assimilate literature to the interests of life, when we know how to awaken the anxiety of expectation by a mere recital; the judgment of the reader is exercised on a word, on an action, which makes him at once understand the character of a man, and often the spirit even of a nation or of a century.

The conspiracy of Rütli, as it is related in the History of Müller, excites very great interest. That peaceful valley, where men equally peaceable resolved on the most perilous actions at the command of conscience; the calmness of their deliberation; the solemnity of their oath; their ardor in the execution of it; an irrevocable determination founded on the will of man, while all without is changeable, what a picture! The imagery alone awakens thought; the heroes of this event, as the author relates it, are absorbed by the grandeur of their object. No general idea presents itself to their mind, no reflection occurs to diminish the firmness of the action, or the beauty of the recital.

At the battle of Granson, in which the Duke of Burgundy attacked the small army of the Swiss Cantons, a simple trait gives the most affecting idea of those times and manners. Charles already occupied the heights, and thought himself master of the army which he saw at a distance on the plain; when all at once, at the rising of the sun, he perceived the Swiss, who, according to the custom of their fathers, fell on their knees before the battle to implore the protection of the Lord of lords; the Burgundians thought they were kneeling thus in order to yield up their arms, and began to shout triumphantly; but all at once those Christian soldiers, fortified by prayer, rose from the ground, fell on their adversaries, and at length obtain the victory of which their pious ardor had rendered them so worthy. Circumstances of this sort are often found in Müller's history, and his language affects the soul, even when what he says is not in itself pathetic; there is

something grave, noble, and chaste in his style, which powerfully awakens the recollection of ancient times.

Müller had nevertheless much versatility; but genius assumes all forms without being on that account subjected to the charge of hypocrisy. It is what it appears to be, but it cannot always continue in the same disposition, and external circumstances give it different modifications. It is above all to the coloring of his style that Müller owes his power over the imagination; the old words which he makes use of so much to the purpose, give an air of Germanic faith which inspires us with confidence. Nevertheless, he is wrong in attempting to unite the conciseness of Tacitus with the *naïveté* of the middle ages; these two imitations are inconsistent with each other. There is even no one but Müller with whom the old German phraseology sometimes succeeds; in every one else it is affectation. Sallust alone among the ancient writers ventured to make use of the forms and language of a period anterior to his own; in general this sort of imitation is unnatural to us; nevertheless, the chronicles of the middle ages were so familiar to Müller, that he often unintentionally wrote in the same style. Those expressions must certainly have been natural to him, since they inspire all that he wished us to feel.[1]

In reading Müller we have pleasure in believing that he possessed at least some of the virtues which he knew so well how to appreciate. His last will, which has been just pub-

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[1] "Comparatively few, we imagine, even among diligent readers, have paid much attention to the history of Helvetia. It has not yet been well written. It is a thing for the future. The man is yet to arise, who, bringing to this task scholarship, candor, industry, genius, and sympathy with the principle of freedom, shall make of Swiss history what it ought to be, a story as grand and far-reaching and inspiring as the views from those rugged and enduring mountains. Müller was great enough for the task, but he lived a century too soon, was seduced from his integrity as an historian by the blandishments of the German courts, found naturally more scope for his genius in a universal than in a merely national record, and has only left materials for some more loyal son of the land to recast and complete."—(*North American Review*, April, 1859, p. 480.)—*Ed.*

lished, is undoubtedly a proof of his disinterestedness. He leaves no fortune, but directs his manuscripts to be sold in order to pay his debts. He adds, that if the produce is sufficient to discharge them, he bequeathes his watch to his servant, "who will not," he says, "receive without tender emotion, the watch which he has daily wound up for twenty years." The poverty of a man possessed of such distinguished talents is always an honorable circumstance of his life: a thousandth part of the genius which confers a high literary reputation would certainly be sufficient to insure the success of all the calculations of covetousness. It is a fine thing to devote one's talents to the pursuit of fame, and we always feel esteem for those who ardently aspire after an object which lies beyond the grave.

CHAPTER XXX.

HERDER.

The literary men of Germany, as a united body, form in many respects the most respectable assemblage which the enlightened world can present to us; and among these, Herder[1] deserves a distinguished place: his mind, his genius, and his morality united, have rendered his life illustrious. His writings may be considered in three different points of view, those of history, literature, and theology. He was much occupied

[1] "John Godfrey Herder, the friend and early patron of Goethe, was born, in 1744, at Mohrungen, a small place in East-Prussia, where his father was sexton and schoolmaster. He received from him the rudiments of his education, and at a very early age showed great diligence. But the small means of his parents, and a defect in one of his eyes, seemed a bar to his ever being sent to a university. The clergyman of the place took him into his house in the capacity of a menial, but he had access to his library, and employed all his leisure time in reading. During the Seven Years' War, he became acquainted with an army surgeon who prevailed on him to accompany him to Königsberg, to study surgery; but some short time

in the study of antiquity in general, and of the oriental languages in particular. His book entitled *the Philosophy of History* has more fascination in it than almost any other German production. We do not indeed find that it contains the same depth of political observation as the work written by Montesquieu on *the Causes of the Grandeur and Decline of the Romans;* but as Herder's object was to penetrate the genius of the earliest times, perhaps the quality he most eminently possessed, which was imagination, proved more serviceable to him in that pursuit than any other would have done. That sort of torch is necessary when we walk in darkness: Herder's various chapters on Persepolis and Babylon, on the Hebrews and Egyptians, form a delightful kind of reading; it seems as if we were walking in the midst of the old world with an historical poet, who touches the ruins with his wand, and erects anew before our eyes all the fallen edifices.

In Germany, so extensive a degree of information is expected even from men of the greatest genius, that some critics have accused Herder of not possessing a sufficient depth of learning. But what strikes us, on the contrary, is the variety of his knowledge; all the languages were familiar to him, and his *Essay on the Poetry of the Hebrews,*[1] is the work in which he

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afterwards he determined to embrace the profession of theology, and was appointed minister of the Lutheran church and rector of the high-school in Riga. He soon, however, resigned that situation, and, desirous to see the world, travelled through Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, Great Britain, and the Netherlands, to France. In Paris he had an offer of travelling as tutor with the Prince of Holstein, whom he went to meet at Eutin. After having accompanied him through a great part of Germany, he left him to accept an appointment as court-preacher at Bückeburg (1770). Five years afterwards, the professorship of theology in the University of Göttingen was offered to him; but on his arrival there he received the disagreeable intelligence that his nomination had not been confirmed by the King of England. In 1789, the rank of vice-president of Consistory was bestowed on him by the Duke of Weimar, in whose capital he took his final abode. He died in 1803, in his fifty-ninth year.

"His principal works are: *Ueber den Ursprung der Sprache; Geist der hebräischen Poesie; Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit; Briefe über die Fortschritte der Humanität; Vernunft und Menschlichkeit.*"—*Ed.*

[1] It has been well translated in this country by Professor Marsh.—*Ed.*

most readily discovers how far he could adopt the spirit of foreign nations. The genius of a prophetic people, with whom poetical inspiration was an emanation from the Deity, was never better expressed. The wandering life of that nation, the manners of its people, the thoughts of which they were capable, the imagery habitual to it, are all pointed out by Herder with great sagacity. By the help of the most ingenious combinations, he endeavors to give us an idea of the symmetry of Hebrew versification, of that return of the same sentiment and of the same image in different terms of which every stanza offers us an example. Sometimes he compares this striking regularity to two rows of pearls which surround the hair of a beautiful woman. "Art and nature," says he, "through all their varieties, still preserve an astonishing uniformity." Unless we were able to read the Hebrew Psalms in the original language, it is impossible to acquire a better idea of the charm with which they are accompanied, than by what Herder says of them. His imagination was straitened in the countries of the West; he delighted in breathing the perfumes of Asia, and in transfusing into his works the pure incense which his soul had collected. It was he who first made Spanish and Portuguese poetry known in Germany; the translations of W. Schlegel have since naturalized them. Herder published a collection entitled *Popular Songs*. It contains ballads and detached pieces, on which the national character and imagination of the people are strongly impressed. We may study in them that natural poetry which precedes cultivation. Cultivated literature becomes so speedily factitious, that it is good, now and then, to have recourse to the origin of all poetry, that is to say, to the impression made by nature on man before he had analyzed both the universe and himself. The flexibility of the German language alone, perhaps, admits a translation of those *naïvetés* peculiar to that of different countries, without which we cannot enter into the spirit of popular poetry; the words in those poems have in themselves a certain grace, which affects us like a flower we have before seen, like an air that we have heard in our childhood: these peculiar impressions contain not only the secrets

of the art, but those of the soul, from which art originally derived them. The Germans, in literature, analyze their sensations to the very utmost, even to those delicate shades which no language can convey to our ideas; and we may reproach them with attaching themselves too much, in every respect, to the endeavor of making us comprehend what can never be expressed.

I shall speak, in the fourth part of this work, of Herder's theological writings; history and literature are often found united in them. A man of genius so sincere as Herder, must naturally mingle religion with all his thoughts, and all his thoughts with religion. It has been said that his writings resemble an animated conversation: it is true that he has not made use of that methodical form in his works, which is given to books in general. It was under the porticos, and in the gardens of the Academy, that Plato explained to his disciples the system of the intellectual world. We find in Herder that noble negligence of genius ever impatient to acquire new ideas. What we call a well-made book is a modern invention. The discovery of the art of printing has made necessary divisions, recapitulations, in short all the apparatus of logic. The greatest number of ancient works of philosophy, are treatises or dialogues, which we consider as written conversations. Montaigne also gave himself up to the natural course of his thoughts. To be allowed such a privilege, however, we should possess a decided superiority of intellect. Order supplies the want of that superiority; for if mediocrity were thus to deviate at random, we should commonly be brought back to the point from which we begun, with the fatigue of having taken many a wearisome step; but a man of genius interests us the more, by showing himself as he is, and by making his books appear rather as extemporaneous effusions than labored compositions.

Herder[1] possessed, it is said, admirable powers of conversa-

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[1] "Herder is the lineal descendant of Lessing, imitating his revolutionary efforts, helping to disseminate his ideas, and succeeded in carrying them further by reason of the very qualities which distinguished him from Lessing. The works published about this period, namely, *Fragmente zur*

tion, and from his writings we are sensible that it must have been so. We also perceive from them what indeed all his friends attest the truth of, that there never was a better man. When literary genius inspires those who do not know us with a disposition to love us, it is that gift of heaven from which on earth we gather the most delightful fruit.

Deutschen Literatur, 1767; the *Kritische Wälder*, 1769; and *Von Deutscher Art und Kunst*, 1773, show Lessing's influence as the groundwork, with Hamann's and his own rhetorical and theologico-poetical tendencies as variations. If Lessing is now best known by his *Laokoön* and *Nathan*, Herder is almost exclusively known by his *Ideas towards a History of Mankind*. The contrast between these works is all the greater because of the evident parentage. Herder had something of the Hebrew Prophet in him, but the Hebrew Prophet fallen upon Deistical times, with Spinoza and Lessing for teachers. To complete the contrast between Lessing and Herder, it may be added that both were critics rather than poets; but the clear rational poetry of Lessing survives, while the rhetoric of Herder is altogether forgotten. Both greatly influenced their nation, Herder perhaps more than Lessing at the time; but as the waves of time roll on they leave Herder more and more behind, scarcely washing any thing away of the great Lessing.

"Herder's merit, according to Gervinus, is, that he gave an impulse to poetic activity, less through his own example than through his union of imagination and fancy with æsthetical criticism, thus throwing a bridge over from criticism to poetry. From youth upwards there was something in him solitary, visionary, and sensitive: he was never seen to leap and play like other boys, but wandered lonely with his thoughts. A vast ambition, resting on a most predominating vanity, made him daring in literature, bitter, and to many unendurable in intercourse. His sensitive nerves forbidding the study of medicine, he chose that of theology. He became one of Germany's most renowned preachers; but although his loved wife weaned him from the early 'freethinking,' he never to the last became what could be called orthodox; he was, so to speak, a rhetorical Spinoza 'in orders.'

"Although Herder was not more a poet than Lessing, he had more of the poetical element in his nature; but it was confused, and instead of ripening into fruit, ran to seed in rhetoric. This fault, which was also a quality, brought him nearer to his age and nation. It gave a charm to his teaching. It roused enthusiasm. It aided his efforts towards the dissemination of Ossian, Hebrew poetry, and old German literature, especially old ballads."—(Lewes, *Life and Works of Goethe*, vol. i. pp. 258, 259.)—*Ed.*

CHAPTER XXXI.

OF THE LITERARY TREASURES OF GERMANY, AND OF ITS MOST RENOWNED CRITICS, A. W. AND F. SCHLEGEL.

In the picture which I have now given of German literature, I have endeavored to point out the principal works; but I have been obliged to omit naming a great number of men, whose writings, being less known, conduce more to the instruction of those who read them, than to the reputation of the authors themselves.

Treatises on the fine arts, works of erudition and philosophy, though they do not immediately belong to literature, must, however, be counted among its treasures. There is in Germany a fund of ideas and knowledge which the other nations of Europe will not for a long time be able to exhaust.

The poetical genius, if Heaven ever restores it to us, may also receive a happy impulse from the love of nature, of arts, and philosophy, which is kindled in the countries of Germany; but at least, I dare affirm that any man who now wishes to devote himself to a serious work of whatever sort, whether history, philosophy, or antiquities, cannot excuse himself from becoming acquainted with the German writers, who have been occupied with the study of those subjects.

France may boast of a great number of learned men of the first rank, but they have seldom united knowledge and philosophical sagacity, while in Germany they are now almost inseparable. Those who plead in favor of ignorance, as a pledge of grace, mention many very sensible men who have had no instruction; but they forget that those men have deeply studied the human heart, such as it shows itself in the world, and that their ideas are derived from that source. But if those men, learned in society, would judge of literature without being ac-

quainted it, they would be as tiresome as citizens are when they talk of the court.

When I began the study of German literature, it seemed as if I was entering on a new sphere, where the most striking light was thrown on all that I had before perceived only in a confused manner. For some time past, little has been read in France except memoirs and novels, and it is not wholly from frivolity that we are become less capable of more serious reading, but because the events of the revolution have accustomed us to value nothing but the knowledge of men and things: we find in German books, even on the most abstract subjects, that kind of interest which confers their value upon good novels, and which is excited by the knowledge which they teach us of our own hearts. The peculiar character of German literature is to refer every thing to an interior existence; and as that is the mystery of mysteries, it awakens an unbounded curiosity.

Before we proceed to philosophy, which always makes a part of learning in countries where the empire of literature is free and powerful, I will say a few words on what may be considered as the legislation of that empire—I mean criticism. There is no branch of German literature which has been carried to a greater extent, and as in certain cities there are more physicians than sick people, there are sometimes in Germany more critics than authors; but the analyses of Lessing, who was the creator of style in German prose, are made in such a manner, that they may themselves be considered as works.

Kant, Goethe, J. von Müller, the greatest German writers of every kind, have inserted in the periodicals, what they call *recensions* of different publications, and these *recensions* contain the most profound philosophical theory, and positive knowledge. Among the younger writers, Schiller and the two Schlegels have shown themselves very superior to all other critics. Schiller is the first among the disciples of Kant who applied his philosophy to literature; and indeed, to judge from the soul, of exterior objects, or from exterior objects to know what passes in the soul, is so different a progress, that all con-

nected with either, must be sensible of it. Schiller has written two treatises *on the naif and the sentimental*, in which, genius unconscious of its own powers, and genius which is self-observant, are analyzed with great sagacity; but in his *Essay on Grace and Dignity*, and in his letters on *Æsthetics*, that is, the theory of the beautiful, there is too much of metaphysics. When we mean to speak of that enjoyment of the arts of which all men are susceptible, we should dwell on the impressions they have received, instead of permitting the use of abstract forms, which make us lose the trace of those impressions. Schiller was a man of literature by his genius, and a philosopher by his inclination to reflection; his prose writings border on the confines of the two regions; but he often treads a little forward on the highest, and returning incessantly to what is more abstract in theory, he disdains the application as a useless consequence of the principles he has laid down.

Animated descriptions of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of literature give much more interest to criticism, than general ideas which skim over all subjects without characterizing any. Metaphysics may be termed the science of what is immutable; but all that is subjected to the course of time, is explained only by the mixture of facts and reflections: the Germans would attain complete theories, independent of circumstances, on all subjects; but as that is impossible, we must not give up facts from a fear lest they should circumscribe ideas; and examples alone in theory, as well as in practice, engrave precepts deeply in the memory.

The quintessence of thoughts which some German works present to us, does not, like that of flowers, concentrate the most odoriferous perfumes; on the contrary, we may say with greater truth, that it is only a cold remnant of emotions that were full of life. We might, however, extract from those works a multitude of very interesting observations; but they are confounded with each other. The author, by great exertion of mind, leads his readers to that point where his ideas are too fine and delicate for him to attempt transmitting them to others.

The writings of A. W. Schlegel are less abstracted than those of Schiller; as his knowledge of literature is uncommon even in Germany, he is led continually to application by the pleasure which he finds in comparing different languages and different poems with each other; so general a point of view ought almost to be considered as infallible, if partiality did not sometimes impair it; but this partiality is not of an arbitrary kind, and I will point out both the progress and aim of it; nevertheless, as there are subjects in which it is not perceived, it is of those that I shall first speak.

W. Schlegel has given a course of dramatic literature at Vienna, which comprises every thing remarkable that has been composed for the theatre from the time of the Grecians to our own days: it is not a barren nomenclature of the works of the various authors; he seizes the spirit of their different sorts of literature with all the imagination of a poet; we are sensible that to produce such consequences extraordinary studies are required; but learning is not perceived in this work except by his perfect knowledge of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of composition. In a few pages we reap the fruit of the labor of a whole life; every opinion formed by the author, every epithet given to the writers of whom he speaks, is beautiful and just, concise and animated. W. Schlegel has found the art of treating the finest pieces of poetry as so many wonders of nature, and of painting them in lively colors which do not injure the justness of the outline; for we cannot repeat too often, that imagination, far from being an enemy to truth, brings it forward more than any other faculty of the mind, and all those who depend upon it as an excuse for indefinite terms or exaggerated expressions, are at least as destitute of poetry as of good sense.

An analysis of the principles on which both tragedy and comedy are founded, is treated in W. Schlegel's course of dramatic literature with much depth of philosophy; this kind of merit is often found among the German writers; but Schlegel has no equal in the art of inspiring enthusiasm for the great geniuses he admires; in general he shows himself attached to a simple taste, sometimes bordering on rusticity, but he devi-

ates from his usual opinions in favor of the opinions of the inhabitants of the South. Their *jeux de mots* and their *concetti* are not the objects of his censure; he detests the affectation which owes its existence to the spirit of society, but that which is excited by the luxury of imagination pleases him in poetry as the profusion of colors and perfumes would do in nature. Schlegel, after having acquired a great reputation by his translation of Shakspeare, became equally enamored of Calderon, but with a very different sort of attachment from that with which Shakspeare had inspired him; for while the English author is deep and gloomy in his knowledge of the human heart, the Spanish poet gives himself up with pleasure and delight to the beauty of life, to the sincerity of faith, and to all the brilliancy of those virtues which derive their coloring from the sunshine of the soul.

I was at Vienna when W. Schlegel gave his public course of lectures. I expected only good sense and instruction where the object was only to convey information; I was astonished to hear a critic as eloquent as an orator, and who, far from falling upon defects, which are the eternal food of mean and little jealousy, sought only the means of reviving a creative genius.

Spanish literature is but little known, and it was the subject of one of the finest passages delivered during the sitting at which I attended. W. Schlegel gave us a picture of that chivalrous nation, whose poets were all warriors, and whose warriors were poets. He mentioned that Count Ercilla, "who composed his poem of the Araucana in a tent, as now on the shores of the ocean, now at the foot of the Cordilleras, while he made war on the devoted savages. Garcilasso, one of the descendants of the Incas, wrote love-poems on the ruins of Carthage, and perished at the siege of Tunis. Cervantes was dangerously wounded at the battle of Lepanto; Lope de Vega escaped miraculously at the defeat of the Invincible Armada; and Calderon served as an intrepid soldier in the wars of Flanders and Italy.

"Religion and war were more frequently united among the Spaniards than in any other nation; it was they who, by per-

petual combats, drove out the Moors from the bosom of their country, and who may be considered as the vanguard of European christendom; they conquered their churches from the Arabians, an act of their worship was a trophy for their arms, and their triumphant religion, sometimes carried to fanaticism, was allied to the sentiment of honor, and gave to their character an impressive dignity. That gravity tinctured with imagination, even that gayety which loses nothing of what is serious in the warmest affections, show themselves in Spanish literature, which is wholly composed of fictions and of poetry, of which religion, love, and warlike exploits are constantly the object. It might be said, that when the new world was discovered, the treasures of another hemisphere contributed to enrich the imagination as much as the state; and that in the empire of poetry as well as in that of Charles V, the sun never ceased to enlighten the horizon."

All who heard W. Schlegel, were much struck with this picture, and the German language, which he spoke with elegance, added depth of thought and affecting expression to those high-sounding Spanish names, which can never be pronounced without presenting to our imaginations the orange-trees of the kingdom of Grenada, and the palaces of its Moorish sovereigns.[1]

We may compare W. Schlegel's manner of speaking of poetry, to that of Winkelmann in describing statues; and it is only by such a method of estimating talents, that it is honorable to be a critic: every artist or professional man can point out faults and inaccuracies which ought to be avoided, but the ability to discover genius and to admire it, is almost equal to the possession of genius itself.

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[1] William Schlegel, whom I here mention as the first literary critic of Germany, is the author of a French pamphlet lately published under the title of *Reflections on the Continental System.* This same W. Schlegel printed a few years ago, at Paris, a comparison between the Phædra of Euripides and that of Racine: it made a great noise among the Parisian literati; but no one could deny that W. Schlegel, though a German, wrote French well enough to be fully competent to speak of Racine.

Frederick Schlegel being much engaged in philosophical pursuits, devoted himself less exclusively to literature than his brother; yet the piece he wrote on the intellectual culture of the Greeks and Romans, contains in small compass perceptions and conclusions of the first order. F. Schlegel[1] has more originality of genius than almost any other celebrated man in Germany; but far from depending on that originality, though it promised him much success, he endeavored to assist it by extensive study. It is a great proof of our respect for the human species, when we dare not address it from the suggestions of our own minds, without having first conscientiously examined into all that has been left to us by our predecessors as an inheritance. The Germans, in those acquired treasures of the human mind, are true proprietors: those who depend on their

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[1] "It is not our purpose" says Carlyle, speaking of Schlegel's last work, "to offer any criticism of Schlegel's Book; in such limits as were possible here, we should despair of communicating even the faintest image of its significance. To the mass of readers, indeed, both among the Germans themselves, and still more elsewhere, it nowise addresses itself, and may lie forever sealed. We point it out as a remarkable document of the Time and of the Man; can recommend it, moreover, to all earnest Thinkers, as a work deserving their best regard: a work full of deep meditation, wherein the infinite mystery of Life, if not represented, is decisively recognized. Of Schlegel himself, and his character and spiritual history, we can profess no thorough or final understanding; yet enough to make us view him with admiration and pity, nowise with harsh contemptuous censure; and must say, with clearest persuasion, that the outcry of his being 'a renegade,' and so forth, is but like other such outcries, a judgment where there was neither jury, nor evidence, nor judge. The candid reader, in this Book itself, to say nothing of all the rest, will find traces of a high, far-seeing, earnest spirit, to whom 'Austrian Pensions,' and the Kaiser's crown, and Austria altogether, were but a light matter to the finding and vitally appropriating of Truth. Let us respect the sacred mystery of a Person; rush not irreverently into man's Holy of Holies! Were the lost little one, as we said already, found 'sucking its dead mother, on the field of carnage,' could it be other than a spectacle for tears? A solemn mournful feeling comes over us when we see this last Work of Friedrich Schlegel, the unwearied seeker, end abruptly in the middle; and, as if he *had not* yet found, as if emblematically of much, end with an 'Aber—,' with a 'But—!' This was the last word that came from the Pen of Friedrich Schlegel: about eleven at night he wrote it down, and there paused sick; at one in the morning, Time for him had merged itself in Eternity; he was, as we say, no more."—(*Essays*, p. 307.)—*Ed.*

own natural understandings alone, are mere sojourners in comparison with them.

After having done justice to the uncommon talents of the two Schlegels, we will now examine in what that partiality consists of which they are accused, and from which it is certain all their writings are not exempt. They are evidently prepossessed in favor of the middle ages, and the opinions that were then prevalent; chivalry without spot, unbounded faith, and unstudied poetry, appear to them inseparable; and they apply themselves to all that may enable them to direct the minds and understandings of others to the same preference. W. Schlegel expresses his admiration for the middle ages in several of his writings, and particularly in two stanzas of which I will now give a translation.

"In those distinguished ages Europe was sole and undivided, and the soil of that universal country was fruitful in those generous thoughts which are calculated to serve as guides through life and in death. Knighthood converted combatants into brethren in arms: they fought in defence of the same faith; the same love inspired all hearts, and the poetry which sung that alliance, expressed the same sentiment in different languages.

"Alas! the noble energy of ancient times is lost: our age is the inventor of a narrow-minded wisdom, and what weak men have no ability to conceive, is in their eyes only a chimera; surely nothing truly great can succeed if undertaken with a grovelling heart. Our times, alas! no longer know either faith or love; how then can hope be expected to remain with them?"

Opinions, whose tendency is so strongly marked, must necessarily affect impartiality of judgment on works of art: without doubt, as I have continually repeated during the whole course of this work, it is much to be desired that modern literature should be founded on our history and our religion; it does not, however, follow that the literary productions of the middle ages should be considered as absolutely good. The energetic simplicity, the pure and loyal character which is dis-

played in them, interests us warmly; but on the other hand, the knowledge of antiquity and the progress of civilization have given us advantages which are not to be despised. The object is not to trace back the arts to remote times, but to unite, as much as we can, all the various qualities which have been developed in the human mind at different periods.

The Schlegels have been strongly accused of not doing justice to French literature; there are, however, no writers who have spoken with more enthusiasm of the genius of our troubadours, and of that French chivalry which was unequalled in Europe, when it united in the highest degree, spirit and loyalty, grace and frankness, courage and gayety, the most affecting simplicity with the most ingenuous candor; but the German critics affirm that those distinguished traits of the French character were effaced during the course of the reign of Louis XIV; literature, they say, in ages which are called classical, loses in originality what it gains in correctness; they have attacked our poets, particularly, in various ways, and with great strength of argument. The general spirit of those critics is the same with that of Rousseau in his letter against French music. They think they discover in many of our tragedies that kind of pompous affectation, of which Rousseau accuses Lully and Rameau, and they affirm that the same taste which gives the preference to Coypel and Boucher in painting, and to the Chevalier Bernini in sculpture, forbids in poetry that rapturous ardor which alone renders it a divine enjoyment; in short, they are tempted to apply to our manner of conceiving and of loving the fine arts, the verses so frequently quoted from Corneille:

> "Othon à la princesse a fait un compliment,
> Plus un homme d'esprit qu'en véritable amant."

W. Schlegel pays due homage, however, to most of our great authors; but what he chiefly endeavors to prove, is, that from the middle of the seventeenth century, a constrained and affected manner has prevailed throughout Europe, and that this prevalence has made us lose those bold flights of genius which animated both writers and artists in the revival of literature.

In the pictures and bas-reliefs where Louis XIV is sometimes represented as Jupiter, and sometimes as Hercules, he is naked, or clothed only with the skin of a lion, but always with a great wig on his head. The writers of the new school tell us that this great wig may be applied to the physiognomy of the fine arts in the seventeenth century: an affected sort of politeness, derived from factitious greatness, is always to be discovered in them.

It is interesting to examine the subject in this point of view, in spite of the innumerable objections which may be opposed to it; it is however certain that these German critics have succeeded in the object aimed at, as, of all writers since Lessing, they have most essentially contributed to discredit the imitation of French literature in Germany; but from the fear of adopting French taste, they have not sufficiently improved that of their own country, and have often rejected just and striking observations, merely because they had before been made by our writers.

They know not how to make a book in Germany, and scarcely ever adopt that methodical order which classes ideas in the mind of the reader; it is not, therefore, because the French are impatient, but because their judgment is just and accurate, that this defect is so tiresome to them; in German poetry fictions are not delineated with those strong and precise outlines which insure the effect, and the uncertainty of the imagination corresponds to the obscurity of the thought. In short, if taste be found wanting in those strange and vulgar pleasantries which constitute what is called *comic* in some of their works, it is not because they are natural, but because the affectation of energy is at least as ridiculous as that of gracefulness. "I am making myself lively," said a German as he jumped out of window: when we attempt to make ourselves any thing, we are nothing: we should have recourse to the good taste of the French to secure us from the excessive exaggeration of some German authors, as on the other hand we should apply to the solidity and depth of the Germans to guard us against the dogmatic frivolity of some men in France

Different nations ought to serve as guides to each other, and all would do wrong to deprive themselves of the information they may mutually receive and impart. There is something very singular in the difference which subsists between nations; the climate, the aspect of nature, the language, the government, and above all, the events of history, which have in themselves powers more extraordinary than all the others united, all combine to produce those diversities; and no man, however superior he may be, can guess at that which is naturally developed in the mind of him who inhabits another soil and breathes another air: we should do well then, in all foreign countries, to welcome foreign thoughts and foreign sentiments, for hospitality of this sort makes the fortune of him who exercises it.

CHAPTER XXXII.

OF THE FINE ARTS IN GERMANY.

The Germans in general understand the arts better than they practise them; no sooner is an impression made on their minds, than they draw from it a number of ideas. They boast much of mystery, but it is with the purpose of revealing it, and no sort of originality can be shown in Germany without exciting a general endeavor to explain from whence it is derived; this is a great disadvantage, particularly with respect to the arts, where all is sensation; they are analyzed before this inspiration is felt, and it is in vain afterwards to say, it was wrong to analyze them, we must denounce the practice, for we have tasted the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and the innocence of genius is lost.

I certainly do not recommend, with respect to the arts, that ignorance which I have always condemned in literature; but we should distinguish the studies which relate to the practice of the arts, from those whose only object is the theory of

genius; these carried too far, stifle invention; we are perplexed by the recollection of all that has been said on the subject of every different *chef-d'œuvre*, and think we perceive between ourselves and the object we mean to describe, a number of treatises on painting and sculpture, on the ideal and the real, till as artists, we feel that we are no longer in immediate communion with nature. Without doubt the spirit of those various treatises is encouragement; but genius is wearied by being brought too forward, as on the other hand it is extinguished by too much restraint; and in all that relates to the imagination, there is required so happy a combination of obstacles and facilities, that ages may pass away before we arrive exactly at the point most favorable for the display of the human mind in its highest degree of perfection.

Before the period of the Reformation, the Germans had a school of painting which that of Italy would not have disdained. Albert Durer, Lucas Cranach, and Holbein, have in their manner of painting some affinity with the predecessors of Raphael, Perugino, Andrea Mantegna, etc. Holbein approaches nearer to Leonardo da Vinci; there is however in general more hardness in the German than in the Italian school, but not less expression and collectedness in the countenances. The painters in the fifteenth century had very little knowledge of the means which facilitate the practice of their art, but simplicity and modesty are everywhere displayed in their works; we see in them no pretensions to grand effect, we perceive only the expression of that strong and vivid emotion, for which all men of genius endeavor to find a language, that they may not leave the world without imparting a portion of their soul to their contemporaries.

In the paintings of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the folds of the drapery are quite straight, the head-dresses a little stiff, the attitudes very simple; but there is something in the expression of the figures which we are never tired of contemplating. The pictures inspired by the Christian religion, produce an impression like that of the Psalms, wherein poetry and piety are so charmingly united.

The second, and the finest epoch of the art of painting, was that in which the painters preserved the truth of the middle ages, and added to it all the more recently acquired splendor of the art: nothing among the Germans corresponds to the age of Leo X. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, on to the middle of the eighteenth, the fine arts almost everywhere fell into a singular decay; taste degenerated into affectation: Winckelmann[1] then exerted the greatest influence not only over his own country, but over the rest of Europe; and it was his writings which directed the minds of different artists to the study and admiration of the monuments of antiquity: he was better skilled in sculpture than in poetry; and he therefore led painters into the practice of placing colored statues in their pictures rather than the animated forms of living nature. Painting also lost much of its charm by being so nearly allied to sculpture; the illusion necessary to the one is directly contrary to the immovable and decided forms of the other. When painters take their models exclusively from the remains of ancient beauty, as it is only in statues that it can be discovered, we may address to them the reproach which has been applied

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[1] "J. J. Winckelmann, the son of a poor shoemaker, was born December 9, 1717, at Stendall, in the Altmark. He studied theology at Halle, and, in 1743, became a schoolmaster at Seehausen. His leisure time there he gave to the study of the ancient classics, and his thoughts were altogether turned towards Greece and Rome. Appointed librarian (1748) to the Count Bünau, he had opportunities of examining the valuable collection of antiquities in Dresden, and of becoming acquainted with Lippert, Hagedorn, and Oeser, and more deeply initiated in the fine arts. Through Cardinal Archinto, who held out to him promotion at Rome, he became, in 1755, a convert to the Romish faith, and secretary to the Vatican library. He hastened to Rome, where he led for more than ten years the happy life of a man enabled to indulge in his favorite pursuits. In 1768, when he returned to Germany, to visit his friends, the sight of snow and of smoky houses drove him back to Italy. On his way thither he was joined by an Italian who affected to be greatly interested in numismatics, and when Winckelmann, on their arrival at Trieste, readily displayed to him his collection of gold coins, assassinated him, June 8, 1768.

"Winckelmann is founder of the school of art-criticism. His greatest celebrity is from the work *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, which gave an impulse and a healthiness of tone to the whole literature of Germany."—*Ed.*

to modern classical literature, that it is not from the inspiration of their own minds that they produce the effects of their art.

Mengs, a German painter, has given us many philosophical thoughts, in his writings, on the subject of his art; he was the friend of Winckelmann, and participated in his admiration of the antique; but he nevertheless avoided the faults for which the painters, formed by the writings of Winckelmann, have generally been censured, and which are mostly confined to their copying the *chefs-d'œuvre* of antiquity. Mengs had even taken Corregio for his model, whose pictures, of all others, are the farthest removed from any resemblance to sculpture, and whose *chiaro-oscuro* recalls to our minds the vague but delightful impressions of melody.

The German artists had almost all of them adopted the operations of Winckelmann, till the period when the new literary school also extended its influence over the fine arts. Goethe, whose universal genius meets us everywhere, has shown in his writings that he comprehends the true spirit of painting much better than Winckelmann; nevertheless, convinced like him that subjects drawn from the Christian religion are not favorable to the art, he endeavors to revive our enthusiam for ancient mythology, an attempt which it is impossible to succeed in; perhaps, with respect to the fine arts, we are not capable of being either Christians or Pagans; but at whatever period a creative imagination shall again spring up from among men, it will assuredly not be in an imitation of the ancients that its effects will be perceived.

The new school maintains the same system in the fine arts as in literature, and affirms that Christianity is the source of all modern genius; the writers of this school also characterize, in a new manner, all that in Gothic architecture agrees with the religious sentiments of Christians. It does not follow, however, from this that the moderns can and ought to construct Gothic churches; nether art nor nature admit of repetition; it is only of consequence to us, in the present silence of genius, to lay aside the contempt which has been thrown on all the conceptions of the middle ages; it certainly does not suit us to

adopt them, but nothing is more injurious to the development of genius than to consider as barbarous every thing that is original.

I have already said, in speaking of Germany, that there are very few modern buildings which are at all remarkable; in the North, we see nothing in general but Gothic edifices, and the dispositions of soul which they tend to excite are encouraged both by nature and poetry. Görres, a German writer, has given an interesting description of an ancient church. "We see," he says, "figures of knights kneeling on a tomb-stone, with their hands joined together; above them are placed some wonderful curiosities from Asia, which are intended to attest, as so many dumb witnesses, the voyages of the deceased to the Holy Land. The dark arches of the church cover those who rest beneath them with their shade; we might almost imagine ourselves in the midst of a forest, the branches and leaves of which have been petrified by death, so that they will no longer move or be agitated when succeeding ages, like the midnight storm, shall roll through their lengthened vaults. The church resounds with the majestic tones of the organ; inscriptions in letters of brass, half destroyed by the humid vapors of time, confusedly indicate those great actions which are now become fabulous, after having been so long considered as incontestably true."

In speaking of the arts in Germany we are led to mention writers rather than artists. The Germans are in every respect stronger in theory than in practice, and northern climates are so little favorable to those arts which strike our eyes, that we might almost be induced to think the spirit of reflection was bestowed on them merely because their inhabitants should be enabled to observe and appreciate the beauties of the South.

There are many galleries[1] of pictures and collections of drawings in Germany, which indicate a love of the arts in all ranks of people. In the houses of the nobility and most dis-

[1] Those of Dresden, Munich, Berlin, and Vienna, are among the most celebrated in Europe.—*Ed.*

tinguished men of letters, there are very fine copies of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of antiquity; that of Goethe is remarkable in this respect; his object is not merely the pleasure which is felt from the sight of fine statues and pictures, he thinks both the genius and the soul are affected by it. "I should be a better man," said he, "if I had always under my eyes the head of the Olympian Jupiter, which was so much admired by the ancients." Several distinguished painters have established themselves at Dresden; the *chefs-d'œuvre* which adorn the gallery are the objects of attraction, and excite both skill and emulation. The Virgin of Raphael, with two children gazing on her, is in itself a treasure of art; there is in this figure an elevation and a purity which is the perfect ideal of religion and inward fortitude. The perfection of the features is in this picture only a symbol; the long garments, as an expression of modesty, render the countenance still more interesting; and the physiognomy, even more admirable than the features, is like supreme beauty manifesting itself in that which is terrestrial. The Christ, who is in the arms of his mother, seems at most about two years of age; but the painter has wonderfully expressed the powerful energy of the divine being, in a countenance as yet scarcely formed. The looks of the angelic children who are placed at the bottom of the picture, are delightful; the innocence of that age alone can appear charming by the side of celestial candor; their astonishment at the sight of the Virgin, beaming with holiness and beauty, does not resemble the surprise which men might feel; they appear as if they adored her with confidence, because they acknowledge in her an inhabitant of that heaven from which they had just descended.

The Night of Corregio is, next to the Virgin of Raphael, the finest *chef-d'œuvre* in the Dresden Gallery. The adoration of the shepherds has often been well represented; but as novelty of subject goes but a little way in the pleasure we receive from painting, it is sufficient to observe the manner in which Corregio's picture is conceived, in order to admire it; it is in the middle of the night that the child is placed on the knees

of its mother, and that it receives the homage of the astonished shepherds; the light which beams from the holy aureola with which his head is surrounded, has something in it truly sublime; the personages placed in the background of the picture and far from the divine infant, are still in darkness; an emblem of the obscurity with which human life was environed before it was enlightened by revelation.[1]

Among the various pictures of modern artists at Dresden, I recollect a head of Dante, which in character was a little like the figure of Ossian in the fine picture of Gerard. This analogy is a happy one. Dante and the son of Fingal may take each other by the hand through successive ages, and through the clouds that hang over them.

A picture of Hartmann's represents the visit of Magdalen, and the two other Marys, to the sepulchre of Jesus Christ; the angel appears to announce to them that he is risen; the open tomb, which no longer incloses any mortal remains, and those women of most admirable beauty lifting their eyes towards heaven to behold him whom they have just been seeking in the shades of the sepulchre, form a painting at once picturesque and dramatic.

Schick, another German artist, now settled at Rome, has, since his residence in that place, composed a picture which represents the first sacrifice of Noah after the deluge; nature, revived by the waters, seems to have acquired a new freshness; the animals appear familiarized with the patriarch and his children, as having escaped together from the flood. The verdure, the flowers, and the sky are painted in lively and natural colors, which recall the sensations excited by the landscapes of the East. Several other artists endeavored, like Schick, to follow in painting the new system introduced, or rather revived, in literary poetry; but the arts require the assistance of riches, and wealth is dispersed through the different cities of Germany;

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[1] Unsatisfying enough are these descriptions of great pictures, but if we begin to quote from Kügler we shall completely bury the text, and so desist altogether.—*Ed.*

and besides this the greatest progress which has hitherto been made in that country, results from properly understanding, and copying in their true spirit, the works of the ancient masters; original genius has not yet decidedly displayed itself.

Sculpture has not been cultivated with much success among the Germans;[1] in the first place because they want the marble which renders the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the art immortal, and also because they have no just idea of that delicacy and grace of attitude and gesture which gymnastic exercises and dancing alone can render natural and easy to us; nevertheless, a Dane, Thorwaldsen, educated in Germany, is at present the rival of Canova at Rome, and his Jason resembles that which Pindar describes as the model of manly beauty; a fleece lies on his left arm; he holds a lance in his hand, and the inactivity of strength characterizes the hero. I have already said that sculpture in general loses much by the neglect of dancing; the only phenomenon of that art in Germany is Ida Brunn, a young girl whose situation in life precludes her from adopting it as a profession; she has received from nature and from her mother a wonderful talent of representing, by simple attitudes, the most affecting pictures, or the most beautiful statues; her dancing is a course of transient *chefs-d'œuvre*, every one of which we should wish to fix forever: it is true that the mother of Ida had before conceived in her imagination all that her daughter so admirably presents to our eyes. The poetry of Madame Brunn displays a thousand new treasures, both in art and nature, which from inattention had been before unnoticed. I saw the young Ida, when yet a child, represent Althea ready to burn the brand on which the life of her son, Meleager, depended; she expressed without words the grief, the struggles, the terrible resolution of the mother; her animated looks, without doubt, made us understand what was passing in her heart; but the art of varying her gestures, and the skilful manner in which she folded round her the purple mantle with

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[1] Famous sculptors, as well as painters, Germany has produced in the last half century, but we cannot enumerate them here.—*Ed.*

which she was clothed, produced at least as much effect as her countenance itself; she often remained a considerable time in the same attitude, and at such times a painter could not have invented any thing finer than the picture which she improvised; a talent of this sort is unique. I think, nevertheless, that pantomimical dances would succeed better in Germany than those which consist entirely, as in France, of bodily gracefulness and agility.

The Germans excel in instrumental music;[1] the knowledge

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[1] "In orchestral music the Germans are generally far in advance of all other people. This pleasure, too, is more easily accessible than in any other country; it is best to be enjoyed in the late autumn and winter, when the world of artists and audiences has come home 'from the baths.' The Symphonic Concerts of Berlin, and the subscription concerts at the *Gewand Haus* of Leipzig, will give the traveller the 'true reading' of the works of the great German symphonists, and afford him also a chance of hearing the best *solo* players, home and foreign. They are also of a wise brevity, as compared with our more cumbrous and costly entertainments. The 'high places' of chamber-music were recently Berlin, Leipzig, and Brunswick, each of which towns possessed a resident quartette of stringed instrumentalists, possessing very high renown. But all periodical music is more or less interrupted by fine weather, which tempts the world from home.

"From June till September the tourist has the chance of falling in with some celebration or festival, akin to our own provincial music meetings; but different, inasmuch as the chorus mainly consists of amateurs. These meetings are, on the average, interesting in the music selected, excellent as regards execution, from the heartiness, zeal, and patience in co-operation which pervade it, and most pleasantly social. It is the fault of bad English manners, if any Englishman, having claims on good society in his own country, finds himself 'a stranger among strangers' on these occasions—a very slight introduction (and, of course, some power of communication) securing him a good-natured welcome. Those who winter in Berlin will, of course, make an effort to attend the meetings of the *Sing Academie*. This may be called the best and most renowned amateur vocal society in Europe, and its members occasionally, for purposes of charity, give public performances on a grand scale. Gentlemen, too, will do well to gain access to such meetings of the *Lieder-tafel* societies as may fall in their way. These are singing parties of gentlemen only, who execute the part-music of German composers with great spirit and energy; both the music and the execution calculated, by their difference of style, especially to interest those who care for glees and madrigals at home.

"The best orchestral mass, probably, now to be heard in Europe, is that performed in the cathedral at Cologne. The organs in Dresden, in the

it demands, and the patience necessary to execute it well, are quite natural to them; some of their composers have also much variety and fruitfulness of imagination; I shall make but one objection to their genius as musicians; they put too much mind in their works; they reflect too much on what they are doing. In the fine arts there should be more instinct than thought: the German composers follow too exactly the sense of the words; this, it is true, is a great merit, in the opinion of those who love words better than music, and besides, we cannot deny that a disagreement between the sense of the one, and the impression of the other, would be offensive: but the Italians, who are truly the musicians of nature, make the air and words conform to each other only in a general manner. In ballads and vaudevilles, as there is not much music, the little that there is may be subjected to the words; but in the great effects of melody, we should endeavor to reach the soul by an immediate sensation.

Those who are not admirers of painting, considered in itself attach great importance to the subject of a picture: they wish, in contemplating it, to feel the impressions which are produced by dramatic representation: it is the same in music; when its powers are but feebly felt, we expect that it should faithfully conform to every variation of the words; but when the whole soul is affected by it, every thing, except the music itself, is importunate, and distracts the attention; provided there be no

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Sophien Kirche, the Catholic church, and one or two others, built by the Silbermanns, are well worth an effort to hear.

"Lastly, for those who search less scientifically than the traveller to whom the above hints are addressed, most attractive cheap music abounds in Germany. Almost every town has its Casino, or private subscription club; its pleasure-garden, and other public resorts, to which every one is admitted, where a good band, often of wind-instruments alone, may be heard to play good music to good company for a very small price of entrance. And these unpretending concerts (the very absence of pretension of which is an evidence of popular taste, as distinct from fashion) are sometimes diversified by very fair quartette singing. For the characteristic of German musical execution is, that, generally, every one occupied in its production takes pains in its production because he likes it."—(*Murray's Handbook for Northern Germany*, p. 222.)—*Ed.*

contrast between the poetry and the music, we give ourselves up to that art which should always predominate over the others; for the delightful reverie into which it throws us, annihilates all thoughts which may be expressed by words; and music awakening in us the sentiment of infinity, every thing which tends to particularize the object of melody, must necessarily diminish its effect.[1]

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[1] "At the close of the last, and commencement of the present century, the stronghold of German music was in South Germany. Every fifty years, however, the art seems to change its *habitat*, following in the steps of such individual and creative geniuses as a Mozart, a Beethoven, a Mendelssohn,—and thus the old glories of Prague, Munich, and Vienna may be revived. Meanwhile, they are somewhat in decadence.

"The best operatic theatres within the scope of this volume are those of Vienna, Munich, Prague, Stuttgart. The first-mentioned was, and perhaps is, the best in Germany, for this simple reason,—that one of the best Italian operas out of Italy has always been that established in Vienna. Hence, to please in that city, the German vocalists have been compelled to cultivate a more refined style of execution than has been required in places where such schools of example do not exist. The worst seasons for grand opera everywhere are the late summer and the early autumn—when theatres are on 'short allowance;' when the singers are bathing here, gambling there, or 'starring it' in some third out-of-the-way corner—and audiences are drinking or dancing in beer-gardens. In some respects, however, the tourist profits by this, since, in consequence of such stagnation, he may chance to hear, not the poor novelties in fashion—Italian, French, English ephemera, badly translated and clumsily executed—but the standard masterpieces of the German repertory. The old unaccompanied Italian church music was, till recently at least, maintained with care in one or two of the churches at Munich. The more modern orchestral Catholic, to be heard on 'high days and holidays' in St. Stephen's, at Vienna, was, a few years since, and probably still is, very fine.

"The grand orchestral and choral performances in the Riding School at Vienna, held principally in late autumn or early winter, are well worthy of attendance. The Austrian metropolis, too, has long been the Paradise of brilliant instrumental execution. Violin-players and pianists are, during the winter, to be heard there in great profusion; and testimony is agreed as to their meeting among their audiences with a quick and vivacious sympathy, as distinct from the enthusiasm of Frankfort or from the critical approval of Berlin, as south is from north. On the other hand, the graves of the great men men of South German music are neglected. The burying-places of Mozart and Gluck are imperfectly known, and I received three totally different directions in three different music-shops of Vienna as to the cemetery where they lie.

"The organs in the monasteries on the Danube are, so far as I know, su-

Gluck, whom the Germans, with reason, reckon among their men of genius, has adapted his airs to the words in a wonderful manner, and in several of his operas he has rivalled the poet by the expression of his music. When Alcestis has determined to die for Admetus, and that this sacrifice, secretly offered to the gods, has restored her husband to life, the contrast of the joyful airs, which celebrate the convalescence of the king, and the stifled groans and lamentations of the queen, who is condemned to quit him, has a fine tragical effect. Orestes, in the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, says, "serenity is restored to my soul," and the air which he sings expresses the sentiment, but its accompaniment is mournful and agitated. The musicians, astonished at this contrast, endeavored, in playing it, to soften the accompaniment, when Gluck angrily cried out: "You must not hearken to Orestes, he tells you he is calm, but he lies." Poussin, in painting the dance of the shepherd-

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perior instruments, bearing a high reputation. The military music of the Austrian regiments is surpassingly beautiful in tone and precise in execution. The dance music of Vienna has a value and a speciality which can hardly be rated too highly. Every traveller has heard of the waltzing in Austria, but few critics have been catholic enough to consider the waltz-music of such composers as Strauss, Lanner, and Labitsky, a manifestation, after its kind, as national as the Italian *cantilena*, and as self-consistent as the organ-fugue in the hands of Sebastian Bach. This is no place for analyzing forms of composition; but the attention of the musical traveller may be unhesitatingly directed to the execution of the ball-room bands of Vienna, when stimulated by the sympathy of the dancers, as something admirable, unique, and fascinating.

"Lastly, the amount of what may be called wild-music embraced within the range of this volume, is greater and more various than within the scope of almost any other Hand-book. Bohemia on the one side, and on the other Styria, Carinthia, and the Tyrol, are full of village bands, village singers, village composers, village instruments, and village traditions—in the mountain districts especially, varying from parish to parish. In all these things the primitive forms of melody, harmony, and rhythm may be studied by the most severely scientific musical pilgrim. For the less learned, or less pedantic traveller, it is needless to dwell on the enchantment which a few good players, playing before the inns, or singing in the village school-room, or some most quaint and provocative dance-tune (if a wedding chance to be going on), give to the pleasures of the mid-day halt, or the evening hours after the night quarters are reached."—(*Murray's Handbook for Southern Germany*, p. 4.)—*Ed.*

esses, places in the landscape the tomb of a young girl, on which is inscribed, "And I also was an Arcadian." There is thought in this kind of conception of the arts, as well as in the ingenious combination of Gluck; but the arts are superior to thought: their language is color, forms, or sounds. If we could form an imagination of the expressions of which our souls would be susceptible without the knowledge of words, we should have a more just idea of the effect to be produced by painting and music.

Of all musicians, perhaps Mozart has shown most skill in the talent of "marrying" the music to the words. In his operas, particularly in *the Banquet of the Statue*, he makes us sensible of all the gradations of dramatic representation; the songs are gay and lively, while the strange and loud accompaniment seems to point out the fantastic and gloomy subject of the piece. This ingenious alliance of the musician and poet, gives us also a sort of pleasure, but it is a pleasure which springs from reflection, and that does not belong to the wonderful sphere of the arts.

At Vienna, I heard Haydn's *Creation* performed by four hundred musicians; it was an entertainment worthy to be given in honor of the great work which it celebrated; but the skill of Haydn was sometimes even injurious to his talent: with those words of the Bible, "God said, let there be light, and there was light," the accompaniment of the instruments was at first very soft, so as scarcely to be heard, then all at once they broke out together with a terrible noise, as if to express the sudden burst of light, which occasioned a witty remark, "that at the appearance of light it was necessary to stop one's ears."

In several other passages of the *Creation*, the same labor of mind may often be censured; the music creeps slowly when the serpents are created; it becomes lively again with the singing of birds: and in the *Seasons*, by Haydn also, these allusions are still more multiplied. Effects thus prepared beforehand are in music what the Italians term *concetti;* without doubt, certain combinations of harmony may remind us of the

wonders of nature, but their analogies have nothing to do with imitation, which is nothing more than a factitious amusement. The real resemblance of the fine arts to each other, and also to nature, depends on sentiments of the same sort which they excite in our souls by various means.

Imitation and expression differ extremely in the fine arts: it is pretty generally agreed, I believe, that imitative music should be laid aside; but there are still two different ways of considering that of expression; some wish to discover in it a translation of the words; others, and the Italians are of this number, are contented with a general connection of the situations of the piece with the intention of the airs, and seek the pleasures of the art entirely in the art itself. The music of the Germans is more varied than that of the Italians, and in this respect, perhaps, is not so good; the mind is condemned to variety, its poverty is perhaps the cause of it; but the arts, like sentiment, have an admirable monotony, that of which one would willingly make an everlasting moment.

Church music is not so fine in Germany as in Italy, because the instrumental part is too powerful. To him who has heard the Miserere, performed at Rome by voices only, all instrumental music, not excepting that of the Chapel at Dresden, appears terrestrial. Violins and trumpets make part of the orchestra at that place during divine service, and the music is consequently much more warlike than religious; the contrast between the lively impression it occasions, and the meditations suited to the church, is not agreeable: we should not bring animated life to the foot of the tomb; military music leads us to sacrifice existence, but not to detach us from it. The music of the Chapel at Vienna also deserves praise; of all the arts, music is that which the people of Vienna most value; and this leads us to hope that at some future day they will also become poets, for in spite of their taste, which is a little prosaic, whoever really loves music, is an enthusiast, without knowing it, of all the sentiments which music recalls to our mind. I heard at Vienna the Requiem composed by Mozart a few days before his death, and which was sung in the church at his funeral;

it is not sufficiently solemn for the situation, and we still find in it, as in all his preceding compositions, many ingenious passages; what is there, however, more affecting and impressive than the idea of a man of superior genius thus celebrating his own obsequies, inspired at the same time by the sentiment of his death and of his immortality! The recollections of life ought to decorate the tomb; the arms of a warrior are usually suspended on it, and the *chefs-d'œuvre* of art cause a peculiarly solemn impression in the temple where the remains of the artist repose.

PART III.

PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS.

CHAPTER I.

OF PHILOSOPHY.

The world has been pleased, for some time past to throw great discredit upon the very name of philosophy. The case is common with all those terms, the signification of which is capable of much extension; they are the objects of benediction or blame among mankind, according to their use in fortunate or unhappy periods; but, in spite of the casual injustice or panegyric of individuals and of nations, philosophy, liberty, religion, never change their value. Man has spoken evil things of the sun, of love, and of life; he has suffered, he has felt himself consumed, by these lights of nature; but would he therefore extinguish them?

Every thing that has a tendency to set bounds to our faculties, bears the stamp of a degrading doctrine. We ought to direct those faculties to the lofty end of our existence—our advance to moral perfection. But it is not by the partial suicide of this or that power of our nature, that we shall be rendered capable of rising towards such an object; all our resources are not too numerous to forward our approach to it; and, if Heaven had granted more genius to man, he would have advanced so much the more in virtue.

Among the different branches of philosophy, metaphysics have, especially, occupied the attention of the Germans. The

objects which this science embraces, may be divided into three classes. The first relates to the mystery of the creation; that is, to the Infinite in all things; the second, to the formation of ideas in the human mind; and the third, to the exercise of our faculties, without ascending to their source.

The first of these studies, that which applies itself to the discovery of the secret of the universe, was cultivated among the Greeks, as it now is among the Germans. It is impossible to deny that such an investigation, however sublime in its principle, makes us feel our impotence at every step; and discouragement follows those efforts which cannot attain a result. The utility of the third class of metaphysical observations, that which is confined to the knowledge of the acts of our understanding, cannot be contested; but this utility is limited to the circle of daily experience. The philosophical meditations of the second class, those which are directed to the nature of our soul, and to the origin of our ideas, appear to me the most interesting of all. It is not likely that we should ever be able to know the eternal truths which explain the existence of this world: the desire that we feel for such knowledge is among the number of those noble thoughts which draw us towards another life; but it is not for nothing that the faculty of self-examination has been given to us. Doubtless, to observe the progress of our mind, such as it exists, is already to avail ourselves of this faculty; nevertheless, in rising higher, in striving to learn whether this mind acts spontaneously, or whether we can only think when thought is excited by external objects, we shall cast additional light upon the free-will of man, and consequently upon vice and virtue.

A crowd of moral and religious questions depends upon the manner in which we consider the origin and formation of our ideas. It is the diversity of their systems in this respect, above all others, that distinguishes the German from the French philosophers. We may easily conceive, that if the difference is at the fountain-head, it must show itself in the derived streams; it is impossible, therefore, to become acquainted with Germany, without tracing the progress of that philosophy, which, from

the days of Leibnitz down to our own, has incessantly exerted so great a power over the republic of letters.

There are two methods of considering the philosophy of the human mind; either in its theory or in its results. The examination of the theory demands a capacity which belongs not tc me: but it is easy to remark the influence which this or that metaphysical opinion exercises over the development of the mind and of the soul. The Gospel tells us, "that we must judge of prophets by their works:" this maxim may also guide our inquiry into the different systems of philosophy; for every thing that is of immoral tendency must be sophistical. This life has no value, unless it is subservient to the religious education of our hearts, unless it prepares us for a higher destiny, by our free choice of virtue upon earth. Metaphysics, social institutions, arts, sciences, all ought to be appreciated accordingly as they contribute to the moral perfection of mankind; this is the touchstone granted to the ignorant as well as to the learned. For if the knowledge of the means belongs only to the initiated, the results are discernible by all the world.

It is necessary to be accustomed to that mode of reasoning which is used in geometry, in order to gain a full comprehension of metaphysics. In this science, as in that of calculation, if we omit the least link in the chain of evidence, we destroy the whole connection. Metaphysical reasonings are more abstract, and not less precise, than mathematical; and yet their object is indefinite. We must unite, as metaphysicians, two of the most opposite faculties, imagination, and the power of calculation: we have to measure a shade of thought with the same accuracy as a field; and there is no study which requires such closeness of attention; nevertheless, in the highest questions there is always some point of view within the reach of everybody, and it is this point which I propose to seize and present.

I one day asked Fichte, one of the greatest thinkers in Germany, whether he could not more easily tell me his ethical system than his metaphysical? "The one depends upon the other," he replied; and the remark was very profound: it

comprehends all the motives of the interest that we can take in philosophy.

We have been accustomed to regard it as destructive of every belief of the heart; it would then indeed be the enemy of man; but it is not so with the doctrine of Plato, nor with that of the Germans; they consider sentiment as a fact, as the primitive fact of mind; and they look upon the power of philosophical reasoning as destined solely to investigate the meaning of this fact.

The enigma of the universe has wasted the meditations of many, who have still deserved our admiration, because they felt themselves summoned to something better than the present world. Minds of a lofty kind wander unceasingly around the abyss of thoughts that are without an end; but still they must turn themselves away from it, for the mind fatigues itself in vain in these efforts to scale the heavens.

The origin of thought has occupied all true philosophers. Are there two natures in man? If there is but one, is it mind or matter? If there are two, do ideas come by the senses, or do they spring up in the soul? Or, in truth, are they a mixture of the action of external objects upon us, and of the internal faculties which we possess?

To these three questions, which at all times have divided the philosophical world, is united the inquiry which most immediately touches upon virtue; to wit, whether free-will or fatality decides the resolutions of man.

Among the ancients, fatality arose from the will of the gods; among the moderns, it is attributed to the course of events. Fatality, among the ancients, gave a new evidence to free-will; for the will of man struggled against the event, and moral resistance was unconquerable: the fatalism of the moderns, on the contrary, necessarily destroys the belief in free-will: if circumstances make us what we are, we cannot oppose their ascendency; if external objects are the cause of all that passes in our mind, what independent thought can free us from their influence? The fatalism which descended from heaven filled the soul with a holy terror, while that which

attaches us to earth only works our degradation. It may be asked, to what purpose all these questions? It may be answered, to what purpose any thing that bears no relation to them? For what is there more important to man, than to know whether he really is responsible for his actions; and what sort of a proportion there is between the power of the will and the empire of circumstances over it? What would become of conscience, if our habits alone gave birth to it; if it was nothing but the product of colors, of sounds, of perfumes, of circumstances, in short, of every kind, with which we may have been surrounded from our infancy?

The department of metaphysics, that endeavors to discover what is the source of our ideas, has a powerful influence, by its consequences, upon the nature and energy of our will; it is at once the most exalted and the most necessary of all our knowledge; and the advocates of the highest utility, namely, of moral utility, cannot undervalue it.

CHAPTER II.

OF ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY.

Every thing seems to testify in us the existence of a double nature. The influence of the senses and that of the soul share our being between them; and accordingly as Philosophy inclines towards the one or the other, opinions and sentiments are in every respect diametrically opposite. We may also describe the dominion of the senses, and that of thought, by other terms: there is in man that which perishes with his earthly existence, and that which may survive him; that which experience enables him to acquire, and that with which his moral instinct inspires him, the finite and the infinite; but in what manner soever we express ourselves, it is always neces-

sary to grant that there are two different principles of life in a creature subject to death, and destined to immortality.

A tendency to spiritualism has been always very manifest among the people of the North; and even before the introduction of Christianity, this bias made itself perceptible through the violence of warlike passions. The Greeks had faith in external miracles; the German nations believe in the miracles of the soul. All their poetry is filled with presentiments, presages, prophecies of the heart; and while the Greeks united themselves to nature by pleasures, the inhabitants of the North raised themselves to their Creator by religious sentiments. In the South, Paganism deified physical phenomena; in the North, men were inclined to believe in magic, because it attributes to the mind a boundless power over the material world. The soul and nature, will and necessity, divide the dominion of existence, and accordingly as we place the force within ourselves or without us, we are the sons of heaven or the slaves of earth.

At the revival of letters, some occupied themselves with the subtilties of the schools in metaphysics, and others believed in the superstitions of magic in the sciences: the art of observation reigned no more in the empire of the senses, than enthusiasm in the empire of the soul; with very few exceptions, there was neither experience nor inspiration among the philosophers. A giant appeared; this was Bacon: never were the discoveries of thought, nor the wonders of nature, so well conceived by the same intelligence. There is not a phrase of his writings which does not imply years of reflection and of study; he animates his metaphysics with his knowledge of the human heart; he knows how to generalize facts by philosophy. In physical science he has created the art of experiment, but it does not at all follow, as it has been attempted to make us believe, that he was the exclusive advocate of that system which grounds all our ideas upon sensations. He admits inspiration in every thing that belongs to the soul; and he thinks it even necessary, in order to interpret natural phenomena according to general principles. But, in his age, there

were still alchemists, diviners, and sorcerers; men were ignorant enough of Religion, in the greater part of Europe, to believe that there were some truths of which she forbade the promulgation, she who leads us into all truth. Bacon was struck with these errors; his age had a bias towards superstition, as our age has towards incredulity. At the epoch in which he lived, it was right to endeavor to bring experimental philosophy into favor; in our era, he would have felt the necessity of reanimating the internal source of moral beauty, and of incessantly reminding man that he exists in himself, in his sentiment, and in his will. When the age is superstitious, the genius of observation is timid, the physical world is ill known; when the age is incredulous, enthusiasm exists no more, and no more do we know any thing of the soul or of heaven.

At a time when the progress of the human mind was in every way uncertain, Bacon exerted all his powers to trace out the way in which experimental philosophy ought to proceed; and his writings, even yet, serve as a guide to those who wish to study nature. As a minister of state, he was for a long time occupied with government and politics. The strongest heads are those which unite the taste and habit of meditation with a capacity for business. Bacon, under both these views, was a wonderful genius; but his philosophy and his character failed in the same point. He was not virtuous enough fully to feel the moral liberty of man: nevertheless, we cannot compare him to the materialists of the last century; and his successors have pushed the theory of experience much beyond his intention. He is far, I repeat it, from attributing all our ideas to our sensations, and from considering analysis as the sole instrument of discovery. He frequently pursues a bolder course; and if he adheres to experimental logic to remove all the prejudices which encumber his progress, it is to the spring of genius alone that he trusts to forward his advance.

"The human mind," says Luther, "is like a drunken peasant on horseback; when we put it up on one side, it falls down on the other." Thus man has incessantly fluctuated between

his two natures; sometimes his thoughts have disentangled him from his sensations; sometimes his sensations have absorbed his thoughts, and he has wished, successively, to refer every thing to one or the other: it however appears to me that the moment for a fixed doctrine has arrived. Metaphysics are about to undergo a revolution, like that which Copernicus has produced in the system of the world; they are about to replace the soul of man in the centre, and to make it, in every respect, like the sun, round which external objects trace their circle, and from which they borrow their light.

The genealogical tree of the different branches of human knowledge, in which every science is referred to a certain faculty, is doubtless one of the titles of Bacon to the admiration of posterity; but what constitutes his real glory is this, that he has announced his opinion, that there was no absolute separation of one science from another;[1] but that general philosophy reunited them all. He is not the author of that anatomical method, which considers the intellectual powers severally, or each by itself; and which appears to be ignorant of the admirable unity in the moral being. Sensibility, imagination, reason, serve each other. Each one of these faculties would be nothing but a disease, but weakness, instead of strength, if it were not modified or completed by the totality of our being. The exact sciences, at a certain height, stand in need of the imagination. She, in her turn, must support herself upon the accurate knowledge of nature. Reason, of all our faculties, appears to be that which would most easily do without the assistance of the others; and yet, if a person were entirely unprovided with imagination and sensibility, he might by that very want become, if we may so express it, the fool of

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[1] "Bacon was the first, after the revival of letters, who essayed a distribution of the sciences and of philosophy. He divided all human knowledge into History, Poetry, and Philosophy. Philosophy he distinguished into branches conversant about the Deity, about Nature, and about Man; and each of these had their subordinate divisions, which, however, it is not necessary to particularize."—(Sir Wm. Hamilton, *Lectures on Metaphysics*, vol i. p. 119.)—*Ed.*

reason; and, seeing nothing in life but calculations and material interests, deceive himself as much concerning the characters and affections of men, as the enthusiastic being whose fancy pictures all around him disinterestedness and love.

We follow a bad system of education, when we aim at the exclusive development of this or that quality of mind; for, to devote ourselves to one faculty, is to take up an intellectual trade. Milton says, with reason, "that our education is not good, excepting when it renders us capable of every employment in peace or war:" all that makes of man a man, is the true object of instruction.

Not to know any thing of a science but that portion of it which individually belongs to us, is to apply the division of labor (inculcated by Smith) to the liberal studies, when it is only adapted to the mechanic arts. When we arrive at that height where every science touches upon all the rest in some particulars, it is then that we approach the region of universal ideas; and the air which breathes from that region gives life to all our thoughts.

The soul is a fire that darts its rays through all the senses; it is in this fire that existence consists; all the observations and all the efforts of philosophers ought to turn towards this ME, the centre and the moving power of our sentiments and our ideas. Doubtless, the imperfection of language compels us to make use of erroneous expressions; we are obliged to repeat, according to the customary phrase, *Such a person is endowed with the power of reason, of imagination, or of sensibility*, etc.; but, if we wish to be understood in a single word, we ought simply to say, *He has soul, he has an abundance of soul.*[1] It is this divine spirit that makes the whole man.

Love teaches us more certainly what belongs to the mysteries of the soul, than the utmost metaphysical subtilty. We never attach ourselves to this or that qualification of the object

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[1] M. Ancillon, of whom I shall have occasion to speak in the Fourth Part of this work, has made use of this expression in a book, upon which one cannot grow tired of meditating.

of our preference; and every madrigal reveals a great philosophical truth when it says—"I love I know not why!" for this "I know not why," is that collective character, and that harmony, which we recognize by love, by admiration, by all the sentiments which reveal to us what is most deep and most secret in the heart of another.

The method of analysis, which can only examine by division, applies itself like the dissecting-knife to dead nature; but it is a bad instrument to teach us to understand what is living; and if we feel a difficulty in verbally defining that animated conception which represents whole objects to our mind, it is precisely because that conception clings more closely to the very essence of things. To divide, in order to comprehend, is a sign of weakness in philosophy; as to divide, in order to rule, is a sign of weakness in political power.

Bacon adhered much more than is believed to that ideal philosophy, which, from the days of Plato down to our own, has constantly reappeared under different forms: nevertheless, the success of his analytical method in the exact sciences has necessarily had an influence over his metaphysical system. His doctrine of sensations, considered as the origin of ideas, has been understood in a much more positive sense than that in which he maintained it himself. We can clearly see the influence of this doctrine in the two schools which it has produced, that of Hobbes, and that of Locke. Certainly they differ very much in their aim; but their principles are alike in many respects.

Hobbes embraced to the letter that philosophy which derives all our ideas from the impressions of sense. He feared not the consequences; and he has boldly said, "that the soul is as much subjected to necessity, as society to despotism." He admits the fatalism of sensation as the controller of thought, and that of force as the controller of action. He annihilates moral as well as civil liberty; thinking, with reason, that one depends upon the other. He was an Atheist and a slave, and nothing is more consequent; for if there is in man but the impress of sensations received from without, earthly power is

every thing, and our soul and our destiny equally depend upon it.[1]

The cultivation of all pure and elevated sentiments is so consolidated in England, by political and religious institutions, that the speculations of the mind revolve around these imposing columns without ever shaking them. Hobbes, accordingly, has gained few partisans in his country; but the influence of Locke has been more universal. As his character was moral and religious, he did not allow himself to use any of those dangerous reasonings which are necessarily derived from his metaphysical system; and the greater part of his countrymen, in adopting it, have shown like him the noble inconsistency of separating results from principles, while Hume and the French philosophers, having admitted the system, made application of it in a much more logical manner.

The metaphysical doctrines of Locke have had no other effect upon the minds of England, than to tarnish a little their natural originality; had they even dried up the source of high philosophical reflection, they would not have destroyed that religious sentiment which can so well supply the want of it; but these doctrines, so generally received throughout the rest of Europe, Germany excepted, have been one of the principal causes of that immorality, the advocates of which have formed it into a theory, in order to make its practice more certain.

Locke exerted his especial endeavors to prove that there is

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[1] "Hobbes, though a Materialist, admitted no knowledge of an external world. Like his friend Sorbiere, he was a kind of material idealist. According to him, we know nothing of the qualities or existence of any outward reality. All that we know is the 'seeming,' the 'apparition,' the 'aspect,' the 'phenomenon,' the 'phantasm,' within ourselves; and this subjective object of which we are conscious, and which is consciousness itself, is nothing more than the 'agitation' of our internal organism, determined by the unknown 'motions,' which are supposed, in like manner, to constitute the world without. Perception he reduces to Sensation. Memory and Imagination are faculties specifically identical with sense, differing from it simply in the degree of their vivacity; and this difference of intensity, with Hobbes as with Hume, is the only discrimination between our dreaming and our waking thoughts."—(Sir Wm. Hamilton, *Lectures on Metaphysics*, vol. ii. p. 60.)—*Ed.*

nothing innate in the mind. He was right in his own sense, for he always blended with the meaning of the word idea that of a notion acquired by experience; ideas thus conceived are the result of objects that excite them, of comparisons that collect them, and of language that facilitates their combination. But this is not the case with the sentiments, with the dispositions, and the faculties which constitute the laws of the human understanding, as attraction and impulse constitute the laws of physical nature.

It is truly worth observing what kind of arguments Locke has been compelled to adopt, in order to prove that every thing in the mind came there by means of sensation. If these arguments led to the truth, doubtless we ought to overcome the moral aversion with which they inspire us; but in general we may trust to this sort of aversion as an infallible token of what must be avoided. Locke wished to show that consciousness of good and evil was not innate in man, and that we know nothing of justice or injustice, except from experience, as we learn to distinguish red from blue. To arrive at this conclusion, he has carefully inquired after all those countries where the laws and customs honor crimes; those, for instance, in which it is thought a duty to kill an enemy; to despise marriage; to put a father to death when he has grown old. He attentively collects every thing that travellers have related of barbarities which have passed into daily practice. What then must that system be which excites in so virtuous a man as Locke eagerness for such facts?

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[1] "Reid did him [Locke] any thing but injustice in supposing him to maintain that ideas are objects *either* in the *brain*, *or* in the *mind* itself. Even the *more material* of these alternatives has been the one generally attributed to him by his critics, and the one adopted from him by his disciples. Nor is this to be deemed an opinion too monstrous to be entertained by so enlightened a philosopher. It was, as we shall see, the common opinion of the age; the opinion in particular held by the most illustrious of his countrymen and contemporaries—by Newton, Clarke, Willis, Hook, etc.[2] The English psychologists have indeed been generally very mechanical."—(Sir Wm. Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy*, etc.)—*Ed.*

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[2] "We know not whether it has been remarked that Locke's doctrine of particles and impulse is precisely that of Sir Kenelm Digby; and if Locke adopts *one* part of

Let these facts be melancholy or not, it may be said the important thing is to know if they are true. Allow them to be true, of what consequence are they? Do we not know, by our own experience, that circumstances, in other words, external objects, have an influence over the manner in which we interpret our duties? Amplify these circumstances, and you will find in them the causes of national error; but is there any nation, or any man, that denies that there are duties? Has it ever been pretended that the ideas of justice and injustice have no meaning? Different explanations of them may prevail in different places; but the conviction of the principle is everywhere the same; and it is in this conviction that the primitive impression consists, which we recognize in every human being.

When the savage kills his aged father, he believes that he renders the old man a service; he does not act for his own interest, but for that of his parent: the deed he commits is horrible, and yet he is not, on that account, devoid of conscience; because he is ignorant he is not therefore vicious. The sensations, that is, the external objects with which he is surrounded, blind him; the inward sentiment which constitutes the hatred for vice and the love of virtue, does not the less exist within him because he has been deceived by experience as to the manner in which this sentiment ought to be manifested in his life. To prefer others to ourselves when virtue commands the preference, is precisely that in which the essence of moral beauty consists; and this admirable instinct of the soul, the opponent of our physical instinct, is inherent in our nature; if it could be acquired, it could also be lost; but it is unchangeable, because it is innate. It is possible for us to do evil, when

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so gross an hypothesis, what is there improbable in his adoption of the *other?*—that the object of perception is 'a material participation of the bodies that work on the outward organs of the senses' (Digby, *Treatise of Bodies*, c. 32). As a specimen of the mechanical explanations of mental phenomena then considered satisfactory, we quote Sir Kenelm's theory of memory: 'Out of which it followeth, that the little similitudes which are in the caves of the brain, wheeling and swimming about, almost in such sort as you see in the washing of currants or rice by the winding about and circular turning of the cook's hand, divers sorts of bodies do go their course for a pretty while; so that the most ordinary objects cannot but present themselves quickly,' etc., etc."—*Ibid.*

we believe we are doing good; a man may be culpable knowingly and willingly; but he cannot admit a contradiction for a truth, that justice is injustice.

There is such a thing as indifference to good and evil, and it is the ordinary result of civilization, when its coldness has reached the point of petrifaction, if the expression may be allowed, and this indifference is a much greater argument against an innate conscience than the gross errors of savages; but the most skeptical of men, if they are sufferers from oppression in any relation of life, appeal to justice, as if they had believed in it all their days; and when they are seized with any vivid affection, and tyrannical power is exerted to control it, they invoke the sentiment of equity with as much force as the most severe of moralists. When the flame of any passion, whether it be indignation or love, takes possession of the soul, it makes the sacred characters of eternal laws reappear in us.

If the accident of birth and education decided the morality of man, how could we accuse him for his actions? If all that composes our will comes to us from external objects, every one may appeal to his own particular relations for the motives of his whole conduct; and frequently these relations differ as much between the inhabitants of the same country, as between an Asiatic and a European. If circumstance then were to be the divinity of mortals, it would be in order for every man to have his peculiar morality, or rather a want of morals according to his respective practice; and to counteract the evil which sensations might suggest, no efficient reason could be opposed except the public power of punishment: now if that public power commanded us to be unjust, the question would be resolved thus: all sensations would produce all ideas, which would lead us on to the most complete depravity.

The proofs of the spirituality of the soul cannot be discovered in the empire of the senses. The visible world is abandoned to their dominion; but the invisible will not be subjected to it; and if we do not admit spontaneous ideas, if thought and sentiment depend entirely on sensations, how could the soul, in such a servitude, be immaterial? And if, as

nobody denies, the greater part of the knowledge transmitted by the senses is liable to error, what sort of a moral being must that be, who does not act until aroused by outward objects, and by objects even whose appearances are often deceitful?

A French philosopher, making use of the most revolting expression, has said, "that thought is nothing but the material product of the brain." This deplorable definition is the most natural result of those metaphysics which attribute to our sensations the origin of all our ideas. We are in the right, if it be so, to laugh at all that is intellectual, and to make what is impalpable synonymous with what is incomprehensible. If the human mind is but subtle matter, put in motion by other elements, more or less gross, in comparison with which even it has the disadvantage of being passive; if our impressions and our recollections are nothing but the prolonged vibrations of an instrument, which chance has played upon; then there are only fibres in the brain, only physical forces in the world, and every thing can be explained according to the laws by which these forces are governed. Still there remain some little difficulties concerning the origin of things, and the end of our existence; but the question has been much simplified, and reason counsels us to suppress within our souls all the desires and all the hopes that genius, love, and religion call to life; for, according to this system, man would only be another machine in the great mechanism of the universe; his faculties would be all wheel-work, his morality a matter of calculation, and his worship success.

Locke, believing from the bottom of his soul in the existence of God, established his conviction, without perceiving it, upon reasonings which are all taken out of the sphere of experience; he asserts the existence of an eternal principle, the primary cause of all other causes; thus he enters into the region of infinity, and that region lies beyond all experience: but Locke, at the same time, was so apprehensive lest the idea of God should pass for an innate idea in man, it appeared to him so absurd that the Creator should have deigned to in-

scribe his name, like that of a great painter, upon the tablet of the soul, that he set himself to discover, out of all the narratives of travellers, some nations who were destitute of any religious belief. We may, I think, boldly affirm, that such nations do not exist. The impulse that exalts us towards the Supreme Intelligence discovers itself in the genius of Newton, as it does in the soul of the poor savage, who worships the stone upon which he finds rest. No man clings exclusively to the external world, such as it is; and all have felt in their hearts, at some period of their lives, an undefinable inclination towards the supernatural; but how can it happen, that a being, so religious as Locke, should try to change the primitive characters of belief into an accidental knowledge, which chance may confer or take away? I repeat it, the tendency of any doctrine ought always to be deemed of great account in the judgment which we form upon the truth of that doctrine; for, in theory, the good and the true are inseparable.

All that is invisible talks to man of a beginning and an end, of decline and destruction. A divine spark is the only indication in us of immortality. From what sensation does this arise? All our sensations fight against it, and yet it triumphs over them all. What! it will be said, do not final causes, do not the wonders of the universe, the splendor of the heavens that strikes our eyes, declare the magnificence and the goodness of our Creator? The book of nature is contradictory; we see there the emblems of good and evil almost in equal proportion; and things are thus constituted, in order that man be able to exercise his liberty between opposite probabilities, between fears and hopes of almost equal power. The starry heaven appears to us like the threshold of the Divinity; but all the evils and all the vices of human nature obscure these celestial fires. A solitary voice, without speech, but not without harmony, without force, but irresistible, proclaims a God at the bottom of the human heart: all that is truly beautiful in man springs from what he experiences within himself, and spontaneously: every heroic action is inspired by moral liberty; the act of devoting ourselves to the divine will, that

act which every sensation opposes, and which enthusiasm alone inspires, is so noble and so pure, that the angels themselves, virtuous as they are by nature, and without impediment, might envy it to man.

The metaphysical doctrine that displaces the centre of life, by supposing its impulse to come from without, despoils man of his liberty, and destroys itself; for a spiritual nature no longer exists, when we unite it in such a manner to a physical nature, that it is only by human respect that we distinguish them: such a system shrinks from its own consequences, excepting when it derives from them, as it has done in France, materialism built upon sensation, and ethics founded upon interest. The abstract theory of this system was born in England; but none of its consequences have been admitted there. In France they have not had the honor of the discovery, but in a great degree that of the application. In Germany, since Leibnitz, they have opposed the system and its consequences; and, assuredly, it is worthy of enlightened and religious men of all countries, to inquire whether those principles, whose results are so fatal, ought to be considered as incontestable truths.

Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Smith, Reid, Dugald Stewart, etc., have studied the operations of the human mind with a rare sagacity; the works of Dugald Stewart, in particular, contain so perfect a theory of the intellectual faculties, that we may consider them, so to speak, as the natural history of the moral being. Every individual must recognize in them some part of himself. Whatever opinion we may have adopted as to the origin of ideas, we must acknowledge the utility of a labor which has for its object the examination of their progress and direction; but it is not enough to observe the development of our faculties, we must ascend to their source, in order to give an account of the nature, and of the independence, of the will of man.

We cannot consider that question as an idle one, which endeavors to learn whether the soul has an independent faculty of feeling and thinking. It is the question of Hamlet, "To be or not to be?"

CHAPTER III.

OF FRENCH PHILOSOPHY.

Descartes, for a long period, was the chief of French philosophy; and if his physics had not been confessedly erroneous, perhaps his metaphysics would have preserved a more lasting ascendency. Bossuet, Fénelon, Pascal, all the great men of the age of Louis XIV, had adopted the Idealism of Descartes; and this system agreed much better with the Catholic religion than that philosophy which is purely experimental; for it appeared singularly difficult to combine a faith in the most mysterious doctrines with the sovereign empire of sensation over the soul.

Among the French metaphysicians who have professed the doctrine of Locke, we must reckon, in the first class, Condillac, whose priestly office obliged him to use some caution in regard to religion, and Bonnet, who, being naturally religious, lived at Geneva, in a country where learning and piety are inseparable. These two philosophers, Bonnet especially, have established exceptions in favor of revelation; but it appears to me, that one of the causes of the diminution of respect for Religion, is this custom of setting her apart from all the sciences; as if philosophy, reasoning, every thing, in short, which is esteemed in earthly affairs, could not be applied to Religion: an ironical veneration removes her to a distance from all the interests of life; it is, if we may so express ourselves, to bow her out of the circle of the human mind. In every country, where a religious belief is predominant, it is the centre of ideas; and philosophy consists in the rational interpretation of divine truths.

When Descartes wrote, Bacon's philosophy had not yet penetrated into France; and that country was then in the

same state of ignorance and scholastic superstition as at the epoch when the great English thinker published his works. There are two methods of correcting the prejudices of men: the recourse to experience, and the appeal to reflection. Bacon adopted the first means; Descartes the second. The one has rendered immense service to the sciences; the other to thought, which is the source of all the sciences.

Bacon was a man of much greater genius, and of still ampler learning, than Descartes. He has known how to establish his philosophy in the material world; that of Descartes was brought into discredit by the learned, who attacked with success his opinions upon the system of the world:[1] he could reason justly in the examination of the soul, and deceived himself in relation to the physical laws of the universe; but the judgments of men resting almost entirely upon a blind and precipitate confidence in analogy, they believed that he who had observed so ill what passed without him, was no better instructed as to the world within. In his manner of writing, Descartes shows a simplicity and overflowing goodness of nature, which inspires his readers with confidence; and the energy of his genius will not be contested. Nevertheless, when we compare him, either to the German philosophers or to Plato, we can neither find in his works the theory of Idealism in all its abstraction, nor the poetical imagination, which constitutes its beauty. Yet a ray of light had passed over the mind of Descartes, and his is the glory of having directed the philosophy of his day towards the interior development of the soul. He produced a great effect by referring all received truths to the test of reflection; these axioms were admired:

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1 "'Descartes,' says Voltaire, 'was the greatest mathematician of his age; but mathematics leave the intellect as they find it. That of Descartes was too prone to invention. He preferred the divination to the study of nature. The first of mathematicians produced nothing almost but romances of philosophy.' A more felicitous expression had been preoccupied by Father Daniel: 'The philosophy of Descartes is the romance of nature.' But in fact, Descartes himself was author of the *mot*:—'My theory of vortices is a philosophical romance.'"—(Sir Wm. Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy*, etc., p. 296.)—*Ed.*

"I think, therefore I exist; therefore I have a Creator, the perfect source of my imperfect faculties; every thing without us may be called in question: truth is only in the mind, and the mind is the supreme judge of truth."

Universal doubt is the A B C of philosophy; every man begins to reason again by the aid of his own native light, when he attempts to ascend to the principles of things; but the authority of Aristotle had so completely introduced the dogmatic forms into Europe, that the age was astonished at the boldness of Descartes, who submitted all opinions to natural judgment.

The Port-Royal writers were formed in his school; so that France produced men of a severer turn of thought in the seventeenth than in the eighteenth century. At the side of their graceful and engaging genius appeared a certain gravity, which betrayed the natural influence of a system of philosophy that attributed all our ideas to the power of reflection.

Malebranche, the principal disciple of Descartes, was a man gifted with genius of soul in an eminent degree. They have been pleased to consider him as a dreamer in the eighteenth century;[1] and in France it is all over with that writer who has the character of a dreamer; for it implies the idea of total inutility, and this is peculiarly offensive to all reasonable persons, as they are called; but is this word utility noble enough to be applied to all the needs of the soul?

The French writers of the eighteenth century excelled most in the study of political liberty; those of the seventeenth in

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[1] "I cannot concur in the praise of novelty and invention, which has always been conceded to the central theory of Malebranche. His '*Vision of all things in the Deity*,' is, as it appears to me, simply a transferrence to man in the flesh, to the *Viator*, of that mode of cognition, maintained by many of the older Catholic divines, in explanation of how the Saints, as disembodied spirits, can be aware of human invocations, and, in general, of what passes upon earth. '*They perceive*,' it is said, '*all things in God*.' So that, in truth, the philosophical theory of Malebranche is nothing but the extension of a theological hypothesis, long common in the schools; and with scholastic speculations, Malebranche was even intimately acquainted."—(Sir Wm. Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy*, etc., p. 199.)—*Ed.*

the study of moral liberty. The philosophers of the one period were combatants; of the other, anchorets. Under an absolute government, like that of Louis XIV, independence finds no asylum but in meditation; in the disorderly reigns of the last century, the men of letters were animated with the desire of winning over the government of their country to the liberal principle and ideas of which England displayed so fair an example. The writers who have not gone beyond this point, are very deserving of the esteem of their countrymen; but it is not the less true, that the works composed in the seventeenth century are more philosophical, in many respects, than those which have since been published; for philosophy especially consists in the study and the knowledge of our intellectual being.

The philosophers of the eighteenth century have busied themselves rather with social politics than with the primitive nature of man; those of the seventeenth century, solely and precisely from their being religious men, had a more thorough knowledge of the human heart. During the decline of the French monarchy, the philosophers turned the direction of thought, which they used as a weapon, to what was passing without them; under the empire of Louis XIV, they were more attached to idealistic metaphysics, because reflection was to them more habitual and more necessary. In order to raise the French genius to its highest degree of perfection, it would be requisite to learn, from the writers of the eighteenth century, how to use our faculties to advantage; and from those of the seventeenth, how to study their source.

Descartes, Pascal, and Malebranche had much more resemblance to the German philosophers than the French writers of the eighteenth century; but Malebranche and the Germans differ in this, that the one lays down as an article of faith what the other reduce into a scientific theory; the one aims at clothing with dogmatic forms what is inspired by imagination, because he is afraid of being accused of enthusiasm; while the others, writing at the end of an era when analysis has been extended to every object of study, know that they are enthu-

siasts, and are solely anxious to prove that enthusiasm accords with reason.

If the French had followed the metaphysics of their great men of the seventeenth century, they would now hold the same opinions as the Germans; for in the progress of philosophy Leibnitz is the natural successor of Descartes and Malebranche, and Kant of Leibnitz.

England had great influence over the writers of the eighteenth century; the admiration which they felt for that country inspired them with the wish of introducing into France her liberty and her philosophy. English philosophy was then only void of danger when united with the religious sentiments of that people, with their liberty, and with their obedience to the laws. In the bosom of a nation where Newton and Clarke never pronounced the name of God without bowing their heads, let the metaphysical systems have been ever so erroneous, they could not be fatal. That which is every way wanting in France, is the feeling and habit of veneration; and the transition is there very quick from the examination which may enlighten, to the irony which reduces every thing to dust.

It seems to me that we may observe two perfectly distinct epochs in the eighteenth century; that in which the influence of England was first acknowledged, and that in which the men of genius hurried themselves into destruction: light was then changed to conflagration; and Philosophy, like an enraged enchantress, set fire to the palace where she had displayed her wonders.

In politics, Montesquieu belongs to the first epoch, Raynal to the second; in religion, the writings of Voltaire, which had the defence of toleration for their object, breathed the spirit of the first half of the century; but his pitiable and ostentatious irreligion has been the disgrace of the second. Finally, in metaphysics, Condillac and Helvetius, although they were contemporaries, both bear the impress of these very different epochs; for, although the entire system of the philosophy of sensation was wrong in its principle, yet the consequences

which Helvetius has drawn from it ought not to be imputed to Condillac; he was far from assenting to them.

Condillac has rendered experimental metaphysics more clear and more striking than they are in Locke; he has truly levelled them to the comprehension of all the world; he says, with Locke, that the soul can have no idea which does not come to it by sensation; he attributes to our wants the origin of knowledge and of language; to words, that of reflection; and thus, making us receive the entire development of our moral being from external objects, he explains human nature as he would a positive science, in a clear, rapid, and, in some respects, convincing manner; for if we neither felt in our hearts the native impulses of belief, nor a conscience independent of experience, nor a creating spirit, in all the force of the term, we might be well enough contented with this mechanical definition of the human soul. It is natural to be seduced by the easy solution of the greatest of problems; but this apparent simplicity exists only in the mode of inquiry; the object to which it is pretendingly applied does not the less continue of unknown immensity; and the enigma of ourselves swallows up, like the sphinx, thousands of systems which pretend to the glory of having guessed its meaning.

The work of Condillac ought only to be considered as another book on an inexhaustible subject, if the influence of this book had not been sad. Helvetius, who deduces from the philosophy of sensations all the direct consequences which it can admit, asserts, that if the hands of man had been made like the hoofs of the horse, he would only have possessed the intelligence of this animal. Assuredly, if it were so, it would be very unjust to attribute to ourselves any thing blamable or meritorious in our actions; for the difference which may exist between the several organizations of individuals, would authorize and be the proper cause of the difference in their characters.

To the opinions of Helvetius succeeded those of the *System of Nature*, which tended to the annihilation of the Deity in the universe, and of free-will in man. Locke, Condillac, Helvetius, and the unhappy author of the *System of Nature*, have

all progressively advanced in the same path: the first steps were innocent; neither Locke nor Condillac knew the dangers of the principles of their philosophy; but very soon this black spot, which was hardly visible in the intellectual horizon, grew to such a size as to be near plunging the universe and man back again into darkness.[1]

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[1] "After the philosophy of Descartes and Malebranche had sunk into oblivion, and from the time that Condillac, exaggerating the too partial principles of Locke, had analyzed all knowledge into sensation, Sensualism (or, more correctly, Sensuism), as a psychological theory of the origin of our cognitions, became, in France, not only the dominant, but almost the one exclusive opinion. It was believed that reality and truth were limited to experience, and experience was limited to the sphere of sense; while the very highest faculties of mind were deemed adequately explained when recalled to perceptions, elaborated, purified, sublimated, and transformed. From the mechanical relations of sense with its object, it was attempted to solve the mysteries of will and intelligence; the philosophy of mind was soon viewed as correlative to the physiology of organization. The moral nature of man was at last formally abolished, in its identification with his physical: mind became a reflex of matter; thought a secretion of the brain.

"A doctrine so melancholy in its consequences, and founded on principles thus partial and exaggerated, could not be permanent: a reaction was inevitable. The recoil, which began about twenty years ago, has been gradually increasing; and now it is perhaps even to be apprehended, that its intensity may become excessive. As the poison was of foreign growth, so also has been the antidote. The doctrine of Condillac was, if not a corruption, a development, of the doctrine of Locke; and, in returning to a better philosophy, the French are still obeying an impulsion communicated from without. This impulsion may be traced to two different sources,—to the philosophy of Scotland, and to the philosophy of Germany.

"In Scotland, a philosophy had sprung up, which, though professing, equally with the doctrine of Condillac, to build only on experience, did not, like that doctrine, limit experience to the relations of sense and its objects. Without vindicating to man more than a relative knowledge of existence, and restricting the science of mind to an observation of the fact of consciousness, it, however, analyzed that fact into a greater number of more important elements than had been recognized in the school of Condillac. It showed that phenomena were revealed in thought which could not be resolved into any modification of sense,—external or internal. It proved that intelligence supposed principles, which, as the *conditions* of its activity, cannot be the *results* of its operation; that the mind contained knowledges, which, as primitive, universal, necessary, are not to be explained as generalizations from the contingent and individual, about which alone all experience is conversant. The phenomena of mind were thus

External objects, it was said, are the cause of all our impressions; nothing then appears more agreeable than to give ourselves up to the physical world, and to come, self-invited guests, to the banquet of nature; but by degrees the internal source is dried up, and even as to the imagination that is requisite for luxury and pleasure, it goes on decaying to such a degree, that very shortly man will not retain soul enough to relish any enjoyment, of however material a nature.

The immortality of the soul, and the sentiment of duty, are suppositions entirely gratuitous in the system which grounds all our ideas upon our sensations; for no sensation reveals to us immortality in death. If external objects alone have formed our conscience, from the nurse who receives us in her arms until the last act of an advanced old age, all our impressions are so linked to each other, that we cannot arraign with justice the pretended power of volition, which is only another instance of fatality.

I shall endeavor to show, in the second part of this section,

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distinguished from the phenomena of matter; and if the impossibility of materialism were not demonstrated, there was, at least, demonstrated the impossibility of its proof.

"This philosophy, and still more the spirit of this philosophy, was calculated to exert a salutary influence on the French. And such an influence it did exert. For a time, indeed, the truth operated in silence; and Reid and Stewart had already modified the philosophy of France, before the French were content to acknowledge themselves their disciples. In the works of Degerando and Laromiguière, may be traced the influence of Scottish speculation; but it is to Royer-Collard, and, more recently, to Jouffroy, that our countrymen are indebted for a full acknowledgment of their merits, and for the high and increasing estimation in which their doctrines are now held in France. M. Royer-Collard, whose authority has, in every relation, been exerted only for the benefit of his country, and who, once great as a professor, is now not less illustrious as a statesman, in his lectures, advocated with distinguished ability the principles of the Scottish school; modestly content to follow, while no one was more entitled to lead. M. Jouffroy, by his recent translation of the works of Dr. Reid, and by the excellent preface to his version of Mr. Dugald Stewart's 'Outlines of Moral Philosophy,' has likewise powerfully co-operated to the establishment, in France, of a philosophy equally opposed to the exclusive Sensualism of Condillac, and to the exclusive Rationalism of the new German school."—(Sir Wm. Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy*, etc., p. 2–4)—*Ed.*

that the moral system, which is built upon interest, so strenuously preached up by the French writers of the last age, has an intimate connection with the metaphysics which attribute all our ideas to our sensations, and that the consequences of the one are as bad in practice, as those of the other in theory. Those who have been able to read the licentious works published in France towards the close of the eighteenth century, will bear witness, that when the writers of these culpable performances attempt to support themselves upon any species of reasoning, they all appeal to the influence of our physical over our moral constitution; they refer to our sensations the most blamable opinions; they exhibit, in short, under all appearances, the doctrine which destroys free-will and conscience.

We cannot deny, it may be said, that this is a degrading doctrine; but, nevertheless, if it be true, must we reject it, and blind ourselves on purpose? Assuredly those writers would have made a deplorable discovery, who had dethroned the soul, and condemned the mind to sacrifice itself, by employing all its faculties to prove that the laws which are common to every physical existence, are also proper for it; but, thanks be to God (and this expression is here in its peculiar place), thanks be to God, I say, this system is entirely false in its principle; and the circumstance of those writers espousing it who have supported the cause of immorality, is an additional proof of the errors which it contains.

If the greater part of the profligate have upheld themselves by the doctrine of materialism, when they have wished to become degraded according to method, and to form a theory of their actions, it is because they believed that, by submitting the soul to sensation, they would thus be delivered from the responsibility of their conduct. A virtuous being, convinced of this doctrine, would be deeply afflicted by it; for he would incessantly fear that the all-powerful influence of external objects would change the purity of his soul and the force of his resolutions. But when we see men rejoicing to proclaim themselves the creatures of circumstances in all respects, and declaring that all these circumstances are combined by

chance, we shudder from our very hearts at their perverse satisfaction.

When the savage sets fire to a cottage, he is said to warm himself with pleasure at the conflagration which he has kindled; he exercises at least a sort of superiority over the disorder of which he is guilty; he makes destruction of some use to him: but when man chooses to degrade human nature, who will thus be profited?

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE RIDICULE INTRODUCED BY A CERTAIN SPECIES OF PHILOSOPHY.

The philosophical system, adopted in any country, exerts a great influence over the direction of mind; it is the universal model after which all thought is cast; those persons even, who have not studied the system, conform, unknowingly, to the general disposition which it inspires. We have seen for nearly a hundred years past, in Europe, the growth and increase of a sort of scoffing skepticism, the foundation of which is the philosophy that attributes all our ideas to our sensations. The first principle in this philosophy is, not to believe any thing which cannot be proved like a fact or a calculation; in union with this principle is contempt for all that bears the name of exalted sentiment, and attachment to the pleasures of sense. These three points of the doctrine include all the sorts of irony of which religion, sensibility, and morals, can become the object.

Bayle, whose learned Dictionary is hardly read by people of the world, is nevertheless the arsenal from which all the pleasantries of skepticism have been drawn; Voltaire has given them a pungency by his wit and elegance;[1] but the founda-

[1] "Since the metaphysics of Locke crossed the channel, on the light and brilliant wings of Voltaire's imagination, Sensualism has reigned in France

tion of all this jesting is, that every thing, not as evident as a physical experiment, ought to be reckoned among dreams and idle thoughts. It is good management to dignify an incapacity for attention, by calling it a supreme sort of reason, which rejects all doubt and obscurity; in consequence, they turn the noblest thoughts into ridicule, if reflection is necessary to comprehend them, or a sincere examination of the heart to make them felt. We still speak with respect of Pascal, of Bossuet, of J. J. Rousseau, etc.; because authority has consecrated them, and authority, of every sort, is a thing easily discerned. But a great number of readers being convinced that ignorance and idleness are the attributes of a man of wit, think it beneath them to take any trouble, and wish to read, like a paragraph in a newspaper, writings that have man and nature for their subject.

In a word, if by chance such writings were composed by a German, whose name was not a French one, and it was as difficult to pronounce this name as that of the Baron in *Candide*, what collections of pleasantries would not be formed upon this circumstance! and the meaning of them all would be the following: "I have grace and lightness of spirit; while you, who have the misfortune to think upon some subjects, and to hold by some sentiments, you do not jest upon all with nearly the same elegance and facility."

The philosophy of sensation is one of the principal causes of this frivolity. Since the time that the soul has been considered passive, a great number of philosophical labors have been despised.

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without contradiction, and with an authority of which there is no parallel in the whole history of philosophy. It is a fact, marvellous but incontestable, that from the time of Condillac, there has not appeared among us any philosophical work, at variance with his doctrine, which has produced the smallest impression on the public mind. Condillac thus reigned in peace; and his domination, prolonged even to our own days, through changes of every kind, pursued its tranquil course, apparently above the reach of danger. Discussion had ceased: his disciples had only to develop the words of their master; philosophy seemed accomplished." (M. Cousin, *Journal des Savans*, 1819.)—*Ed.*

The day on which it was said that there are no mysteries in the world, or at all events that it is unnecessary to think about them, that all our ideas come by the eyes and by the ears, and that the palpable only is the true, the individuals who enjoyed all their senses in perfect health believed themselves the genuine philosophers. We hear it incessantly said, by those who have ideas enough to get money when they are poor, and to spend it when they are rich, that they have the only reasonable philosophy, and that none but enthusiasts would dream of any other. In fact, our sensations teach nothing but this philosophy; and if we can gain no knowledge except by their means, every thing that is not subject to the evidence of matter must bear the name of folly.

If it was admitted, on the contrary, that the soul acts by itself, and that we must draw up information out of ourselves to find the truth, and that this truth cannot be seized upon, except by the aid of profound meditation, because it is not within the range of terrestrial experience, the whole course of men's minds would be changed; they would not disdainfully reject the most sublime thoughts because they demand a close attention; but that which they found insupportable would be the superficial and the common; for emptiness grows at length singularly burdensome.

Voltaire so well perceived the influence that metaphysics exercise over the general bias of the mind, that he wrote *Candide*, to combat Leibnitz.[1] He took up a curious whim against final causes, optimism, free-will; in short, against all the philosophical opinions that exalt the dignity of man; and he composed *Candide*, that work of a diabolical gayety; for it appears to be written by a being of a different nature from ourselves, insensible to our condition, well pleased with our sufferings, and laughing like a demon or an ape, at the miseries of that human species with which he has nothing in common.

The greatest poet of the age, the author of *Alzire*, *Tancrède*, *Merope*, *Zaïre*, and *Brutus*, showed himself in this work igno-

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[1] His object was to combat the *optimism* of Leibnitz.—*Ed.*

rant of all the great moral truths which he had so worthily celebrated.

When Voltaire as a tragic author felt and thought in the character of another, he was admirable; but when he remains wholly himself, he is a jester and a cynic. The same versatility which enabled him to adopt the part of the personages whom he wished to represent, only too well inspired the language which in certain moments, was suited to Voltaire.

Candide brings into action that scoffing philosophy, so indulgent in appearance, in reality so ferocious; it presents human nature under the most lamentable point of view, and offers us, in the room of every consolation, the sardonic grin, which frees us from all compassion for others, by making us renounce it for ourselves.

It is in consequence of this system that Voltaire, in his Universal History, has aimed at attributing virtuous actions, as well as great crimes, to those accidental events which deprive the former of all their merit, and the latter of all their guilt.

In effect, if there is nothing in the soul but what our sensations have imprinted upon it, we ought no longer to recognize more than two real and lasting motives on earth, force and well-being, tactics and gastronomy; but if the mind is still to be considered such as it has been formed by modern philosophy, it would very soon be reduced to wish that something of an exalted nature would reappear, in order at least to furnish it with an object for exercise and for attack.

The Stoics have often repeated that we ought to brave all the assaults of fortune, and only to trouble ourselves with what depends upon the soul, upon our sentiments and our thoughts. The philosophy of sensation would have a totally opposite result; it would disembarrass us from our feelings and thoughts, with the design of turning our efforts towards our physical well-being; she would say to us: "Attach yourselves to the present moment; consider as a chimera everything which wanders out of the circle of the pleasures and affairs of this world, and pass your short career of life as well as you may, taking care of your health, which is the foundation of happiness."

These maxims have been known in all times; but they were thought to be the exclusive property of valets in comedies; and in our days they have been made the doctrine of reason, founded upon necessity, a doctrine very different from that of religious resignation, for the one is as vulgar as the other is noble and exalted.

The singularity of the attempt consists in deducing the theory of elegance from so plebeian a philosophy; our poor nature is often low and selfish, as we must grieve to confess; but it was novel enough to boast of it. Indifference and contempt for exalted subjects have become the type of the graceful; and witticisms have been levelled against those who take a lively interest in any thing which is without a positive result in the present world.

The argumentative principle of this frivolity of heart and mind, is the metaphysical doctrine which refers all our ideas to our sensations; for nothing but the superficial comes to us from without, and the seriousness of life dwells at the bottom of the soul. If the fatality of materialsm, admitted as a theory of the human mind, led to a distaste for every thing external, as well as to a disbelief of all within us, there would still be something in this system of an inactive nobleness, of an oriental indolence, which might lay claim to a sort of grandeur; and some of the Greek philosophers have found means to infuse almost a dignity into apathy; but the empire of sensation, while it has weakened sentiment by degrees, has left the activity of personal interest in full force; and this spring of action has become so much the more powerful, as all the others have been broken into pieces. To incredulity of mind, to selfishness of heart, must still be added the doctrine concerning conscience, which Helvetius developed, when he asserted, that actions virtuous in themselves had for their object the attainment of those physical enjoyments which we can taste here below; it has followed from hence, that sacrifices made to the ideal worship of any opinion, or any sentiment whatever, have been considered as if those who offer them were dupes; and as men dread nothing more than passing for dupes, they have

been eager to cast ridicule upon every sort of unsuccessful enthusiasm; for that which has been recompensed with good fortune, has escaped raillery: success is always in the right with the advocates of materialism.

The dogmatic incredulity, that, namely, which calls in question the truth of every thing that is not proved by the senses, is the source of the chief irony of man against himself: all moral degradation comes from that quarter. This philosophy, doubtless, ought to be considered an effect, as well as a cause, of the present state of public feeling: nevertheless, there is an evil of which it is the principal author; it has given to the carelessness of levity the appearance of reflective reasoning; it has furnished selfishness with specious arguments; and has caused the most noble sentiments to be considered as an accidental malady, which is the result of external circumstances alone.

It is important, then, to examine whether the nation, which has constantly guarded itself against the metaphysics from which such consequences have been drawn, was not right in principle, and still more so in the application which it has made of that principle to the development of the faculties of man, and to his moral conduct.

CHAPTER V.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS UPON GERMAN PHILOSOPHY.

Speculative philosophy has always found numerous partisans among the Germanic nations, and experimental philosophy among the Latin nations. The Romans, expert as they were in the affairs of life, were no metaphysicians; they knew nothing of this subject, except by their connection with Greece, and the nations civilized by them, have, for the most part, inherited their knowledge in politics, and their indifference for those studies which cannot be applied to the business of the world. This disposition shows itself in France in its greatest

strength; the Italians and the Spaniards have partaken of it; but the imagination of the South has sometimes deviated from practical reason, to employ itself in theories purely abstract.

The greatness of soul that appeared among the Romans, gave a sublime character to their patriotism and their morals; but this consequence must be attributed to their republican institutions. When liberty no longer existed in Rome, a selfish and sensual luxury was seen to reign there, with almost an undivided empire; excepting that of an adroit sort of political knowledge, which directed every mind towards observation and experience. The Romans retained nothing of their past study of Grecian literature and philosophy but a taste for the arts; and this taste itself very soon degenerated into gross enjoyments.

The influence of Rome did not exert itself over the northern nations. They were almost entirely civilized by Christianity; and their ancient religion, which contained within it the principles of chivalry, bore no resemblance to the Paganism of the South. There was to be found a spirit of heroical and generous self-devotion; an enthusiasm for women, which made a noble worship of love: in a word, as the rigors of the climate prevented man from plunging himself into the delights of nature, he had so much the keener relish for the pleasures of the soul.

It may be objected to me, that the Greeks had the same religion and the same climate as the Romans; and that yet they have given themselves up more than any other people to speculative philosophy; but may we not attribute to the Indians some of the intellectual systems developed among the Greeks? The idealistic philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato ill agrees with Paganism, such as it appears to us; historical traditions also lead us to believe that Egypt was the medium through which the nations of southern Europe received the influence of the East. The philosophy of Epicurus is the only philosophy of truly Grecian origin.

Whatever may become of these conjectures, it is certain that the spirituality of the soul, and all the thoughts derived from it, have been easily naturalized among the people of the

North; and of all these nations, the Germans have ever showed themselves the most inclined to contemplative philosophy. Leibnitz[1] is their Bacon and their Descartes. We find in this excellent genius all the qualities which the German philosophers, in general, glory to aim at—immense erudition, perfect good faith, enthusiasm hidden under strict forms and method. He had profoundly studied theology, jurisprudence, history, languages, mathematics, physics, chemistry; for he

[1] "The comprehensive genius of Gottfried William Leibnitz embraced the whole circle of philosophy, and imparted to it, in Germany at least, a new and powerful impulse. All that can interest or exercise the understanding was attempted by his great and original mind, more especially in Mathematics and Philosophy. He was ignorant of no one branch of learning, and in all he has shown the fertility of his mind by the discoveries he suggested or attempted. He was the founder of a school in Germany, which distinguished itself for the fundamental nature of the principles it embraced, and the systematic manner in which these were developed—a school which effected the final overthrow of the Scholastic system, and extended its beneficial influence over the whole range of the sciences. Leibnitz, by his example and his exertions, laid the foundations of this great revolution, by combining the philosophical systems which had prevailed up to his time—by his well-trained and original spirit—by his extraordinary learning—the liberality of his mind, and that spirit of toleration which led him always to discover some favorable point of view in what he criticised—something, even in the most despised and neglected systems, which might suggest matter for research. To this must be added his sense of harmony, and the infinitude of bright ideas, hints, and conjectures, which were perpetually, as it were, scintillating from his brilliant mind, though he left to others the task of collecting and combining them.

"He was born, June 21, 1646, at Leipsic, where his father was professor of moral philosophy, and studied the same science under J. Thomasius (born 1622, died 1684), applying himself at the same time to the Mathematics[2] and the study of Natural Law; read the classics in the original tongues, particularly Plato and Aristotle, whose doctrines he endeavored at an early age to combine. The cultivation of his mind was advanced, and the versatility and address of his natural parts promoted, by immense reading and a multifarious correspondence—by his early independence of mind—by his travels, particularly to Paris and London—and by his acquaintance with the most distinguished statesmen and princes, and most illustrious sages of his time. He died, November 14, 1716, at Hanover, of which state he was a privy-councillor and keeper of the library; scarcely less honored after his death than during his life, as is testified, among other things, by a monument recently erected to him."—(Tennemann, *Manual of Philosophy*, pp. 340, 341.)—*Ed.*

[2] Under Erh. Weigel, at Jena (who died 1690.)

was convinced that a universality of knowledge was necessary to constitute a superior being in any department: in short, every thing in Leibnitz displayed those virtues which are allied to loftiness of thought, and which deserve at once our admiration and our respect.

His works may be divided into three branches: the exact sciences, theological philosophy, and the philosophy of the mind. Every one knows that Leibnitz was the rival of Newton, in the theory of calculation. The knowledge of mathematics is very useful in metaphysical studies; abstract reasoning does not exist in perfection out of algebra and geometry: I shall endeavor to show in another place the unsuitableness of this sort of reasoning, when we attempt to exercise it upon a subject that is allied in any manner to sensibility; but it confers upon the human mind a power of attention, that renders it much more capable of analyzing itself. We must also know the laws and the forces of the universe, in order to study man under all his relations. There is such an analogy, and such a difference, between the physical and the moral world, their resemblances and their diversity lend each other such light, that it is impossible to be a learned man of the first rank without the assistance of speculative philosophy, nor a speculative philosopher without having studied the positive sciences.

Locke and Condillac had not sufficiently attended to these sciences; but Leibnitz had in this respect an incontestable superiority. Descartes also was a very great mathematician; and it is to be remarked, that the greater part of the philosophical partisans of idealism have made an unbounded use of their intellectual faculties. The exercise of the mind, as well as that of the heart, imparts a feeling of internal activity, of which all those beings who abandon themselves to the impressions that come from without are rarely capable.

The first class of the writings of Leibnitz contains those which we call theological, because they are directed to truths which form part of the support of religion; and the theory of the human mind is included in the second class. In the first class he treats of the origin of good and evil, of the divine

prescience, in a word, of those primitive questions which lie beyond the bounds of human intelligence. I do not pretend to censure, by this expression, those great men who, from the times of Pythagoras and Plato down to our own, have been attracted towards these lofty philosophical speculations. Genius does not set bounds to itself, until it has struggled for a long time against this hard necessity. Who can possess the faculty of thinking, and not endeavor to learn the origin and the end of the things of this world?

Every thing that lives upon earth, excepting man, seems to be ignorant of itself. He alone knows that he will die, and this awful truth awakens his interest for all the grand thoughts which are attached to it. From the time that we are capable of reflection we resolve, or rather we think we resolve, after our own manner, the philosophical questions which may explain the destiny of man; but it has been granted to no one to comprehend that destiny altogether. Every man views it from a different point; every man has his own philosophy, his poetry, his love. This philosophy is in accordance with the peculiar bias of his character and his mind. When we elevate ourselves towards the infinite, a thousand explanations may be equally true, although different; for questions without bounds have thousands of aspects, one of which may be sufficient to occupy the whole duration of existence.

If the mystery of the universe is above the reach of man, still the study of this mystery gives more expansion to the mind. It is with metaphysics as with alchemy; in searching for the philosopher's stone, in endeavoring to discover an impossibility, we meet upon the road with truths which would have remained unknown to us; besides, we cannot hinder a meditative being from bestowing some time at least upon the transcendental philosophy; this ebullition of spiritual nature cannot be kept back without bringing that nature into disgrace.

The Pre-established Harmony[1] of Leibnitz, which he believed

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[1] "When an impression is made on a bodily organ by an external object, the mind becomes percipient. When a volition is framed by the will, the

to be a great discovery, has been refuted with success; he flattered himself that he could explain the relations between mind and matter, by considering them both as instruments tuned beforehand, which re-echo, and answer, and imitate each other mutually. His monads,[1] of which he constitutes the simple

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bodily organs are ready to execute it. How is this brought about? The doctrine of a *pre-established harmony* has reference to this question, and may be thus stated.

"Before creating the mind and the body of man, God had a perfect knowledge of all possible minds and of all possible bodies. Among this infinite variety of minds and bodies, it was impossible but that there should come together a mind the sequence of whose ideas and volitions should correspond with the movements of some body; for, in an infinite number of possible minds and possible bodies, every combination or union was possible. Let us, then, suppose a mind, the order and succession of whose modifications corresponded with the series of movements to take place in some body, God would unite the two and make of them a living soul, a man. Here, then, is the most perfect harmony between the two parts of which man is composed. There is no commerce nor communication, no action and reaction. The mind is an independent force, which passes from one volition or perception to another, in conformity with its own nature; and would have done so although the body had not existed. The body, in like manner, by virtue of its own inherent force, and by the single impression of external objects, goes through a series of movements; and would have done so although it had not been united to a rational soul. But the movements of the body and the modifications of the mind correspond to each other. In short, the mind is a spiritual automaton, and the body is a material automaton. Like two pieces of clockwork, they are so regulated as to mark the same time; but the spring which moves the one is not the spring which moves the other; yet they go exactly together. The harmony between them existed before the mind was united to the body. Hence this is called the doctrine of *pre-established harmony.*

"It may be called *correspondence* or *parallelism*, but not *harmony* between mind and body—for there is no unity superior to both, and containing both, which is the cause of their mutual penetration. In decomposing human personality into two substances,[2] from eternity abandoned each to its proper impulse, which acknowledges no superior law in man to direct and control them, liberty is destroyed."—(Fleming, *Vocabulary of Philosophy*, pp. 216, 217.)—*Ed.*

[1] "According to Leibnitz, the elementary particles of matter are vital forces, not acting mechanically, but from an internal principle. They are incorporeal or spiritual atoms, inaccessible to all change from without, but subject to internal movement. This hypothesis he explains in a treatise

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[2] Soul and body, however, constitute one *suppositum* or person.

elements of the universe, are but an hypothesis as gratuitous as all those which have been used to explain the origin of things. But in what a singular state of perplexity is the human mind? Incessantly attracted towards the secret of it being, it finds that secret equally impossible to be discovered, or to be banished from its thoughts.

The Persians say that Zoroaster interrogated the Deity, and asked how the world had begun, when it would end, what was the origin of good and evil. The Deity answered to all these questions: *Do good, and gain immortality.* The point which particularly constitutes the excellence of this reply is, that it does not discourage man from the most sublime meditations; it only teaches him, that by conscience and sentiment he may exalt himself to the most lofty conceptions of philosophy.

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entitled *Monadologie.* He thought inert matter insufficient to explain the phenomena of body, and had recourse to the *entelechies* of Aristotle, or the *substantial forms* of the scholastic philosophy, conceiving of them as primitive forces, constituting the substance of matter, atoms of substance but not of matter, real and absolute unities, metaphysical points full of vitality, *exact* as mathematical points, and *real* as physical points. These substantial unities which constitute matter are of a nature inferior to spirit and soul, but they are imperishable, although they may undergo *transformation.*

"'*Monadology* rests upon this axiom—every substance is at the same time a cause, and every substance being a cause, has therefore in itself the principle of its own development: such is the *monad*; it is a simple force. Each *monad* has relation to all others; it corresponds with the plan of the universe; it is the universe abridged; it is, as Leibnitz says, a living mirror which reflects the entire universe under its own point of view. But every *monad* being simple, there is no immediate action of one *monad* upon another; there is, however, a natural relation of their respective development, which makes their apparent communication; this natural relation, this harmony which has its reason in the wisdom of the Supreme Director, is *pre-established harmony.*'—Cousin, *Hist. Mod. Philos.*, vol. ii. p. 86.

"Mr. Stewart (*Dissert.*, part 2, note 1, p. 219) has said: 'After studying, with all possible diligence, what Leibnitz has said of his *monads* in different parts of his works, I find myself quite incompetent to annex any precise idea to the word as he has employed it.' The most intelligible passage which he quotes is the following. (Tom. ii. p. 50.) 'A *monad* is not a *material* but a *formal* atom, it being impossible for a thing to be at once material, and possessed of a real unity and indivisibility. It is necessary, therefore, to revive the obsolete doctrine of *substantial forms* (the essence of which consists in *force*), separating it, however, from the various abuses to which it is liable.'"—(Fleming, *Vocab. of Philos.*, pp. 320-322.)—*Ed.*

Leibnitz was an idealist, who founded his system solely upon reasoning; and from thence it arises, that he has pushed his abstractions too far, and that he has not sufficiently supported his theory upon inward persuasion, the only true foundation of that which is above the understanding; in fact, reason upon the liberty of man, and you will not believe it; lay your hand upon your conscience, and you will not be able to doubt it. Consequence and contradiction, in the sense that we attach to either of these terms, do not exist within the sphere of the great questions concerning the liberty of man, the origin of good and evil, the divine prescience, etc. In these questions sentiment is almost always in opposition to reason; in order to teach mankind, that what he calls incredible in the order of earthly things, is perhaps the supreme truth under universal relations.

Dante has expressed a grand philosophical thought by this verse:

"A guisa del ver primo che l'uom crede." [1]

We must believe certain truths as we believe our own existence; it is the soul which reveals them to us, and reasonings of every kind are never more than feeble streams derived from this fountain.

The *Theodicy* [2] of Leibnitz treats of the divine prescience,

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[1] "It is thus that man believes in primitive truth."

[2] "This word was employed by Leibnitz, who in his *Essais de Theodicée, sur la bonté de Dieu, la liberté de l'homme et l'origine du mal*, published in 1710, maintained that the existence of moral evil has its origin in the free will of the creature, while metaphysical evil is nothing but the limitation which is involved in the essence of finite beings, and that out of this both physical and moral evil naturally flow. But these finite beings are designed to attain the utmost felicity they are capable of enjoying, while each, as a part, contributes to the perfection of the whole, which of the many worlds that were possible is the very best. On this account it has been called the theory of *optimism*.

"In Manuals of Philosophy, the term *theodicy* is applied to that part which treats of the *being*, *perfections*, and *government* of God, and the *immortality of the soul*.

"In the *Manuel de Philosophie, a l'usage des Colleges*, 8vo, Paris, 1846, *Theodicée*, which is written by Emille Saisset, is called Rational Theology,

and of the cause of good and evil; it is one of the most profound and argumentative works upon the theory of the infinite; the author, however, too often applies to that which is without bounds, a sort of logic to which circumscribed objects alone are amenable. Leibnitz was a highly religious man; but, from this very circumstance, he believed it a duty to ground the truths of religion upon mathematical reasoning, in order to support them on such foundations as are admitted within the empire of experience; this error proceeds from a respect, oftener felt than acknowledged, for men of cold and arid minds; we attempt to convince them in their own manner; we acknowledge that arguments in a logical form have more certainty than a proof from sentiment; and it is not true.

In the region of intellectual and religious truths, of which Leibnitz has treated, we must use consciousness in the room of demonstration. Leibnitz, wishing to adhere to abstract reasoning, demands a sort of stretch of attention which few minds can support. Metaphysical works, that are founded neither upon experience nor upon sentiment, singularly fatigue the thinking power; and we may imbibe from them a physical and moral pain, so great, that by our obstinate endeavors to conquer it, we may shatter the organs of reason in our heads. A poet, Baggesen, has made Vertigo a divinity; we should

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or the Theology of Reason, independent of Revelation. 'It proposes to establish the existence of a being infinitely perfect, and to determine his attributes and essential relations to the world.' It treats of the existence, attributes, and providence of God, and the immortality of the soul—which were formerly included under metaphysics.

"According to Kant, the objections which a *theodicy* should meet are: 1. The existence of moral evil, as contrary to the holiness of God. 2. Of physical evil, as contrary to his goodness. 3. The disproportion between the crimes and the punishments of this life as repugnant to his justice. He approves of the vindication adopted by Job against his friends, founded on our imperfect knowledge of God's ways.

"'When the Jewish mind began to philosophize, and endeavored to produce dialectic proofs, its *theodicean* philosophy, or *justification of God*, stopped, in the book of Job, at the avowal of the incomprehensibility of the destinies of mankind.'"—Bunsen, *Hippolytus*, vol. ii. p. 7.—(Fleming, *Vocab. of Philos.*, p. 513.)—*Ed.*

recommend ourselves to the favor of that goddess, when we are about to study these works, which place us in such a manner at the summit of ideas, that we have no longer any ladder to re-descend into life.

The metaphysical and religious writers, who are eloquent and feeling at the same time (such as we have seen in some examples), are much better adapted to our nature. Far from requiring the suppression of our faculties of feeling, in order to make our faculty of abstraction more precise, they bid us think, feel, and wish, that all the strength of our souls may aid us to penetrate into the depths of heaven; but to cling close to abstraction is such an effort, that it is natural enough for the generality of men to have renounced the attempt, and to have thought it more easy to admit nothing beyond what is visible.

The experimental philosophy is complete in itself; it is a whole, sufficiently vulgar, but compact, circumscribed, consequent; and while we adhere to the sort of reasoning which is received in the affairs of the world, we ought to be contented with it; the immortal and the infinite are only felt through the medium of the soul; the soul alone can diffuse an interest over the higher sort of metaphysics. We are very wrong to persuade ourselves that the more abstract a theory is, the more likely it is to guard us against all illusion; for it is exactly by these means that it may lead us into error. We take the connection of ideas for their proof; we arrange our rank and file of chimeras with precision, and we fancy that they are an army. There is nothing but the genius of sentiment that rises above experimental, as well as above speculative philosophy; there is no other genius but that, which can carry conviction beyond the limits of human reason.

It appears then to me, that, notwithstanding my entire admiration for the strength of mind and depth of genius in Leibnitz, we should wish, in his writings upon questions of metaphysical theology, more imagination and sensibility, that we might repose from thought by the indulgence of our feelings. Leibnitz almost made a scruple of recurring to it, fearing that he should have the appearance of using seductive arts

in favor of the truth; he was wrong, for sentiment is truth itself in questions of this nature.

The objections which I have allowed myself to make to those works of Leibnitz which aim at the solution of truths insoluble by reasoning, do not at all apply to his writings on the formation of ideas in the human mind; those writings are of a most luminous clearness; they refer to a mystery which man, to a certain degree, can penetrate; for he knows more of himself than of the universe. The opinions of Leibnitz in this respect tend, above all, to our moral perfection, if it be true, as the German philosophers have attempted to prove, that free-will rests upon the doctrine which delivers the soul from external objects, and that virtue cannot exist without the perfect independence of the will.

Leibnitz has combated, with admirable dialectic force, the system of Locke, who attributes all our ideas to our sensations. The advocates of this system had vaunted that well-known axiom, that there is nothing in the intellect which has not first been in the senses; and Leibnitz added to it this sublime restriction, *except the intellect itself.*[1] From this principle all the new philosophy is derived, which so much influences minds in Germany. This philosophy also is experimental, for it endeavors to learn what is passing within ourselves. It only substitutes the observation of internal feeling for that of our external sensations.

The doctrine of Locke gained many partisans in Germany among those who endeavored, like Bonnet at Geneva, and many other philosophers in England, to reconcile this doctrine with the religious sentiments which Locke himself always professed. The genius of Leibnitz foresaw all the consequences of this sort of metaphysics; and that which has built his glory on an everlasting foundation, is his having maintained in Germany the philosophy of moral liberty against that of sensual fatalism. While the rest of Europe adopted those principles which regard the soul as passive, Leibnitz, with unshaken con-

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[1] Nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu, nisi intellectus ipse.

stancy, was the defender of the idealistic philosophy, such as his genius had conceived it. It had no connection with the system of Berkeley; nor with the reveries of the Greek skeptics upon the non-existence of matter; but it maintained the moral being in his independence and in his rights.

CHAPTER VI.

KANT.

KANT lived even to a very advanced age, and never quitted Königsberg; there, in the midst of northern ice, he passed his whole life in meditation upon the laws of human intelligence. An indefatigable ardor for study enabled him to acquire stores of knowledge without number. Sciences, languages, literature, all were familiar to him; and without seeking for glory which he did not enjoy till a very late period (not having heard the noise of his renown before his old age), he contented himself with the silent pleasure of reflection. In solitude he contemplated his mind with close attention; the examination of his thoughts lent him new strength to support his virtue; and although he never intermeddled with the ardent passions of men, he knew how to forge arms for those who should be summoned to combat those passions.

Except among the Greeks, we have hardly any example of a life so strictly philosophical; and this life itself answers for the sincerity of the writer. To such an unstained sincerity, we must further add an acute and exact understanding, which served for a corrector to his genius, when he suffered it to carry him too far. This is enough, it seems to me, to make us judge at least impartially of the persevering labors of such a man.

KANT[1] first published several works on the natural sciences;

[1] "Immanuel Kant was born April 24, 1724, at Königsberg in Prussia. Here, as a student in the university, his youth was devoted to the inde-

and he showed, in this branch of study, so great a sagacity, that it was he who first foresaw the existence of the planet Uranus. Herschel himself, after having discovered it, acknowledged that it was Kant who announced the future event. His treatise upon the nature of the human understanding, entitled *Critique of Pure Reason*, appeared near thirty years ago and this work was for some time unknown; but when at length the treasures of thought, which it contains, were discovered, it produced such a sensation in Germany, that almost all which has been accomplished since, in literature as well as in philosophy, has flowed from the impulse given by this work.

To this treatise upon the human understanding succeeded the *Critique of Practical Reason*, which related to morals; and the *Critique of Judgment*, which had the nature of the beautiful for its object. The same theory serves for a foundation to these three treatises, which embrace the laws of intellect, the principles of virtue, and the contemplation of the beauties of nature and of the arts.

I shall endeavor to give a sketch of the principal ideas which

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fatigable study of natural and moral philosophy, and of the metaphysical sciences. In 1770, he was appointed professor of logic and metaphysics. Nine years afterwards he gave to the world his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft.* In this critical inquiry into the nature of Pure Reason, the attempt was made to define the extent and limits of the capacities of human thought, and the fundamental principles of Kant's philosophical system were first set forth. In order to avail himself of the labors of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, Kant studied the English language. In 1787, he followed up his former publication by *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, a work of great erudition and profound thought. Churchmen would find that this critique, though written ostensibly to combat the error of the Scotch philosopher, taught a greater skepticism than that it denounced; that 'though in it he spoke of the Bible, and also of Christianity, in terms indicative of the highest reverence, admitting them to be designed as the medium by which the knowledge of practical truth should be generally diffused, yet the direct tendency of many of the propositions therein laid down is to deprive the Scriptures of any more authority than attaches to the Zendavesta or the Koran.'—'He assumed the ultimate judgment on such questions, and on historical truth of any kind, to be metaphysical not historical: the living light within a man, not the dead letter from any past age.'

"Of Kant's other works the most important are: *Die Kritik der Urtheilskraft* and *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, 1793. He died in his native place on the 12th of February, 1804."—*Ed.*

this doctrine contains; whatever care I may take to explain it clearly, I do not dissemble the necessity there is of incessant attention to comprehend it. A prince, who was learning mathematics, grew impatient of the labor which that study demanded. "It is indispensable," said his instructor, "for your highness to take the pains of studying, in order to learn the science; for there is no royal road in mathematics." The French public, which has so many reasons to fancy itself a prince, will allow me to suggest that there is no royal road in metaphysics; and that, to attain a conception of any theory whatever, we must pass through the intermediate ways which conducted the author himself to the results he exhibits.

The materialistic philosophy gave up the human understanding to the empire of external objects, and morals to personal interest; and reduced the beautiful to the agreeable. Kant wished to re-establish primitive truths and spontaneous activity in the soul, conscience in morals, and the ideal in the arts. Let us now examine in what manner he has fulfilled these different undertakings.

At the time the *Critique of Pure Reason* made its appearance, there existed only two systems concerning the human understanding among thinking men: the one, that of Locke, attributed all our ideas to our sensations; the other, that of Descartes and Leibnitz, endeavored to demonstrate the spirituality and the activity of the soul, free-will, in short, the whole doctrine of Idealism; but these two philosophers rested their opinions upon proofs purely speculative. I have exposed, in the preceding chapter, the inconveniences which result from these efforts of abstraction, that arrest, if we may use the expression, the very blood in our veins, until our intellectual faculties alone reign within us. The algebraic method, applied to objects that we cannot embrace by mere reasoning, leaves no durable trace in the mind. While we are in the act of perusing these writings upon high philosophical conceptions, we believe that we comprehend them; we think that we believe them; but the arguments which have appeared most convincing, very soon escape from the memory.

If man, wearied with these efforts, confines himself to the knowledge which he gains by his senses, all will be melancholy indeed for his soul. Will he have any idea of immortality, when the forerunners of destruction are engraven so deeply on the countenance of mortals, and living nature falls incessantly into dust? When all the senses talk of death, what feeble hope can we entertain of a resurrection? If man only consulted his sensations, what idea would he form of the supreme goodness? So many afflictions dispute the mastery over our life; so many hideous objects disfigure nature, that the unfortunate created being curses his existence a thousand times before the last convulsion snatches it away. Let man, on the contrary, reject the testimony of his senses, how will he guide himself on the earth? and yet, if he trusts to them alone, what enthusiasm, what morals, what religion will be able to resist the repeated assaults to which pain and pleasure alternately expose him?

Reflection wandered over this vast region of uncertainty, when Kant endeavored to trace the limits of the two empires, that of the senses and that of the soul; of external and of intellectual nature. The strength of thinking, and the wisdom with which he marked these limits, were perhaps never exhibited before: he did not lose himself among the new systems concerning the creation of the universe; he recognized the bounds which the eternal mysteries set to the human understanding, and (what will be new perhaps to those who have only heard Kant spoken of) there is no philosopher more adverse, in numerous respects, to metaphysics; he made himself so deeply learned in this science, only to employ against it the means it afforded him to demonstrate its own insufficiency. We might say of him, that, like a new Curtius, he threw himself into the gulf of abstraction, in order to fill it up.

Locke had victoriously combated the doctrine of innate ideas in man, because he has always represented ideas as making a part of our experimental knowledge. The examination of pure reason, that is to say of the primitive faculties of which the intellect is composed, did not fix his attention.

Leibnitz, as we have said before, pronounced this sublime axiom: "There is nothing in the intellect which does not come by the senses, except the intellect itself." Kant has acknowledged, as well as Locke, that there are no innate ideas; but he has endeavored to enter into the sense of the axiom of Leibnitz, by examining what are the laws and the sentiments which constitute the essence of the human soul, independently of all experience. The *Critique of Pure Reason* strives to show in what these laws consist, and what are the objects upon which they can be exercised.

Skepticism, to which materialism almost always leads, was carried so far, that Hume finished by overturning the foundation of all reason, in his search after arguments against the axiom, "that there is no effect without a cause." And such is the unsteadiness of human nature when we do not place the principle of conviction in the centre of the soul, that incredulity, which begins by attacking the existence of the moral world, at last gets rid of the material world also, which it first used as an instrument to destroy the other.

Kant wished to know whether absolute certainty was attainable by the human understanding; and he only found it in our necessary notions, that is, in all the laws of our understanding, which are of such a nature that we cannot conceive any thing otherwise than as those laws represent it.

In the first class of the imperative forms of our understanding are space and time. Kant demonstrates that all our perceptions are subjected to these two forms; he concludes, from hence, that they exist in us, and not in objects; and that in this respect, it is our understanding which gives laws to external nature, instead of receiving them from it. Geometry, which measures space, and arithmetic, which divides time, are sciences of perfect demonstration, because they rest upon the necessary notions of our mind.

Truths acquired by experience never carry absolute certainty with them; when we say: "The sun rises every day," "all men are mortal," etc., the imagination could figure an exception to these truths, which experience alone makes us consider

indubitable; but Imagination herself cannot suppose any thing out of the sphere of space and time; and it is impossible to regard as the result of custom (that is, of the constant repetition of the same phenomena) those forms of our thoughts which we impose upon things; sensations may be doubtful; but the prism through which we receive them is immovable.

To this primitive intuition of space and time, we must add, or rather give, as a foundation, the principles of reasoning, without which we cannot comprehend any thing, and which are the laws of our intellect: the connection of causes and effects, unity, plurality, totality, possibility, reality, necessity, etc.[1] Kant considers them all as equally necessary notions; and he only raises to the rank of real sciences such as are immediately founded upon these notions, because it is in them alone that certainty can exist. The forms of reasoning have no result, except when they are applied to our judgment of external objects, and in this application they are liable to error; but they are not the less necessary in themselves; that is, we cannot depart from them in any of our thoughts; it is impossible for us to imagine any thing out of the sphere of the relations of causes and effects, of possibility, quantity, etc.; and these notions are as inherent in our conception as space and time. We perceive nothing except through the medium of the immovable laws of our manner of reasoning; therefore these laws are in ourselves, and not out of us.

In the German philosophy, those ideas are called *subjective* which grow out of the nature of our understanding and its faculties; and all those ideas *objective*,[2] which are excited by

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[1] Kant gives the name of *Category* to the different necessary notions of the understanding, of which he gives a list.

[2] "The exact distinction of *subject* and *object* was first made by the schoolmen; and to the schoolmen the vulgar languages are principally indebted for what precision and analytic subtilty they possess. These correlative terms correspond to the first and most important distinction in philosophy; they embody the original antithesis in consciousness of self and not-self,—a distinction which, in fact, involves the whole science of mind; for psychology is nothing more than a determination of the subjective and the objective, in themselves, and in their reciprocal relations.

sensations. Whatever may be the denomination which we adopt in this respect, it appears to me that the examination of our intellect agrees with the prevailing thought of Kant; namely, the distinction he establishes between the forms of our understanding and the objects which we know according to those forms; and whether he adheres to abstract conceptions, or whether he appeals, in religion and morals, to sentiments which he also considers as independent of experience, nothing is more luminous than the line of demarcation which he traces between what comes to us by sensation, and what belongs to the spontaneous action of our souls.

Some expressions in the doctrine of Kant having been ill interpreted, it has been pretended that he believed in *a priori* cognitions, that is, those engraved upon the mind before we have discovered them. Other German philosophers, more allied to the system of Plato, have, in effect, thought that the type of the world was in the human understanding, and that man

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Thus significant of the primary and most extensive analysis in philosophy, these terms, in their substantive and adjective forms, passed from the schools into the scientific language of Telesius, Campanella, Berigardus, Gassendi, Descartes, Spinosa, Leibnitz, Wolf, etc. Deprived of these terms, the Critical philosophy, indeed the whole philosophy of Germany, would be a blank. In this country, though familiarly employed in scientific language, even subsequently to the time of Locke, the adjective forms seem at length to have dropped out of the English tongue. That these words waxed obsolete was perhaps caused by the ambiguity which had gradually crept into the signification of the substantives. *Object*, besides its proper signification, became to be abusively applied to denote *motive*, *end*, *final cause* (a meaning not recognized by Johnson). This innovation was probably borrowed from the French, in whose language the word had been similarly corrupted after the commencement of the last century (*Dict. de Trevoux*, voce *Objet*). *Subject* in English, as *sujet* in French, had been also perverted into a synonym for *object*, taken in its proper meaning, and had thus returned to the original ambiguity of the corresponding term in Greek. It is probable that the logical application of the word (*subject of attribution* or *predication*) facilitated or occasioned this confusion. In using the terms, therefore, we think that an explanation, but no apology, is required. The distinction is of paramount importance, and of infinite application, not only in philosophy proper, but in grammar, rhetoric, criticism, ethics, politics, jurisprudence, theology."—(Sir Wm. Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy*, etc., p. 5.)—*Ed.*

could not conceive the universe if he had not in himself the innate image of it; but this doctrine is not touched upon by Kant: he reduces the intellectual sciences to three—logic, metaphysics, and mathematics. Logic teaches nothing by itself; but as it rests upon the laws of our understanding, it is incontestable in its principles, abstractly considered; this science cannot lead to truth, except in its application to ideas and things; its principles are innate, its application is experimental. In metaphysics, Kant denies its existence; because he pretends that reasoning cannot find a place beyond the sphere of experience. Mathematics alone appear to him to depend immediately upon the notion of space and of time, that is, upon the laws of our understanding anterior to experience. He endeavors to prove, that mathematics are not a simple analysis, but a synthetic, positive, creative science, and certain of itself, without the necessity of our recurring to experience to be assured of its truth. We may study in the work of Kant the arguments upon which he supports this way of thinking; but at least it is true, that there is no man more adverse to what is called the philosophy of the dreamers; and that he must rather have had an inclination for a dry and didactic mode of thinking, although the object of his doctrine be to raise the human species from its degradation, under the philosophy of materialism.

Far from rejecting experience, Kant considers the business of life as nothing but the action of our innate faculties upon the several sorts of knowledge which come to us from without. He believed that experience would be nothing but a chaos without the laws of the understanding; but that the laws of the understanding have no other object than the elements afforded it by experience. It follows, that metaphysics themselves can teach us nothing beyond these limits; and that it is to sentiment that we ought to attribute the foreknowledge and the conviction of every thing that transcends the bounds of the visible world.

When it is attempted to use reasoning alone for the establishment of religious truths, it becomes a most pliable instru-

ment, which can equally attack and defend them; because we cannot, on this occasion, find any point of support in experience. Kant places upon two parallel lines the arguments for and against the liberty of man, the immortality of the soul, the temporary or eternal duration of the world; and it is to sentiment that he appeals to weigh down the balance, for the metaphysical proofs appear to him of equal strength on either side.[1] Perhaps he was wrong to push the skepticism of reasoning to such an extent; but it was to annihilate this skepticism with more certainty, by keeping certain questions clear from the abstract discussions which gave it birth.

It would be unjust to suspect the sincere piety of Kant, because he has maintained the equality of the reasonings for and against the great questions in the transcendental metaphysics. It appears to me, on the contrary, that there is candor in this avowal. So few minds are able to comprehend these reasonings, and those who are able are so disposed to combat each other, that it is rendering a great service to religious faith to banish metaphysics from all questions that relate to the existence of God, to free-will, to the origin of good and evil.

Some respectable persons have said that we ought not to neglect any weapon, and that metaphysical arguments also ought to be employed, to persuade those over whom they have power; but these arguments lead to discussion, and discussion to doubt upon every subject.

The best eras for the race of man have ever been those when truths of a certain class were uncontested in writing or discourse. The passions might then seduce into culpable acts; but no one called in question the truth of that religion which he disobeyed. Sophisms of every kind, the abuses of a certain philosophy, have destroyed, in different countries and different ages, that noble firmness of belief which was the source of heroic devotion. Then is it not a fine idea for a philosopher to shut, even to the science which he professes, the door of the sanctuary,

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[1] These opposite arguments on great metaphysical questions are called "Antinomies" in Kant's writings.

and to employ all the power of abstraction to prove that there are regions from which it ought to be banished?

Despots and fanatics have endeavored to prevent human reason from examining certain subjects, and Reason has ever burst these unjust fetters. But the limits which she imposes on herself, far from enslaving her, give her a new strength, such strength as always results from the authority of laws which are freely agreed to by those who are subjected to them.

A deaf and dumb person, before he had been under the discipline of the Abbé Sicard, might feel a full conviction of the existence of the Divinity. Many men are as far removed from those who think deeply, as the deaf and dumb are from other men, and still they are not less capable of experiencing (if the expression may be allowed) within themselves primitive truths, because such truths spring from sentiment.

Physicians, in the physical study of man, recognize the principle which animates him, and yet no one knows what life is; and if one set about reasoning, it would be easy to prove to men (as several Greek philosophers have done) that they do not live at all. It is the same with God, with conscience, and with free-will. You must believe, because you feel; all argument will be inferior to this fact.

The labors of anatomy cannot be practised on a living body without destroying it; analysis, when attempted to be applied to indivisible truths, destroys them, because its first efforts are directed against their unity. We must divide our souls in two, in order that one half of us may contemplate the other. In whatever way this division takes place, it deprives our being of all that sublime identity, without which we have not sufficient strength to believe that of which consciousness alone offers us assurance.

Let a great number of men be assembled at a theatre or public place, and let some theorem of reasoning, however general, be proposed to them; as many different opinions will immediately be formed as there are individuals assembled. But if any actions, displaying greatness of soul are related, or

the accents of generosity heard, the general burst will at once proclaim that you have touched that instinct of the soul which is as lively and as powerful in our being as the instinct which preserves our existence.

In referring to sentiment, which does not admit of doubts, the knowledge of transcendent truths, in endeavoring to prove that reasoning avails only when exerted within the sphere of sensations, Kant is very far from considering this faculty of sentiment as an illusion; on the contrary, he assigns to it the first rank in human nature; he makes conscience the innate principle of our moral existence: and the feeling of right and wrong is, according to his ideas, the primitive law of the heart, as space and time are of the understanding.

Has not man been led by reasoning to deny the existence of free-will? And yet he is so convinced of it that he surprises himself in the act of feeling esteem or dislike even for the animals that surround him; so forcibly does he believe in the spontaneous choice of good and evil in all beings.

The assurance of our freedom is only the feeling we have of it; and on this liberty, as the corner-stone, is raised the doctrine of duty; for if man is free, he ought to create to himself motives powerful enough to combat against the operation of exterior objects, and to set his will free from the narrow trammels of selfishness. Duty is at once the proof and the security of the metaphysical independence of man.

In the following chapters we shall examine Kant's arguments against morality as founded upon self-interest, and the sublime theory which he substitutes in the place of this hypocritical sophism, or perverse doctrine. Different opinions may be entertained as to Kant's first work, *the Critique of Pure Reason.* Having himself acknowledged reasoning to be insufficient and contradictory, he ought to have anticipated that it would be made use of against him; but it appears to me impossible not to read with respect his *Critique of Practical Reason*, and the different works that he has written on morals.

Not only are Kant's principles of morals austere and pure, as might be expected from the inflexibility of a philosopher,

but he always connects the evidence of the heart with that of the understanding, and is singularly happy in making his abstract theory as to the nature of the understanding serve as a support to sentiments at once the most simple and the most powerful.

A conscience acquired by sensations may be stifled by them; and the dignity of duty is degraded in being made to depend on exterior objects. Kant, therefore, is incessantly laboring to show that a deep sense of this dignity is the necessary condition of our moral being, the law by which it exists. The empire of sensations, and the bad actions to the commission of which they lead, can no more destroy in us the notion of good or of evil, than the idea of space and time can be changed by an erroneous application of it. There is always, in whatever situation we may be placed, a power of reaction against circumstances, which springs from the bottom of the soul; and we cannot but feel that neither the laws of the understanding, moral liberty, nor conscience, are the result of experience.

In his treatise on the sublime and beautiful, entitled *Critique of the Judgment*, Kant applies to the pleasures of the imagination the system from which he has developed such fruitful deductions in the sphere of intelligence and of sentiment; or rather it is the same soul which he examines, and which shows itself in the sciences, in ethics, and in the fine arts. Kant maintains that there are in poetry, and in the arts which are capable, as poetry is, of painting sentiments by images, two kinds of beauty: one which may be referred to time and to this life; the other, to the eternal and the infinite.

And so impossible is it to say that the infinite and the eternal are intelligible to our minds, that one is often tempted to take even the finite and the transient for a dream; for thought can see no limits to any thing, neither can being have a conception of non-existence. We cannot search deeply into the exact sciences themselves, without meeting, even there, with the infinite and the eternal; and those things which are the most completely matters of fact, do, under some relations, belong to this infinite and eternal, as much as sentiment and imagination.

From this application of the feeling of the infinite to the fine arts, arises the ideal, that is, the beautiful, considered, not as the assemblage and imitation of whatever is more worthy in nature, but as the realization of that image which is constantly present to the soul. Materialistic philosophers judge of the beautiful according to the agreeable impression which it causes, and therefore place it in the empire of sensations; spiritualistic philosophers, who ascribe every thing to reason, see in the beautiful what they call the perfect, and find in it some analogy to the useful and the good, which they consider to be the first degrees of perfection. Kant has rejected both these explanations.

The beautiful, considered only as an agreeable thing, would be confined to the sphere of sensations, and consequently subject to the difference of tastes: it could never claim that universal acknowledgment, which is the true character of beauty. The beautiful, considered as perfection, would require a sort of judgment, like that on which esteem is founded. The enthusiasm that ought to be inspired by the beautiful, belongs neither to sensations nor to judgment; it is an innate disposition, like the feeling of duty, and the necessary notions of the understanding; and we discover beauty when we see it, because it is the outward image of the ideal, the type of which exists in our intellect. Difference of tastes may be applied to what is agreeable, for our sensations are the source of this kind of pleasure; but all men must admire what is beautiful, whether in art or in nature, because they have in their souls sentiments of celestial origin, which beauty awakens, and of which it excites the enjoyment.

Kant passes from the theory of the beautiful to that of the sublime; and this second part of his *Critique of the Judgment* is even more remarkable than the first: he makes the sublime consist in the moral liberty of man struggling with his destiny, or with his nature. Unlimited power excites our fear, greatness overwhelms us; yet, by the vigor of the will, we escape from the sensation of physical weakness. The power of destiny, and the immensity of nature, are placed in endless opposition to

the miserable dependence of the creature upon earth; but one spark of the sacred fire in our bosoms triumphs over the universe; since with that one spark we are enabled to resist the impressions which all the powers in the world could make upon us.

The first effect of the sublime is to overwhelm a man, and the second to exalt him. When we contemplate a storm curling the billows of the sea, and seeming to threaten both earth and heaven, terror at first takes possession of us, although we may be out of the reach of any personal danger; but when the clouds, that have gathered, burst over our heads, when all the fury of nature is displayed, man feels an inward energy, which frees him from every fear, by his will, or by resignation, by the exercise, or by the relinquishment of his moral liberty; and this consciousness of what is within him animates and encourages him.

When we hear of a generous action, when we learn that men have borne unheard-of misfo tunes to remain faithful to their opinion even to the smallest shade, at first the description of the miseries they have suffered confounds our thought; but, by degrees, we regain our strength, and the sympathy that we feel excited within ourselves, by greatness of soul, makes us hope that we ourselves could triumph over the miserable sensations of this life, to remain faithful, noble, and proud, even to our latest day.

Besides, no one can define, if I may thus speak, that which is at the summit of our existence; *we are too much elevated in respect to ourselves, to comprehend ourselves*, says St. Augustin. He must be very poor in imagination who thinks himself able to exhaust the contemplation even of the simplest flower; how then could we arrive at the knowledge of all that is comprised in the idea of the sublime?

I do not certainly flatter myself that I have been able, in a few pages, to give an account of a system which, for twenty years, has occupied all thinking heads in Germany; but I hope to have said enough to indicate the general spirit of the philosophy of Kant, and to enable me to explain, in the follow-

ing chapters, the influence which it has had upon literature, science, and ethics.

In order to reconcile experimental and ideal philosophy, Kant has not made the one subordinate to the other, but he has given to each of the two, separately, a new degree of force. Germany was threatened by that cold doctrine which regarded all enthusiasm as an error, and classed among prejudices those sentiments which form the consolation of our existence. It was a great satisfaction for men, at once so philosophical and so poetical, so capable of study and of exaltation, to see all the fine affections of the soul defended with the strictness of the most abstract reasonings. The force of the mind can never be long in a negative state; that is, it cannot long consist principally in what we do not believe, in what we do not understand, in what we disdain. We must have a philosophy of belief, of enthusiasm, a philosophy which confirms by reason what sentiment reveals to us.

The adversaries of Kant have accused him of having merely repeated the arguments of the ancient idealists; they have pretended that the doctrine of the German philosopher was only an old system in a new language. This reproach has no foundation. There are not only new ideas, but a particular character, in the doctrine of Kant.

It savors of the philosophy of the eighteenth century, although it was intended to refute the doctrines of that philosophy, because it is natural to man always to catch the spirit of the age in which he lives, even when his intention is to oppose it. The philosophy of Plato is more poetical than that of Kant, the philosophy of Malebranche more religious; but the great merit of the German philosopher has been to raise up moral dignity, by setting all that is fine in the heart on the basis of a theory deduced from the strongest reasoning.[1]

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[1] "In the following sublime passage, Kant finely illustrates the opposite influences of material and mental studies, and this by the contrast of the two noblest objects of our contemplation:

"'Two things there are, which, the oftener and the more steadfastly

The opposition which it has been endeavored to show between reason and sentiment, necessarily leads reason to selfishness and sentiment to folly; but Kant, who seemed to be called to conclude all the grand intellectual alliances, has made the soul one focus, in which all our faculties are in contact with each other.

The polemical part of the works of Kant, that in which he attacks the philosophy of the materialists, would be of itself a masterpiece. That philosophy has struck its roots so deeply into the mind, so much irreligion and selfishness has been the result of it, that those men ought to be regarded as benefactors to their country, who have even combated a system so pernicious, and revived the thoughts of Plato, of Descartes, and

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we consider, fill the mind with an ever new, an ever rising admiration and reverence,—*the Starry Heaven above, the Moral Law within.* Of neither am I compelled to seek out the existence, as shrouded in obscurity, or only to surmise the possibility, as beyond the hemisphere of my knowledge. Both I contemplate lying clear before me, and connect both immediately with the consciousness of my being. The one departs from the place I occupy in the outer world of sense; expands, beyond the limits of imagination, that connection of my being with worlds rising above worlds, and systems blending into systems; and protends it also to the illimitable times of their periodic movement—to its commencement and continuance. The other departs from my invisible self, from my personality; and represents me in a world, truly infinite indeed, but whose infinity is to be fathomed only by the intellect, with which also my connection, unlike the fortuitous relation I stand in to the world of sense, I am compelled to recognize, as necessary and universal. In the former, the first view of a countless multitude of worlds annihilates, as it were, my importance as *an animal nature*, which, after a brief and incomprehensible endowment with the powers of life, is compelled to refund its constituent matter to the planet—itself an atom in the universe—on which it grew. The aspect of the other, on the contrary, elevates my worth *as an intelligence*, even to infinitude; and this through my personality, in which the moral law reveals a faculty of life independent of my animal nature, nay, of the whole material world: at least, if it be permitted to infer as much from the regulation of my being, which a conformity with that law exacts; proposing, as it does, my moral worth for the absolute end of my activity, conceding no compromise of its imperative to a necessitation of nature, and spurning in its infinity the limits and conditions of my present transitory life.'"[1]—(Sir Wm. Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy*, etc., p. 301.)—*Ed.*

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[1] *Cr. d. pr. V.* Beschluss. This suggests Prudentius.

of Leibnitz: but the philosophy of the new German school contains a crowd of ideas which are peculiar to it; it is founded upon immense scientific knowledge, which has been increasing every day, and upon a singularly abstract and logical mode of reasoning; for, although Kant blames the use of such reasoning, in the examination of truths which are out of the circle of experience, he shows in his writings a power of mind in metaphysics which places him, in this respect, in the first rank of thinkers.

It cannot be denied that the style of Kant, in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, deserves almost all the reproaches with which his adversaries have treated it. He has made use of a phraseology very difficult to understand, and of the most tiresome new creation of words. He lived alone with his own thoughts, and persuaded himself that it was necessary to have new words for new ideas, and yet there are words to express every thing.[1]

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[1] "Perhaps among all the metaphysical writers of the eighteenth century, including Hume and Hartley themselves, there is not one that so ill meets the conditions of a mystic as this same Immanuel Kant. A quiet, vigilant, clear-sighted man, who had become distinguished to the world in mathematics before he attempted philosophy; who, in his writings generally, on this and other subjects, is perhaps characterized by no quality so much as precisely by the distinctness of his conceptions, and the sequence and iron strictness with which he reasons. To our own minds, in the little that we know of him, he has more than once recalled Father Boscovich in Natural Philosophy; so piercing, yet so sure; so concise, so still, so simple; with such clearness and composure does he mould the complicacy of his subject, and so firm, sharp, and definite are the results he evolves from it. Right or wrong as his hypothesis may be, no one that knows him will suspect that he himself had not seen it, and seen over it; had not meditated it with calmness and deep thought, and studied throughout to expound it with scientific rigor. Neither, as we often hear, is there any superhuman faculty required to follow him. We venture to assure such of our readers as are in any measure used to metaphysical study, that the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* is by no means the hardest task they have tried. It is true, there is an unknown and forbidden terminology to be mastered; but is not this the case also with Chemistry and Astronomy, and all other sciences that deserve the name of science? It is true, a careless or unprepared reader will find Kant's writing a riddle; but will a reader of this sort make much of Newton's *Principia*, or D'Alembert's *Calculus of Variations?* He will make nothing of them; perhaps less than nothing; for if he trust to his own judgment, he will pronounce them madness. Yet if the Philoso-

In those objects which are in themselves most clear, Kant is frequently guided by a very obscure system of metaphysics; and it is only in those regions of thought where darkness prevails in general, that he displays the torch of light: like the

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phy of Mind is any philosophy at all, Physics and Mathematics must be plain subjects compared with it. But these latter are happy, not only in the fixedness and simplicity of their methods, but also in the universal acknowledgment of their claim to that prior and continual intensity of application, without which all progress in any science is impossible; though more than one may be attempted without it; and blamed, because without it they will yield no result.

"The truth is, German Philosophy differs not more widely from ours in the substance of its doctrines, than in its manner of communicating them. The class of disquisitions, named *Kamin-Philosophie* (Parlor-fire Philosophy) in Germany, is there held in little estimation. No right treatise on any thing, it is believed, least of all on the nature of the human mind, can be profitably read, unless the reader himself co-operates: the blessing of half-sleep in such cases is denied him; he must be alert, and strain every faculty, or it profits nothing. Philosophy, with these men, pretends to be a Science, nay, the living principle and soul of all Sciences, and must be treated and studied scientifically, or not studied and treated at all. Its doctrines should be present with every cultivated writer; its spirit should pervade every piece of composition, how slight or popular soever; but to treat itself popularly would be a degradation and an impossibility. Philosophy dwells aloft in the Temple of Science, the divinity of its inmost shrine: her dictates descend among men, but she herself descends not; whoso would behold her, must climb with long and laborious effort; nay, still linger in the forecourt, till manifold trial have proved him worthy of admission into the interior solemnities.

"It is the false notion prevalent respecting the objects aimed at, and the purposed manner of attaining them, in German Philosophy, that causes, in great part, this disappointment of our attempts to study it, and the evil report which the disappointed naturally enough bring back with them. Let the reader believe us, the Critical Philosophers, whatever they may be, are no mystics, and have no fellowship with mystics. What a mystic is, we have said above. But Kant, Fichte, and Schelling are men of cool judgment, and determinate energetic character; men of science and profound and universal investigation; nowhere does the world, in all its bearings, spiritual or material, theoretic or practical, lie pictured in clearer or truer colors, than in such heads as these. We have heard Kant estimated as a spiritual brother of Boehme; as justly might we take Sir Isaac Newton for a spiritual brother of Count Swedenborg, and Laplace's *Mechanism of the Heavens* for a peristyle to the *Vision of the New Jerusalem*. That this is no extravagant comparison, we appeal to any man acquainted with any single volume of Kant's writings. Neither, though Schelling's system differs still more widely from ours, can we reckon Schelling a mystic. He

Israelites, who had for their guide a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of cloud by day.

No one in France would give himself the trouble of studying works so bristling with difficulties, as those of Kant; but he

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is a man evidently of deep insight into individual things; speaks wisely, and reasons with the nicest accuracy, on all matters where we understand his data. Fairer might it be in us to say that we had not yet appreciated his truth, and *therefore* could not appreciate his error. But above all, the mysticism of Fichte might astonish us. The cold colossal, adamantine spirit, standing erect and clear, like a Cato Major among degenerate men: fit to have been the teacher of the Stoa, and to have discoursed of Beauty and Virtue in the groves of Academe! Our reader has seen some words of Fichte's: are these like words of a mystic? We state Fichte's character, as it is known and admitted by men of all parties among the Germans, when we say that so robust an intellect, a soul so calm, so lofty, massive, and immovable, has not mingled in philosophical discussion since the time of Luther. We figure his motionless look, had he heard this charge of mysticism; for the man rises before us, amid contradiction and debate, like a granite mountain amid clouds and wind. Ridicule, of the best that could be commanded, has been already tried against him; but it could not avail. What was the wit of a thousand wits to him? The cry of a thousand choughs assaulting that old cliff of granite: seen from the summit, these, as they winged the midway air, showed scarce so gross as beetles, and their cry was seldom even audible. Fichte's opinions may be true or false; but his character, as a thinker, can be slightly valued only by such as know it ill; and as a man, approved by action and suffering, in his life and in his death, he ranks with a class of men who were common only in better ages than ours.

"The Critical Philosophy has been regarded by persons of approved judgment, and nowise directly implicated in the furthering of it, as distinctly the greatest intellectual achievement of the century in which it came to light. August Wilhelm Schlegel has stated in plain terms his belief, that, in respect of its probable influence on the moral culture of Europe, it stands on a line with the Reformation. We mention Schlegel as a man whose opinion has a known value among ourselves. But the worth of Kant's philosophy is not to be gathered from votes alone. The noble system of morality, the purer theology, the lofty views of man's nature derived from it; nay, perhaps, the very discussion of such matters, to which it gave so strong an impetus, have told with remarkable and beneficial influence on the whole spiritual character of Germany. No writer of any importance in that country, be he acquainted or not with the Critical Philosophy, but breathes a spirit of devoutness and elevation more or less directly drawn from it. Such men as Goethe and Schiller cannot exist without effect in any literature or in any century: but if one circumstance more than another has contributed to forward their endeavors, and introduce that higher tone into the literature of Germany, it has been this phil-

had to do with patient and persevering readers. This, certainly, was not a reason for his abusing their patience; perhaps, however, he would not have been able to search so deeply into the science of the human understanding, if he had attach-

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osophical system; to which, in wisely believing its results, or even in wisely denying them, all that was lofty and pure in the genius of poetry, or the reason of man, so readily allied itself.

"That such a system must in the end become known among ourselves, as it is already becoming known in France and Italy, and over all Europe, no one acquainted in any measure with the character of this matter, and the character of England, will hesitate to predict. Doubtless it will be studied here, and by heads adequate to do it justice: it will be investigated duly and thoroughly, and settled in our minds on the footing which belongs to it, and where thenceforth it must continue. Respecting the degrees of truth and error which will then be found to exist in Kant's system, or in the modifications it has since received, and is still receiving, we desire to be understood as making no estimate, and little qualified to make any. We would have it studied and known, on general grounds; because even the errors of such men are instructive; and because, without a large admixture of truth, no error *can* exist under such combinations, and become diffused so widely. To judge of it we pretend not: we are still inquirers in the mere outskirts of the matter; and it is but inquiry that we wish to see promoted.

"Meanwhile, as an advance or first step towards this, we may state something of what has most struck ourselves as characterizing Kant's system; as distinguishing it from every other known to us; and chiefly from the Metaphysical philosophy which is taught in Britain, or rather which *was* taught; for, on looking round, we see not that there is any such Philosophy in existence at the present day. The Kantist, in direct contradiction to Locke and all his followers, both of the French, and English or Scotch school, commences from within, and proceeds outwards; instead of commencing from without, and, with various precautions and hesitations, endeavoring to proceed inwards. The ultimate aim of all Philosophy must be to interpret appearances,—from the given symbol to ascertain the thing. Now the first step towards this, the aim of what may be called Primary or Critical Philosophy, must be to find some indubitable principle; to fix ourselves on some unchangeable basis: to discover what the Germans call the *Urwahr*, the Primitive Truth, the necessarily, absolutely, and eternally *True*. This necessarily True, this absolute basis of Truth, Locke silently, and Reid and his followers with more tumult, find in a certain modified Experience, and evidence of Sense, in the universal and natural persuasions of all men. Not so the Germans: they deny that there is here any absolute Truth, or that any Philosophy whatever can be built on such a basis; nay, they go the length of asserting, that such an appeal even to the universal persuasions of mankind, gather them with what precautions you may, amounts to a total abdication of Philosophy, strictly so called, and

ed more importance to the choice of the expressions which he made use of in explaining it. The ancient philosophers always divided their doctrines into two distinct parts; one which they reserved for the initiated, and another which they professed in

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renders not only its further progress, but its very existence, impossible. What, they would say, have the persuasions, or instinctive beliefs, or whatever they are called, of men, to do in this matter? Is it not the object of Philosophy to enlighten, and rectify, and many times directly contradict these very beliefs? Take, for instance, the voice of all generations of men on the subject of Astronomy. Will there, out of any age or climate, be one dissentient against the *fact* of the Sun's going round the Earth? Can any evidence be clearer, is there any persuasion more universal, any belief more instinctive? And yet the Sun moves no hairsbreadth; but stands in the centre of his Planets, let us vote as we please. So is it likewise with our evidence for an external independent existence of Matter, and, in general, with our whole argument against Hume; whose reasonings, from the premises admitted both by him and us, the Germans affirm to be rigorously consistent and legitimate, and, on these premises, altogether uncontroverted and incontrovertible. British Philosophy, since the time of Hume, appears to them nothing more than a 'laborious and unsuccessful striving to build dike after dike in front of our Churches and Judgment-halls, and so turn back from them the deluge of Skepticism, with which that extraordinary writer overflowed us, and still threatens to destroy whatever we value most.' This is Schlegel's meaning: his words are not before us

"The Germans take up the matter differently, and would assail Hume, not in his outworks, but in the centre of his citadel. They deny his first principle, that Sense is the only inlet of Knowledge, that Experience is the primary ground of Belief. Their Primitive Truth, however, they seek, not historically and by experiment, in the universal persuasions of men, but by intuition, in the deepest and purest nature of Man. Instead of attempting, which they consider vain, to prove the existence of God, Virtue, an immaterial Soul, by inferences drawn, as the conclusion of all Philosophy, from the world of sense, they find these things written as the beginning of all Philosophy, in obscured but ineffaceable characters, within our inmost being; and themselves first affording any certainty and clear meaning to that very world of sense, by which we endeavor to demonstrate them. God *is*, nay, alone *is*, for with like emphasis we cannot say that any thing else is. This is the Absolute, the Primitively True, which the philosopher seeks. Endeavoring, by logical argument, to prove the existence of God, a Kantist might say, would be like taking out a candle to look for the sun; nay, gaze steadily into your candle-light, and the sun himself may be invisible. To open the inward eye to the sight of this Primitively True; or, rather, we might call it, to clear off the Obscurations of sense, which eclipse this truth within us, so that we may see it, and believe it not only to be true, but the foundation and essence of all other truth, may, in such

public. Kant's manner of writing is quite different, when his theory, or the application of it, is the subject.

In his metaphysical treatises, he makes use of words as arithmetical figures, and gives them whatever value he pleases,

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language as we are here using, be said to be the problem of Critical Philosophy.

"In this point of view, Kant's system may be thought to have a remote affinity to those of Malebranche and Descartes. But if they in some measure agree as to their aim, there is the widest difference as to the means. We state what to ourselves has long appeared the grand characteristic of Kant's Philosophy, when we mention his distinction, seldom perhaps expressed so broadly, but uniformly implied, between Understanding and Reason (*Verstand* and *Vernunft*). To most of our readers this may seem a distinction without a difference; nevertheless, to the Kantists it is by no means such. They believe that both Understanding and Reason are organs, or rather, we should say, modes of operation, by which the mind discovers truth; but they think that their manner of proceeding is essentially different: that their provinces are separable and distinguishable, nay, that it is of the last importance to separate and distinguish them. Reason, the Kantists say, is of a higher nature than Understanding; it works by more subtle methods, on higher objects, and requires a far finer culture for its development, indeed in many men it is never developed at all; but its results are no less certain, nay, rather, they are much more so; for Reason discerns Truth itself, the absolutely and primitively *True;* while Understanding discerns only *relations*, and cannot decide without *if*. The proper province of Understanding is all, strictly speaking, *real*, practical, and material knowledge, Mathematics, Physics, Political Economy, the adaptation of means to ends in the whole business of life. In this province it is the strength and universal implement of the mind: an indispensable servant, without which, indeed, existence itself would be impossible. Let it not step beyond this province, however, not usurp the province of Reason, which it is appointed to obey, and cannot rule over without ruin to the whole spiritual man. Should Understanding attempt to prove the existence of God, it ends, if thorough-going and consistent with itself, in Atheism, or a faint possible Theism, which scarcely differs from this: should it speculate of Virtue, it ends in *Utility*, making Prudence and a sufficiently cunning love of Self the highest good. Consult Understanding about the Beauty of Poetry, and it asks, where is this Beauty? or discovers it at length in rhythms and fitnesses, and male and female rhymes. Witness also its everlasting paradoxes on Necessity and the Freedom of the Will; its ominous silence on the end and meaning of man; and the enigma which, under such inspection, the whole purport of existence becomes.

"Nevertheless, say the Kantists, there is a truth in these things. Virtue is Virtue, and not prudence; not less surely than the angle in a semicircle is a right angle, and no trapezium; Shakspeare is a Poet, and Boileau is none, think of it as you may: neither is it more certain that I myself exist,

without troubling himself with that which they have derived from custom. This appears to me a great error; for the attention of the reader is exhausted in efforts to understand the language, before he arrives at the ideas, and what is known never serves as a step to what is unknown.

We must nevertheless give Kant the justice he deserves, even as a writer, when he lays aside his scientific language. In speaking of the arts, and still more of ethics, his style is almost always perfectly clear, energetic, and simple. How admirable does his doctrine then appear! How well does he express the sentiment of the beautiful and the love of duty! With what force does he separate them both from all calculations of interest or of utility! How he ennobles actions by their source, and not by their success! In a word, what moral grandeur does he not give to man, whether he examines him in himself, or in his external relations; man, that exile of heaven, that prisoner upon earth, so great as an exile, so miserable as a captive!

We might extract from the writings of Kant a multitude of brilliant ideas on all subjects; perhaps, indeed, it is to this doctrine alone, that, at the present day, we must look for conceptions at once ingenious and new; for the notions of the materialists no longer offer any thing interesting or original.

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than that God exists, infinite, eternal, invisible, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. To discern these truths is the province of Reason, which therefore is to be cultivated as the highest faculty in man. Not by logic and argument does it work; yet surely and clearly may it be taught to work: and its domain lies in that higher region whither logic and argument cannot reach; in that holier region, where Poetry, and Virtue, and Divinity abide, in whose presence Understanding wavers and recoils, dazzled into utter darkness by that 'sea of light,' at once the fountain and the termination of all true knowledge.

"Will the Kantists forgive us for the loose and popular manner in which we must here speak of these things, to bring them in any measure before the eyes of our readers? It may illustrate this distinction still farther, if we say, that, in the opinion of a Kantist, the French are of all European nations the most gifted with Understanding, and the most destitute of Reason; that David Hume had no forecast of this latter, and that Shakspeare and Luther dwelt perennially in its purest sphere."—(*Carlyle's Essays*, pp. 31-34.)—*Ed.*

Smartness of wit against what is serious, noble, and divine, is worn out; and in future it will be impossible to restore to the human race any of the qualities of youth, but by returning to religion by philosophy, and to sentiment by reason.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE MOST CELEBRATED PHILOSOPHERS BEFORE AND AFTER KANT.

The philosophic spirit, from its nature, cannot be generally diffused in any country. In Germany, however, there is such a tendency towards habits of reflection, that the German nation may be considered, by distinction, as the metaphysical nation. It possesses so many men capable of understanding the most abstract questions, that even the public are found to take an interest in the arguments employed in discussions of this kind. Every man of talent has his own way of thinking on philosophical questions. Writers of the second and third rank, in Germany, are sufficiently deep to be of the first rank in other countries. Those who are rivals, have the same hatred towards one another there as elsewhere; but no one would dare to enter the lists, without having evinced, by serious study, a real love for the science with which he is occupied. It is not enough ardently to desire success; it must be deserved, before the candidate can be even admitted to compete for it. The Germans, however indulgent they may be to defects of form in a work, are unmerciful with respect to its real value; and when they perceive any thing superficial in the mind, the feeling, or the knowledge of a writer, they try to borrow the very pleasantry of the French, to turn what is frivolous into ridicule.

It is my intention to give, in this chapter, a hasty glimpse of the principal opinions of celebrated philosophers, before and since the time of Kant; the course which his successors have

taken cannot well be judged of, without turning back to see what was the state of opinions at the time when the *Kantian* doctrine first prevailed in Germany: it was opposed at the same time to the system of Locke, as tending to materialism, and to the school of Leibnitz, as having reduced every thing to abstraction.

The ideas of Leibnitz[1] were lofty; but his disciples, Wolf

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[1] "Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz was born in 1646, at Leipsic, where his father was professor. Having chosen the law as his profession, he entered the university in 1661, and in 1663 he defended for his degree of doctor in philosophy his dissertation *de principio individui*, a theme well characteristic of the direction of his later philosophizing. He afterwards went to Jena, and subsequently to Altdorf, where he became doctor of laws. At Altdorf he was offered a professorship of jurisprudence, which he refused. The rest of his life was unsettled and desultory, spent for the most part in courts, where, as a versatile courtier, he was employed in the most varied duties of diplomacy. In the year 1672 he went to Paris, in order to induce Louis XIV to undertake the conquest of Egypt. He subsequently visited London, whence he was afterwards called to Hanover, as councillor of the Duke of Brunswick. He received later a post as librarian at Wolfenbüttel, between which place and Hanover he spent the most of his subsequent life, though interrupted with numerous journeys to Vienna, Berlin, etc. He was intimately associated with the Prussian Electress, Maria Charlotte, a highly talented woman, who surrounded herself with a circle of the most distinguished scholars of the time, and for whom Leibnitz wrote, at her own request, his *Theodicée*. In 1701, after Prussia had become a kingdom, an academy was established at Berlin, through his efforts, and he became its first president. Similar, but fruitless attempts were made by him to establish academies in Dresden and Vienna. In 1711 the title of imperial court councillor, and a baronage, was bestowed upon him by the Emperor Charles VI. Soon after, he betook himself to Vienna, where he remained a considerable period, and wrote his Monadology, at the solicitation of Prince Eugene. He died in 1716. Next to Aristotle, Leibnitz was the most highly gifted scholar that had ever lived; with the richest and most extensive learning, he united the highest and most penetrating powers of mind. Germany has reason to be proud of him, since, after Jacob Bœhme, he is the first philosopher of any note among the Germans. With him philosophy found a home in Germany. It is to be regretted that the great variety of his efforts and literary undertakings, together with his roving manner of life, prevented him from giving any connected exhibition of his philosophy. His views are for the most part developed only in brief and occasional writings and letters, composed frequently in the French language. It is hence not easy to state his philosophy in its internal connection, though none of his views are isolated, but all stand strictly connected with each other."—(Schwegler, *History of Philosophy*, translated by Seelye, pp. 312, 313.)—*Ed.*

at their head, encumbered them with logical and metaphysical forms. Leibnitz had said, that the notions which come by the senses are confused, and that those only which belong to the immediate perceptions of the mind are clear: without doubt his intention was to show by this that invisible truths are more certain and more in harmony with our moral being than all that we learn by the evidence of the senses. Wolf[1] and his disciples have drawn this consequence from it,—that every

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[1] "The philosophy of Leibnitz was taken up and subjected to a further revision by Christian Wolf. He was born in Breslau, in 1679. He was chosen professor at Halle, where he became obnoxious to the charge of teaching a doctrine at variance with the Scriptures, and drew upon himself such a violent opposition from the theologians of the university, that a cabinet order was issued for his dismissal on the 8th of November, 1723, and he was enjoined to leave Prussia within forty-eight hours, on pain of being hung. He then became professor in Marburg, but was afterwards recalled to Prussia by Frederic II, immediately upon his accession to the throne. He was subsequently made baron, and died 1754. In his chief thoughts he followed Leibnitz, a connection which he himself admitted, though he protested against the identification of his philosophy with that of Leibnitz, and objected to the name, *Philosophia Leibnitio-Wolfiana*, which was taken by his disciple Bilfinger. The historical merit of Wolf is threefold. First, and most important, he laid claim again to the whole domain of knowledge in the name of philosophy, and sought again to build up a systematic framework, and make an encyclopedia of philosophy in the highest sense of the word. Though he did not himself furnish much new material for this purpose, yet he carefully elaborated and arranged that which he found at hand. Secondly, he made again the philosophical method as such, an object of attention. His own method is, indeed, an external one as to its content, namely, the mathematical or the mathematico-syllogistical, recommended by Leibnitz; and by the application of this, his whole philosophizing sinks to a level formalism. (For instance, in his principles of architecture, the eighth proposition is—'a window must be wide enough for two persons to recline together conveniently,'—a proposition which is thus proved: 'we are more frequently accustomed to recline and look out at a window in company with another person than alone, and hence, since the builder of the house should satisfy the owner in every respect (§ 1), he must make a window wide enough for two persons conveniently to recline within it at the same time.') Still this formalism is not without its advantage, for it subjects the philosophical content to a logical treatment. Thirdly, Wolf has taught philosophy to speak German, an art which it has not since forgotten. Next to Leibnitz he is entitled to the merit of have made the German language forever the organ of philosophy."—(Schwegler, *History of Philosophy*, translated by Seelye, pp. 222, 223.)—*Ed.*

thing, about which our mind can be employed, must be reduced to abstract ideas. Kant carried interest and warmth into this lifeless idealism; he assigned to experience, as well as to the innate faculties, its just proportion; and the art with which he applied his theory to every thing that is interesting to mankind, to ethics, to poetry, and to the fine arts, extended its influence.

Three leading men, Lessing, Hemsterhuis, and Jacobi, preceded Kant in the career of philosophy. They had no school, because they founded no system; but they began the attack against the doctrine of the materialists. Of these three, Lessing is the one whose opinions on this point are the least decided; however, he had too enlarged a mind to be confined within the narrow circle which is so easily drawn, when we renounce the highest truths. Lessing's all-powerful polemics awoke doubt upon the most important questions, and led to new inquiries of every kind. Lessing himself cannot be considered either as a materialist or as an idealist; but the necessity of examination and study for the acquisition of knowledge, was the main-spring of his existence. "If the Almighty," said he, "held truth in one hand, and search after truth in the other, it is the latter I should ask of him in preference."

Lessing was not orthodox in religion. Christianity, in him, was not a necessary thing, like sentiment; and yet he was capable of admiring it philosophically. He understood its relations with the human heart, and he always considers opinions from a universal point of view. Nothing intolerant, nothing exclusive, is to be found in his writings. When we take our stand, in the centre of ideas, we never fail to have sincerity, depth, and extent of mind. Whatever is unjust, vain, and narrow, is derived from the desire of referring every thing to certain partial views, which we have taken and appropriated to ourselves, and which we make the objects of our self-love.

Lessing expresses in a pointed and positive style, opinions full of warmth. Hemsterhuis, a Dutch philosopher, was the first who, in the middle of the eighteenth century, showed, in his writings, the greater part of the liberal ideas, upon which

the new German school is founded. His works are also very remarkable, for the contrast which there is between the character of his style, and the thoughts which it conveys. Lessing is an enthusiast, with an ironical manner; Hemsterhuis, an enthusiast, with the language of a mathematician. Writers who devote the most abstract metaphysics to the defence of the most exalted systems, and who conceal the liveliness of imagination under the austerity of logic, are a phenomenon which is scarcely to be found, except among the German nations.

Men, who are always upon their guard against imagination, when they have it not are more ready to trust those writers who banish talent and sensibility from philosophical discussions, as if it were not, at least, as easy to be absurd, upon such subjects, with syllogism as with eloquence. For a syllogism, which always takes for its basis that such a thing is or is not, reduces the immense crowd of our impressions to a simple alternative in every case; while eloquence embraces them all together. Nevertheless, although Hemsterhuis has too frequently expressed philosophical truths in an algebraic manner, there is a moral sentiment, a pure love of the beautiful, in his writings, which cannot but be admired; he was one of the first to feel the union which exists between idealism, or (as I should rather say) the free-will of man, and the stoical ethics; and it is in this respect, above all, that the new doctrine of the Germans is of great importance.

Even before the writings of Kant had appeared, Jacobi had attacked the philosophy of sensation, and still more victoriously the system of morality founded upon interest. He did not confine himself strictly in his philosophy to abstract forms of reasoning. His analysis of the human soul is full of eloquence and of charms. In the following chapters, I shall examine the finest part of his works, that which relates to ethics; but, as a philosopher, he deserves separate honor. Better instructed than any one else in the history of ancient and modern philosophy, he devoted his studies to the support of the most simple truths. The first among the philosophers of his day,

he made religious feeling the foundation of our whole intellectual nature; and, it may be said, that he has only learnt the language of metaphysicians and the learned, to do homage, in it, to virtue and the Deity.

Jacobi[1] has shown himself the opposer of the philosophy of Kant, but he does not attack it as if he was himself the partisan of the philosophy of sensation.[2] On the contrary, his objection to Kant is, that he does not rely sufficiently upon the support of religion, considered as the only possible philosophy in those truths which are beyond the reach of experience.

The doctrine of Kant has met with many other opponents in Germany: but it has not been attacked by those who have not understood it, or by those who opposed the opinions of Locke and Condillac, as a complete answer to it. Leibnitz still retained too great an ascendency over the minds of his countrymen, for them not to pay respect to any opinion which was analogous to his. A long list of writers have, for ten years, been incessantly engaged in writing commentaries on the works of Kant. But at the present day, the German phi-

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[1] "Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi was born at Düsseldorf in 1743. His father destined him for a merchant. After he had studied in Geneva and become interested in philosophy, he entered his father's mercantile establishment, but afterwards abandoned this business, having been made chancellor of the exchequer and customs commissioner for Cleves and Berg, and also privy counsellor at Düsseldorf. In this city, or at his neighboring estate of Pempelfort, he spent a great part of his life devoted to philosophy and his friends. In the year 1804 he was called to the newly-formed Academy of Sciences in Munich. In 1807 he was chosen president of this institution, a post which he filled till his death in 1819. Jacobi had a rich intellect and an amiable character. Besides being a philosopher, he was also a poet and citizen of the world; and hence we find in his philosophizing an absence of strict logical arrangement and precise expression of thought. His writings are no systematic whole, but are occasional treatises written 'rhapsodically and in grasshopper gait,' for the most part in the form of letters, dialogues, and romances. 'It was never my purpose,' he says himself, 'to set up a system for the schools. My writings have sprung from my innermost life, and were the result of that which had taken place within me. In a certain sense I did not make them voluntarily, but they were drawn out of me by a higher power irresistible to myself.'"—(Schwegler, *Hist. of Philos.*, translated by Seelye, p. 271.)—*Ed.*

[2] This philosophy has, in Germany, generally received the name of *Empirical Philosophy.*

losophers, although agreeing with Kant as to the spontaneous activity of thought, have adopted each a system of his own on this point. In fact, who has not endeavored, according to his abilities, to understand himself? But, because man has given an innumerable variety of explanations of his nature, does it therefore follow that such a philosophical examination is useless? Certainly not. This variety itself is a proof of the interest which such an examination ought to inspire.

In our days, people would be glad to have done with the moral nature, and would readily pay its reckoning to hear no more of it. Some say, the language was fixed on such a day of such a month, and that, from this moment, the introduction of a new word would be a barbarism. Others affirm, that the rules of the drama were definitely settled in such a year, and that a genius who would now make any change in them, is wrong in not having been born before this year without appeal, in which every literary discussion, past, present, and future, was ended. At last, it has been decided in metaphysics above all, that since the days of Condillac it has been impossible to take a single step more, without erring. It is allowed that the physical sciences are making progress, because it cannot be denied; but, in the career of philosophy and literature, the human mind is to be obliged to incessantly run the ring of vanity around the same circle.

To remain attached to this experimental philosophy which offers a species of evidence, false in principle, although specious in form, is by no means to simplify the system of the universe. By considering every thing as not existing which is beyond the reach of our sensations, it is easy to give light enough to a system, the limits of which we ourselves prescribe; it is a work which depends upon the doer of it. But does every thing beyond these limits exist the less, because it is counted as nothing? The imperfect truth of speculative philosophy is ever much nearer to the essence of things, than that apparent lucidity which belongs to the art of shunning difficulties of a certain order. When one reads in the philosophical works of the last century these phrases so frequently repeated,

There is nothing true but that, Every thing else is chimerical, it puts one in mind of the well-known story of a French actor, who, before he would fight with a man much fatter than himself, proposed to chalk out on his adversary's body a line, the hits on the outside of which should go for nothing. Yet there was the same nature without that line as within it, and equally capable of receiving a mortal wound. In the same manner, those who place the Pillars of Hercules on the boundary of their horizon, cannot prevent the existence of a nature beyond their own, in which there exists a higher degree of life, than in the sphere of matter to which they would confine us.

The two most celebrated philosophers who have succeeded Kant, are Fichte and Schelling. They too pretended to simplify his system; but it was by putting in its place a philosophy still more transcendental than his, that they hoped to accomplish it.

Kant had, with a firm hand, separated the two empires of the soul and of the senses. This philosophical *dualism* was fatiguing to minds which love to repose in absolute ideas. From the days of the Greeks to our own, this axiom has often been repeated, that *All is one*, and the efforts of philosophers have always been directed to find in one single principle, either in the soul or in nature, an explanation of the world. I shall, nevertheless, venture to say, that it appears to me to be one of the titles which Kant's philosophy has to the confidence of enlightened men, that it affirms, what we feel to be the case, that there exists both a soul and an external nature, and that they act mutually one upon the other by such or such laws. I know not why a greater degree of philosophical elevation is to be found in the idea of one single principle, whether material or intellectual; there being one, or two, does not render the universe more easy of comprehension, and our feeling agrees better with those systems that acknowledge a distinction between physics and ethics.[1]

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[1] "The Kantian philosophy soon gained in Germany an almost undisputed rule. The imposing boldness of its standpoint, the novelty of its

Fichte and Schelling have divided between them the empire which Kant acknowledged to be a divided one, and each has chosen that his own half should be the whole. Both have gone out of the sphere of ourselves, and have been desirous of

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results, the applicability of its principles, the moral severity of its view of the world, and above all, the spirit of freedom and moral autonomy which appeared in it, and which was so directly counter to the efforts of that age, gained for it an assent as enthusiastic as it was extended. It aroused among all cultivated classes a wider interest and participation in philosophic pursuits, than had ever appeared in an equal degree among any people. In a short time it had drawn to itself a very numerous school: there were soon few German universities in which it had not had its talented representatives, while in every department of science and literature, especially in theology (it is the parent of theological rationalism), and in natural rights, as also in belles-lettres (*Schiller*), it began to exert its influence. Yet most of the writers who appeared in the Kantian school, confined themselves to an exposition or popular application of the doctrine as Kant had given it, and even the most talented and independent among the defenders and improvers of the critical philosophy (*e. g.*, *Reinhold*, 1758-1823; *Bardili*, 1761-1808; *Schulze*, *Beck*, *Fries*, *Krug*, *Bouterweck*), only attempted to give a firmer basis to the Kantian philosophy as they had received it, to obviate some of its wants and deficiences, and to carry out the standpoint of transcendental idealism more purely and consistently. Among those who carried out the Kantian philosophy, only two men, *Fichte* and *Herbart*, can be named, who made by their actual advance an epoch in philosophy; and among its opposers (*e. g.*, *Hamann*, *Herder*), only one, *Jacobi*, is of philosophic importance. These three philosophers are hence the first objects for us to consider. In order to a more accurate development of their principles, we preface a brief and general characteristic of their relation to the Kantian philosophy.

"1. Dogmatism has been critically annihilated by Kant; his Critick of Pure Reason had for its result the theoretical indemonstrableness of the three ideas of the reason, God, freedom, and immortality. True, these ideas which, from the standpoint of theoretical knowledge, had been thrust out, Kant had introduced again as postulates of the practical reason; but as postulates, as only practical premises, they possess no theoretic certainty, and remain exposed to doubt. In order to do away with this uncertainty, and this despairing of knowledge which had seemed to be the end of the Kantian Philosophy, *Jacobi*, a younger contemporary of Kant, placed himself upon the standpoint of the faith philosophy in opposition to the standpoint of criticism. Though these highest ideas of the reason, the eternal and the divine, cannot be reached and proved by means of demonstration, yet it is the very essence of the divine that it is indemonstrable and unattainable for the understanding. In order to be certain of the highest, of that which lies beyond the understanding, there is only one organ, viz., feeling. In feeling, therefore, in immediate knowledge, in faith,

rising to a knowledge of the system of the universe; very different in this from Kant, who has applied as much power of mind to show those things at the knowledge of which the human mind can never arrive, as to explain those which are within its reach.

No philosopher, however, before Fichte,[1] had extended the

Jacobi thought he had found that certainty which Kant had sought in vain on the basis of discursive thinking.

"2. While Jacobi stood in an antithetic relation to the Kantian philosophy, *Fichte* appears as its immediate consequence. Fichte carried out to its consequence the Kantian dualism, according to which the Ego, as theoretic, is subjected to the external world, while as practical, it is its master, or, in other words, according to which the Ego stands related to the objective world, now receptively and again spontaneously. He allowed the reason to be exclusively practical, as will alone, and spontaneity alone, and apprehended its theoretical and receptive relation to the objective world as only a circumscribed activity, as a limitation prescribed to itself by the reason. But for the reason, so far as it is practical, there is nothing objective except as it is produced. The will knows no being but only an ought. Hence the objective being of truth is universally denied, and the thing which is essentially unknown must fall away of itself as an empty shadow. 'Every thing which is, is the Ego,' is the principle of the Fichtian system, and represents at the same time the subjective idealism in its consequence and completion.

"3. While the subjective idealism of Fichte was carried out in the objective idealism of Schelling, and the absolute idealism of Hegel, there arose contemporaneously with these systems a third offshoot of the Kantian criticism, viz., the philosophy of *Herbart*. It had its subjective origin in the Kantian philosophy, but its objective and historic connection with Kant is slight. It breaks up all historic continuity, and holds an isolated position in the history of philosophy. Its general basis is Kantian, in so far as it makes for its problem a critical investigation of the subjective experience. We place it between Fichte and Schnelling."—(Schwegler, *Hist. of Philos.*, translated by Seelye, pp. 268–271.)—*Ed.*

[1] "Johann Gottlieb Fichte was born at Rammenau, in Upper Lusatia, 1762. A noblemau of Silesia became interested in the boy, and having committed him first to the instruction of a clergyman, he afterwards placed him at the high school at Schulpforte. In his eighteenth year, at Michaelmas, 1780, Fichte entered the university at Jena to study theology. He soon found himself attracted to philosophy, and became powerfully affected by the study of Spinoza. His pecuniary circumstances were straitened, but this only served to harden his will and his energy. In 1784 he became employed as a teacher in a certain family, and spent some time in this occupation with different families in Saxony. In 1787 he sought a place as country clergyman, but was refused on account of his religious opinions.

system of idealism with such scientific strictness; he makes the whole universe consist of the activity of mind. All that can be conceived, all that can be imagined, comes from mind; it is on account of this system that he has been suspected of un-

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He was now obliged to leave his fatherland, to which he clung with his whole soul. He repaired to Zurich, where, in 1788, he took a post as private tutor, and where also he became acquainted with his future wife, a sister's daughter of Klopstock. At Easter, 1790, he returned to Saxony, and taught privately at Leipsic, where he became acquainted with the Kantian philosophy, by means of lessons which he was obliged to give to a student. In the spring of 1791, we find him as private tutor at Warsaw, and soon after in Königsberg, where he resorted, that he might become personally acquainted with the Kant he had learned to revere. Instead of a letter of recommendation, he presented him his '*Critick of all Revelation*,' a treatise which Fichte composed in eight days. In this he attempted to deduce, from the practical reason, the possibility of a revelation. This is not seen purely apriori, but only under an empirical condition; we must consider humanity to be in a moral ruin so complete, that the moral law has lost all its influence upon the will, and all morality is extinguished. In such a case we may expect that God, as moral governor of the world, would give man, through the sense, some pure moral impulses, and reveal himself as lawgiver to them through a special manifestation determined for this end, in the world of sense. In such a case a particular revelation were a postulate of the practical reason. Fichte sought also to determine apriori the possible content of such a revelation. Since we need to know nothing but God, freedom, and immortality, the revelation will contain naught but these, and these it must contain in a comprehensible form, yet so that the symbolical dress may lay no claim to unlimited veneration. This treatise, which appeared anonymously in 1792, at once attracted the greatest attention, and was at first universally regarded as a work of Kant. It procured for its author, soon after, a call to the chair of philosophy at Jena, to succeed Reinhold, who then went to Kiel. Fichte received this appointment in 1793 at Zurich, where he had gone to consummate his marriage. At the same time he wrote and published, also anonymously, his '*Aids to Correct Views of the French Revolution*,' an essay which the governments never looked upon with favor. At Easter, 1794, he entered upon his new office, and soon saw his public call confirmed. Taking now a new standpoint, which transcended Kant, he sought to establish this, and carry it out in a series of writings (the *Wissenschaftslehre* appeared in 1794, the *Naturrecht* in 1796, and the *Sittenlehre* in 1798), by which he exerted a powerful influence upon the scientific movement in Germany, aided as he was in this by the fact that Jena was then one of the most flourishing of the German universities, and the resort of every vigorous head. With Goethe, Schiller, the brothers Schlegel, William von Humboldt, and Hufeland, Fichte was in close fellowship, though this was unfortunately broken after a few years. In 1795 he became associate editor of the '*Philosophical*

belief. He was heard to say, that, in his next lesson, he should create God, and the world was scandalized with reason at such an expression. What he meant by it was, that he should show how the idea of the Divinity arose, and was developed in the

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Journal,' which had been established by Niethammer. A fellow-laborer, Rector Forberg, at Saalfeld, offered for publication in this journal an article 'to determine the conception of religion.' Fichte advised the author not to publish it, but at length inserted it in the journal, prefacing it, however, with an introduction of his own '*On the ground of our faith in a divine government of the world*,' in which he endeavored to remove, or at least soften, the views in the article which might give offence. Both the essays raised a great cry of atheism. The Elector of Saxony confiscated the journal in his territory, and sent a requisition to the dukes Ernest, who held in common the university of Jena, to summon the author to trial and punishment. Fichte answered the edict of confiscation, and attempted to justify himself to the public (1799), by his '*Appeal to the Public. An essay which it is requested may be read before it is confiscated*;' while he defended his course to the government by an article entitled '*The Publishers of the Philosophical Journal justified from the charge of Atheism.*' The government of Weimar, being as anxious to spare him as it was to please the Elector of Saxony, delayed its decision. But as Fichte, either with or without reason, had privately learned that the whole matter was to be settled by reprimanding the accused parties for their want of caution; and, desiring either a civil acquittal or an open and proper satisfaction, he wrote a private letter to a member of the government, in which he desired his dismission in case of a reprimand, and which he closed with the intimation that many of his friends would leave the university with him, in order to establish together a new one in Germany. The government regarded this letter as an application for his discharge, indirectly declaring that the reprimand was unavoidable. Fichte, now an object of suspicion, both on account of his religious and political views, looked about him in vain for a place of refuge. The Prince of Rudolstadt, to whom he turned, denied him his protection, and his arrival in Berlin (1799) attracted great notice. In Berlin, where he had much intercourse with Frederick Schlegel, and also with Schleiermacher and Novalis, his views became gradually modified; the catastrophe at Jena had led him from the exclusive moral standpoint which he, resting upon Kant, had hitherto held, to the sphere of religion; he now sought to reconcile religion with his standpoint of the *Wissenshaftslehre*, and turned himself to a certain mysticism (the second form of the Fichtian theory). After he had privately taught a number of years in Berlin, and had also held philosophical lectures for men of culture, he was recommended (1805) by Beyme and Altenstein, chancellor of state of Hardenberg, to a professorship of philosophy in Erlangen, an appointment which he received together with a permit to return to Berlin in the winter, and hold there his philosophical lectures before the public. Thus, in the winter of 1807–8, while a French marshal was governor of Berlin,

mind of man. The principal merit of Fichte's philosophy is, the incredible attention that it implies; for he is not contented with referring every thing to the inward existence of man, to the ME which forms the basis of every thing; but he goes on to distinguish in this ME what is transitory and what is permanent. In fact, when we reflect on the operations of the understanding, we think ourselves eye-witnesses of our own thoughts; we think we see them pass before us like a stream, while the portion of self which is contemplating them is immovable. It often happens to those who unite an impassioned character to an observing mind, to see themselves suffer, and to feel within themselves a being superior to its own pain, which observes it, and reproves or pities it by turns.

We are subject to continual changes from the external circumstances of our life, and yet we always have the feeling of our identity. What is it, then, that attests this identity, if not the ME, always the same, which sees another ME modified by impressions from without pass before its tribunal?

It is to this immovable soul, the witness of the movable soul, that Fichte attributes the gift of immortality, and the power of creating, or (to translate more exactly), of *drawing to a focus in itself the image of the universe.* This system, which makes every thing rest on the summit of our existence, and places a pyramid on its point, is singularly difficult to follow. It strips our ideas of the colors which so well enable us to understand them; and the fine arts, poetry, the contemplation of nature,

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and while his voice was often drowned by the hostile tumults of the enemy through the streets, he delivered his famous '*Addresses to the German nation.*' Fichte labored most assiduously for the foundation of the Berlin university, for only by wholly transforming the common education did he believe the regeneration of Germany could be secured. As the new university was opened 1809, he was made in the first year dean of the philosophical faculty, and in the second was invested with the dignity of rector. In the 'war of liberation,' then breaking out, Fichte took the liveliest participation by word and deed. His wife had contracted a nervous fever by her care of the sick and wounded, and though she recovered, he fell a victim to the same disease. He died January 28, 1814, not having yet completed his fifty-second year."—(Schwegler, *Hist. of Philos.*, translated by Seelye, pp. 279-282.)—*Ed.*

disappear in abstractions, without any mixture of imagination or sensibility.

Fichte considers the exterior world only as a boundary of our existence, on which thought is at work. In his system this boundary is created by the soul itself, the activity of which is constantly exerted on the web it has formed. What Fichte has written upon the metaphysical ME is a little like the waking of Pygmalion's statue, which, touching alternately itself and the stone on which it was placed, says by turns, *This is I*, and *This is not I*. But when, taking the hand of Pygmalion, it exclaims, *This, too, is I!* then a question is raised of a sentiment which is much beyond the sphere of abstract ideas. Idealism, stripped of sentiment, has nevertheless the advantage of exciting, to the highest degree, the activity of the mind; but nature and love, by this system, lose all their charms; for, if the objects which we see, and the beings whom we love, are nothing but the works of our own ideas, it is man himself that may be considered as *the great celibate of worlds.*

It must be acknowledged, however, that the system of Fichte has two great advantages: the one is its Stoic morality, which admits of no excuses; for, every thing proceeding from ME, it is this ME alone which has to answer for the use it makes of the will: the other is an exercise of thought, at once so severe and so subtile that a man who had mastered the system, even though he should not adopt it, would have acquired a capacity of attention, and a sagacity in analysis, which would afterwards make any other kind of study a plaything to him.

In whatever manner the utility of metaphysics is judged of, it cannot be denied that it is the gymnastic of the mind. It is usual to set children on different kinds of wrestling in their earliest years, although it may never be necessary for them to fight in this manner. It may be truly said, that the study of the idealistic system of metaphysics is almost a certain means of developing the moral faculties of those who devote themselves to it. Thought, like every thing precious, resides at the bottom of ourselves; for on the surface there is nothing but folly and insipidity. But when men are early obliged to dive

into their own minds, and to see all that passes within them, they draw from thence a power and sincerity of judgment which are never lost.

For abstract ideas, Fichte has a mathematical head, like Euler or la Grange. He has a singular contempt for all expressions which in any manner relate to substance; existence even is too common a word for him. Being, principle, essence, are words scarcely airy enough to mark the subtile shades in his opinions. It might be said that he is afraid of coming in contact with realities, and is always shrinking from them. In reading his works, or conversing with him, one loses the consciousness of this world, and feels it necessary, like the ghosts described by Homer, to recall the remembrances of life.

Materialism absorbs the soul by degrading it; the idealism of Fichte, by exalting it, separates it from nature. In both extremes, sentiment, which is the real beauty of existence, has not the rank it deserves.

Schelling[1] has much more knowledge of nature and the fine

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[1] "Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling was born at Leonberg, in Wurtemberg, January 27th, 1775. With a very precocious development, he entered the theological seminary at Tübingen in his fifteenth year, and devoted himself partly to philology and mythology, but especially to Kant's philosophy. During his course as a student, he was in personal connection with Hölderlin and Hegel. Schelling came before the world as an author very early. In 1792 appeared his graduating treatise on the third chapter of Genesis, in which he gave an interesting philosophical signification to the Mosaic account of the fall. In the following year, 1793, he published in Paulus' *Memorabilia* an essay of a kindred nature, '*On the Myths and Philosophemes of the Ancient World.*' To the last year of his abode at Tübingen belong the two philosophical writings: '*On the Possibility of a Form for Philosophy*,' and '*On the Ego as a Principle of Philosophy, or on the Unconditioned in Human Knowledge.*' After completing his university studies, Schelling went to Leipsic as tutor to the Baron von Riedesel, but soon afterwards repaired to Jena, where he became the pupil and co-laborer of Fichte. After Fichte's departure from Jena, he became himself, 1798, teacher of philosophy there, and now began, removing himself from Fichte's standpoint, to develop more and more his own peculiar views. He published in Jena the *Journal of Speculative Physics*, and also, in compahy with Hegel, *the Critical Journal.* In the year 1803 he went to Würzburg as professor *ordinarius* of philosophy. In 1807 he repaired to Munich as member *ordinarius* of the newly established academy of sciences there.

arts than Fichte, and his lively imagination could not be satisfied with abstract ideas; but, like Fichte, his object is to reduce existence to a single principle. He treats with profound contempt all philosophers who admit two principles, and will not allow the name of philosophy to any system but that which unites every thing, and explains every thing. Unquestionably he is right in saying that this system would be the best; but where is it? Schelling pretends that nothing is more absurd than the form of expression, so commonly used, "the philosophy of Plato," "the philosophy of Aristotle." Should we say, "the geometry of Euler," "the geometry of la Grange?" There is but one philosophy, according to Schelling, or there is none. Certainly if by philosophy we only understand the enigma of the universe, we may say, with truth, that there is no philosophy.

The system of Kant appeared insufficient to Schelling, as it did to Fitche; because he acknowledges two natures, two sources of our ideas,—external objects, and the faculties of the soul. But, in order to arrive at this unity, so much desired; in order to get rid of this double life, physical and moral,

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The year after he became general secretary of the Academy of the plastic arts, and subsequently, when the university professorship was established at Munich, he became its incumbent. After the death of Jacobi, he was chosen president of the Munich Academy. In 1841 he removed to Berlin, where he has sometimes held lectures. For the last ten years Schelling has written nothing of importance, although he has repeatedly promised an exposition of his present system. By far the greater portion of his writings belongs to his early life. Schelling's philosophy is no completed system of which his separate works are the constituent elements; but, like Plato's, it has an historical development, a course of formative steps which the philosopher has passed through in his own life. Instead of systematically elaborating the separate sciences from the standpoint of his principle, Schelling has gone back repeatedly to the beginning again, seeking ever for new foundations and new standpoints, connecting these for the most part (like Plato) with some antecedent philosophemes (Fichte, Spinoza, New Platonism, Leibnitz, Jacob Bœhme, Gnosticism), which, in their order, he attempted to interweave with his system.

"Schelling died August 20th, 1854, at Ragaz, Switzerland, whither he had gone for the benefit of his health, which had long been declining.—(Schwegler, *Hist. of Philos.*, translated by Seelye, pp. 312–314.)—*Ed.*

which gives so much offence to the partisans of absolute ideas, Schelling refers every thing to nature, while Fitche makes every thing spring from the soul. Fitche sees nothing in nature but the opposite of soul: in his eyes it is only a limit or a chain, from which we are constantly to endeavor to free ourselves. The system of Schelling gives more rest, and greater delight, to the imagination; nevertheless it necessarily returns into that of Spinoza; but, instead of making the soul descend to the level of matter, which is the practice in our days, Schelling endeavors to raise matter up to the soul; and although his theory entirely depends upon physical nature, it is, nevertheless, a very idealistic one at bottom, and still more so in form.

The ideal and the real hold, in his language, the place of intelligence and matter, of imagination and experience; and it is in the reunion of these two powers in complete harmony, that, in his opinion, the unique and absolute principle of the organized universe consists. This harmony, of which the two poles and the centre form the image, and which is comprised in the number three, so mysterious from all time, supplies Schelling with the most ingenious applications. He believes it is to be found in the fine arts, as in nature; and his works on physical science are thought highly of, even by those learned men who confine themselves to the consideration of facts, and their results. Indeed, in examining the soul, he endeavors to demonstrate how sensations and intellectual conceptions are confounded in the sentiment which unites whatever is involuntary and reflective in both of them, and thus contains all the mystery of life.

What is most interesting in these systems is their developments. The first basis of the pretended explanation of the world is equally true, and equally false, in the greater number of theories; for all of them are comprised in the immense thought, which it is their object to embrace; but, in their application to the things of this world, these theories are very refined, and often throw great light on many particular objects.

Schelling, it cannot be denied, approaches nearly to the philosophers called Pantheists, that is, those who attribute to

nature the attributes of the Divinity. But what distinguishes him is, the astonishing sagacity with which he has managed to connect his doctrine with the arts and sciences; he is instructive, and requires thought, in all his observations, and the depth of his mind is surprising, particularly when he does not pretend to apply it to the secret of the universe; for no man can attain a superiority which cannot exist between beings of the same kind, at whatever distance they may be placed from each other.

To preserve religious ideas in the midst of the apotheosis of nature, the school of Schelling supposes that the individual within us perishes, but that the inward qualities which we possess, enter again into the great whole of the eternal creation. Such an immortality is terribly like death; for physical death itself is nothing but universal nature recalling to herself the gifts she had given to the individual.

Schelling draws from his system some very noble conclusions on the necessity of cultivating in the soul its immortal qualities, those which are in relation with the universe, and of despising every thing in us which relates to our circumstances alone. But are not the affections of the heart, and even conscience itself, allied to the relations of this life? In most situations we feel two distinct motions, that which unites us with the general order, and that which leads us to our particular interests; the sentiment of duty, and personality. The noblest of these motions is the universal. But it is exactly because we have an instinct which would preserve our existence, that it is beautiful to sacrifice it; it is because we are beings, whose centre is in ourselves, that our attraction towards the assemblage of all things is generous; in a word, it is because we exist individually and distinctly, that we can choose out and love one another. What then becomes of that abstract immortality which would strip us of our dearest recollections as mere accidental modifications?

Would you, they say in Germany, rise again in all your present circumstances? Would you be revived a baron, or a marquis? Certainly not. But who would not rise again a

mother or a daughter? and how could we be ourselves again, if we had no longer the same feelings of friendship? Vague ideas of reunion with nature will, in time, destroy the empire of religion over our souls; for religion is addressed to each of us individually. Providence protects us in all the details of our lot. Christianity is adapted to every mind, and sympathizes, like a confidential friend, with the wants of every heart. Pantheism, on the contrary, that is, nature deified, by inspiring religion for every thing, disperses it over the world, instead of concentrating it in ourselves.

This system has at all times had many partisans among philosophers. Thought is always tending, more and more, to generalization; and the labor of the mind, in extending its boundaries, is often taken for a new idea. We think we shall succeed in comprehending the universe as space, by always removing barriers, and setting difficulties farther from us without resolving them; and yet we are no nearer to the infinite. Sentiment alone reveals it to us, without explaining it.

What is truly admirable in German philosophy is the examination of ourselves to which it leads; it ascends even to the origin of the will, even to the unknown spring of the course of our life; and then penetrating the deepest secrets of grief and of faith, it enlightens and strengthens us. But all systems which aspire to the explanation of the universe, can hardly be analyzed with clearness by any expressions: words are not proper for ideas of this kind, and the consequence is, that, in making use of them, all things are overshadowed by the darkness which preceded the creation, not illuminated by the light which succeeded it. Scientific expressions, lavished on a subject in which every one feels that he is interested, are revolting to self-love. These writings, so difficult to comprehend, however serious one may be, give occasion to pleasantry; for mistakes are always made in the dark. It is pleasing to reduce, to a few leading and accessible assertions, that crowd of shades and restrictions which appear quite sacred to the author of them, but which the profane soon forget or confound.

The Orientalists have at all times been idealists, and Asia in no respect resembles the south of Europe. The excessive heat in the East leads to contemplation, like the excessive cold of the North. The religious systems of India are very melancholy and spiritualistic, while the people of the south of Europe have always had an inclination for rather a material kind of Paganism. The learned of England, who have travelled into India, have made deep researches about Asia; and Germans who have not had opportunities, like the princes of the Ocean, to inform themselves with their own eyes, have, by dint of study alone, arrived at very interesting discoveries on the religion, the literature, the languages, of the Asiatic nations; they have been led to think, from many indications, that supernatural light once shone upon the people of those countries, and that the traces of it still remain indelible. The philosophy of the Indians can be well understood only by the German idealists; a similarity of opinion assists them in comprehending it.

Frederick Schlegel, not contented with the knowledge of almost all the languages of Europe, has devoted unheard-of labors to acquiring the knowledge of the country which was the cradle of the world. The work which he has just published on the language and philosophy of the Indians, contains profound views and real information worthy the attention of enlightened men in Europe. He thinks, and many philosophers (in the number of whom Bailly may be reckoned) have maintained the same opinion, that a primitive people inhabited some parts of the world, and particularly Asia, at a period anterior to all the documents of history. Frederick Schlegel finds traces of this people in the intellectual culture of nations, and the formation of languages. He observes a remarkable resemblance between the leading ideas, and even the words which express them, among many nations of the world, even when, so far as we are informed by history, they have never had any connection with each other. Frederick Schlegel does not adopt the very generally received opinion, that men began in the savage state, and that their mutual wants, by degrees,

formed languages. Thus to attribute the development of the human mind and soul to our animal nature, is to give it a very gross origin, and reason combats the hypothesis, as much as imagination rejects it.

We can hardly conceive by what gradation it would be possible, from the cry of the savage, to arrive at the perfection of the Greek language; it would be said, that, in the progress necessary to traverse such an infinite distance, every step would cross an abyss; we see, in our days, that savages do not civilize themselves, and that it is from neighboring nations that they are taught, with great labor, what they themselves are ignorant of. One is much tempted, therefore, to think that a primitive nation did establish the human race; and whence was that people formed, if not from revelation? All nations have, at all times, expressed regret for the loss of a state of happiness which preceded the period in which they existed: whence arises this idea, so widely spread? will it be said, it is an error? Errors that are universal are always founded upon some truth, altered and disfigured perhaps, but based on facts concealed in the night of time, or some mysterious powers of nature.

Those who attribute the civilization of the human race to the effects of physical wants uniting men with one another, will have difficulty in explaining how it happens, that the moral culture of the most ancient nations is more poetical, more favorable to the fine arts, in a word, more nobly useless, in material relations, than all the refinements of modern civilization. The philosophy of the Indians is idealistic, and their religion mystical: certainly it is not the necessity of maintaining order in society, which has given birth to this philosophy, or to this religion.

Poetry has almost everywhere existed before prose; and the introduction of metres, rhythm, and harmony, is anterior to the rigorous precision, and consequently to the useful employment of languages. Astronomy has not been studied for the service of agriculture alone; but the Chaldeans, Egyptians, etc., carried their researches much beyond the practical

advantages to be derived from it; and the love of heaven and the worship of time are supposed to be shown in these profound and exact observations, respecting the divisions of the year, the courses of the stars, and the periods of their junction.

In China, the kings were the first astronomers of their country. They passed nights in contemplating the progress of the stars, and their royal dignity consisted in those exalted species of knowledge, and in those disinterested occupations, which raised them above the vulgar. The magnificent system, which considers civilization as having for its origin a religious revelation, is supported by an erudition, of which the partisans of the materialistic doctrines are seldom capable; to be wholly devoted to study, is to be almost an idealist already.

The Germans, accustomed to deep and solitary reflections, penetrate so far into truth, that, in my opinion, a man must be ignorant or conceited to despise any of their writings, without having long considered them. There were formerly many errors and superstitions, which were attributable to want of knowledge; but when, with the light of our times, and the immense labors of individuals, opinions are propounded which are beyond the circle of our daily experience, it is a cause of rejoicing to the human race; for its actual treasures are very scanty, at least if one may judge by the use made of it.

In reading the account which I have just given of the principal ideas of some of the German philosophers, their partisans, on the one hand, will discover, with reason, that I have noticed, very superficially, researches of great importance; and, on the other hand, the world will ask, of what use is all this? But of what use are the Apollo Belvedere, the pictures of Raphael, the tragedies of Racine? Of what use is every thing beautiful, if not to the soul? It is the same with philosophy; it is the beauty of thought, it attests the dignity of man, who is able to occupy himself with what is external and invisible, although whatever is gross in his nature would remove him from them.

I might cite many other names justly distinguished in the

career of philosophy; but it appears to me, that this sketch, however imperfect, is sufficient to serve as an introduction to the examination of the influence which the transcendental philosophy of the Germans has exercised over the development of the mind, and over the character and morality of the nation in which that philosophy prevails; and this, above all, is the object I propose to myself.

CHAPTER VIII.

INFLUENCE OF THE NEW GERMAN PHILOSOPHY OVER THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MIND.

Attention is, perhaps, the most powerful of all the faculties of the human mind; and it cannot be denied, that idealistic metaphysics strengthen it in a surprising manner. Buffon pretended that genius might be acquired by patience; that was saying too much; but the homage thus rendered to attention, under the name of patience, does great honor to a man of so brilliant an imagnination. Abstract ideas require great efforts of meditation; but when to them is joined the most exact and persevering observation of the inward actions of the will, the whole power of intelligence is at once employed. Subtilty is a great fault in the affairs of this world, but certainly the Germans are not suspected of it. The philosophical subtilty, which enables us to unravel the minutest threads of our thoughts, is exactly the best calculated to extend the genius; for a reflection, from which the sublimest inventions, the most astonishing discoveries may result, passes unperceived within us, if we have not acquired the habit of examining with sagacity the consequences and connections of ideas apparently the most remote from each other.

In Germany, a superior man seldom confines himself to one line. Goethe has made discoveries in science: Schelling is an

excellent writer; Frederick Schlegel, a poet full of originality. A great number of different talents cannot, perhaps, be united; but the view of the understanding ought to embrace every thing.

The new German philosophy is necessarily more favorable than any other to the extension of the mind; for, referring every thing to the focus of the soul, and considering the world itself as governed by laws, the type of which is in ourselves, it does not admit the prejudice which destines every man exclusively to such or such a branch of study. The idealists believe that an art, a science, or any other subject, cannot be understood without universal knowledge, and that from the smallest phenomenon up to the greatest, nothing can be wisely examined, or poetically depicted, without that elevation of mind which sees the whole, while it is describing the parts.

Montesquieu says, *that wit consists in knowing the resemblance of things which differ, and the difference of things which are alike.* If there could exist a theory which would teach a man how to become a wit, it would be that of the understanding as the Germans conceive it; there is none more favorable to ingenious approximations between external objects and the faculties of the mind; they are the different radii of the same centre. Most physical axioms correspond with moral truths; and universal philosophy, in a thousand ways, represents nature always the same, and always varying; reflected, at full length, in every one of her works, and giving the stamp of the universe to the blade of grass, as well as to the cedar.

This philosophy gives a singular attraction to all kinds of study. The discoveries which we make within ourselves are always interesting; but if it is true that they would enlighten us, on the mysteries even of a world created in our image, what curiosity do they not inspire! The conversation of a German philosopher, such as those I have named, calls to mind the dialogues of Plato; and when you question one of these men, upon any subject whatever, he throws so much light on it, that, in listening to him, you seem to think for the first time, if to think is, as Spinoza says, *to identify one's self with Nature by intelligence, and to become one with her.*

So many new ideas on literary and philosophical subjects have, for some years past, been in circulation in Germany, that a stranger might very well take a man, who should only repeat these ideas, for a superior genius. It has sometimes happened to me, to give men, ordinary enough in other respects, credit for prodigious minds, only because they had become familiarized with the system of the idealists, the aurora of a new life.

The faults for which the Germans are commonly reproached in conversation, slowness and pedantry, are remarked infinitely less in the disciples of the modern school; persons of the first rank, in Germany, have formed themselves, for the most part, according to good French manners; but now there is established among the philosophers and men of letters, a sort of education, also in good taste, although of quite another kind. True elegance is considered as inseparable from a poetical imagination, and love for the fine arts, and politeness, as united to knowledge, and to the appreciation of talents and natural qualities.

It cannot, however, be denied, that the new philosophical and literary systems have inspired their partisans with great contempt for those who do not understand them. The wit of the French always aims at humiliating by ridicule; its plan is to avoid the idea, in order to attack the person, and the substance, in order to laugh at the form. The Germans of the new school look upon ignorance and frivolity as diseases of prolonged infancy; they do not confine themselves to contests with strangers, but they attack each other with bitterness; and to hear them, one would suppose, that to possess a single additional degree, either of abstraction or of profundity, conferred a right to treat as vulgar and narrow-minded all those who would not or could not attain it.

When men's minds are irritated by obstacles, exaggeration is mixed with that philosophical revolution, which, in other respects, is so salutary. The Germans of the new school penetrate into the interior of the soul, with the torch of genius. But when they are required to introduce their ideas into the minds of others, they are at a loss for the means, and begin to

affect contempt for their hearers, because they are ignorant, not of the truth itself, but of the means of imparting it. Contempt, except for vice, argues almost always a limited mind: for, with a greater share of understanding, we could make ourselves understood even by vulgar minds, or at least we might sincerely endeavor to do so.

The talent of methodical and clear expression is very rare in Germany: it is not acquired by speculative studies. We must, thus to speak, place ourselves without our own thoughts, to judge of the form which should be given to them. Philosophy teaches the knowledge of man, rather than of men. Habits of society alone teach us the relation our minds bear to those of others. Sincere and serious philosophers are led, first by candor, and then by pride, to feel irritated against those who do not think or feel as they do. The Germans seek for truth conscientiously; but they have a very warm spirit of party in favor of the doctrine which they adopt; for, in the heart of man, every thing degenerates into passion.

But notwithstanding the diversity of opinions, which, in Germany, form schools in opposition to one another, they tend equally, for the most part, to develop activity of soul; so that there is no country where every man makes more advantage of himself, at least in regard to intellectual labors.

CHAPTER IX.

INFLUENCE OF THE NEW GERMAN PHILOSOPHY ON LITERATURE AND THE ARTS.

What I have just said on the development of the mind, is also applicable to literature; yet it may be interesting to add some particular observations to these general reflections.

In those countries where it is supposed that all our ideas have their origin in external objects, it is natural to set a higher

value on the observance of graces or forms, the empire of which is placed without us; but where, on the other hand, men feel convinced of the immutable laws of moral existence, society has less power over each individual; men treat of every thing with themselves; and what is deemed essential, as well in the productions of thought as in the actions of life, is the assurance that they spring from inward conviction and spontaneous feeling.

There are, in style, some qualities which are connected with the very truth of the sentiment, and there are others which depend on grammatical correctness. It would be difficult to make the Germans understand, that the first thing to look for in a work is the manner in which it is written, and that the execution of it should be of more importance than the conception. In experimental philosophy, a work is esteemed, above all things, according to the ingenious and lucid form under which it is presented; in the idealistic philosophy, on the contrary, where all attraction is in the focus of the mind, those writers only are admired who approach the nearest to that point.

It must be admitted, too, that the habit of searching into the most hidden mysteries of our being, gives inclination for what is deepest, and sometimes for what is most obscure in thought. Thus the Germans too often blend metaphysics with poetry.

The new philosophy inspires us with the necessity of rising to thoughts and sentiments without bounds. This impulse may be favorable to genius, but it is so to genius alone, and it often gives to those who are destitute of genius very ridiculous pretensions. In France, mediocrity finds every thing too powerful and too exalted; in Germany, it finds nothing so high as the new doctrine. In France, mediocrity laughs at enthusiasm; in Germany, it despises a certain sort of reason. A writer can never do enough to convince German readers that his ideas are not superficial, that he is occupied, in all things, with the immortal and the infinite. But as the faculties of the mind are not always correspondent to such vast desires, it often

happens that gigantic efforts produce but common results. Nevertheless, this general disposition assists the flight of thought; and it is easier, in literature, to set bounds, than to give emulation.

The taste which the Germans show for what is playful and simple, and of which I have already had occasion to speak, seems to be in contradiction with their inclination for metaphysics, an inclination which arises from the desire of knowing and of analyzing one's self; nevertheless, it is to the influence of a system that we are to refer this taste for playful simplicity; for, in Germany, there is philosophy in every thing, even in the imagination. One of the first characteristics of simplicity is to express what is felt or thought, without reflecting on any result, or aiming at any object; and it is in this respect that it agrees with the theory of the Germans on literature.

In separating the beautiful from the useful, Kant clearly proves that it is not in the nature of the fine arts to give lessons. Undoubtedly, every thing that is beautiful ought to give birth to generous sentiments, and these sentiments excite to virtue; but when the object is to put in proof a precept of morality, the free impression produced by masterpieces of art is necessarily destroyed; for the object aimed at, whatever it may be, when it is known, limits and confines the imagination. It is related, that Louis XIV once said to a preacher, who had directed a sermon against him, "I am ready enough to take to myself my share, but I will not have it allotted to me." These words might be applied to the fine arts in general: they ought to elevate the soul, and not to indoctrinate it.

Nature often displays her magnificence without any aim, and often with a profuseness, which the partisans of utility would call prodigal. She seems to delight in giving more splendor to the flowers, to the trees of the forest, than to the vegetables which serve for the food of man. If what is useful held the first rank in nature, would she not adorn the nutritious plants with more charms than roses, which are only beautiful? And whence comes it, that to deck the altar of

the Divinity with flowers which are useless, should be preferred to doing it with the productions which are necessary to us? How happens it, that what serves for the support of our lives, has less dignity than beauties which have no object? It is because the beautiful recalls to our minds an immortal and divine existence, the recollection and the regret of which live at the same time in our hearts.

It certainly is not from a want of understanding the moral value of what is useful that Kant has separated it from the beautiful: it is to ground admiration of every kind on absolute disinterestedness; it is in order to give sentiments which render vice impossible, the preference over the lessons which only serve to correct it.

The mythological fables of the ancients were seldom intended as moral exhortations or edifying examples, and it does not at all argue that the moderns are better than the ancients that they oftener endeavor to give a useful result to their fictions; it is rather because they have less imagination, and carry into literature the habit which business gives, of always aiming at some object. Events, as they exist in reality, are not calculated beforehand, like a fiction, the winding up of which is moral. Life itself is conceived in quite a poetical manner; for it is not, in general, because the guilty man is punished and the virtuous man rewarded that it makes a moral impression upon us; it is because it develops in the mind indignation against the guilty, and enthusiasm for the virtuous.

The Germans do not, according to the common notion, consider the imitation of nature as the principal object of art; it is ideal beauty which appears to them the principle of all masterpieces, and their poetical theory accords, in this respect, with their philosophy. The impression made on us by the fine arts has nothing whatever in common with the pleasure we feel from any imitation; man has in his soul innate sentiments which real objects will never satisfy, and it is to these sentiments that the imagination of painters and poets gives form and life. Of what is music, the first of all arts, an imitation? And yet, of all the gifts of the Divinity, it is the most noble,

for it may be said to be a superfluous one. The sun gives us light, we breathe the air of a serene atmosphere, all the beauties of nature are, in some way, serviceable to man; music alone has a noble inutility, and it is for this reason that affects us so deeply; the more it is without an object, the nearer it approaches to that inward source of our thoughts, which application to any object whatever checks in its course.

The literary theory of the Germans differs from all others in not subjecting writers to customs, nor to tyrannical restrictions. It is a creative theory, a philosophy of the fine arts, which, instead of confining them, seeks, like Prometheus, to steal fire from heaven to give it to the poets. Did Homer, Dante, or Shakspeare, I shall be asked, know any thing of all this? Did they stand in need of all this metaphysical reasoning to be great writers? Nature, undoubtedly, has not waited for philosophy, which means only, that the fact preceded the observation of the fact; but, as we have reached the epoch of theories, should we not be on our guard against those which may stifle talent?

It must, however, be allowed, that many essential inconveniences result from the application of these systems of philosophy to literature. German readers, accustomed to peruse Kant, Fichte, etc., consider a less degree of obscurity as clearness itself; and writers do not always give to works of art that striking clearness which is so necessary to them. Constant attention may, nay, ought to be exacted where abstract ideas are the subject; but emotions are involuntary. In the enjoyment of the arts, indulgence, effort, and reflection can have no place: what we have to deal with there is pleasure, and not reasoning; philosophy may require attentive examination, but poetical talent ought to carry us away with it.

Ingenious ideas, derived from theories, cause illusion as to the real nature of talent. They prove, with wit, that such or such a piece ought not to have pleased, but still it did please; and then they begin to despise those who like it. They prove that another piece, composed according to certain principles, ought to interest, and yet, when they would have it performed,

when they say to it, *Arise, and walk*, the piece does not go off; and then they despise those who are not amused with a work composed according to the laws of the ideal and the real. People are generally wrong when they find fault with the judgment of the public in the arts, for popular impressions are more philosophical than even philosophy itself; and when the ideas of men of information do not agree with this impression, it is not because they are too profound, but rather because they are not deep enough.

It appears to me, however, infinitely better for the literature of a country that its poetical system should be founded upon philosophical notions, even if they are a little abstract, than upon simple external rules; for these rules are only barriers to prevent children from falling.

In their imitation of the ancients, the Germans have taken quite a different direction from the rest of Europe. The conscientious character, from which they never depart, has prevented their mixing together modern and ancient genius: they treat fiction in some respects like truth, for they find means to be scrupulous even in regard to that; they apply the same disposition to acquire an exact and thorough knowledge of the monuments which are left us of past ages. In Germany, the study of antiquity, like that of the sciences and of philosophy, unites the scattered branches of the human mind.

Heyne, with a wonderful quickness of apprehension, embraces every thing that relates to literature, to history, and to the fine arts. From the most refined observations Wolf draws the boldest inferences, and, disdaining all submission to authority, adopts an opinion of his own of the worth and authenticity of the writings of the Greeks. In a late composition by M. Ch. de Villers, whom I have already mentioned with the high esteem he deserves, it may be seen what immense works are published every year in Germany on the classical authors. The Germans believe themselves called in every thing to act the part of observers; and it may be said that they are not of the age they live in, so much do their reflections and inclinations turn towards another epoch of the world.

It may be that the best time for poetry was during the age of ignorance, and that the youth of the human race is gone forever; but, in the writings of the Germans, we seem to feel a new youth again reviving and springing up from the noble choice which may be made by those to whom every thing is known. The age of light has its innocence as well as the golden age, and if man, during his infancy, believes only in his soul, he returns, when he has learnt every thing, to confide in nothing else.

CHAPTER X.

INFLUENCE OF THE NEW PHILOSOPHY ON THE SCIENCES.

There is no doubt that the ideal philosophy leads to the augmentation of knowledge, and by disposing the mind to turn back upon itself, increases its penetration and perseverance in intellectual labor. But is this philosophy equally favorable to the sciences, which consist in the observation of nature? It is for the examination of this question that the following reflections are designed.

The progress of the sciences in the last century has generally been attributed to the experimental philosophy, and as the observation is of great importance to this subject, men have been thought more certain of attaining to scientific truths in proportion as they attached more importance to external objects; yet the country of Kepler and Leibnitz is not to be despised for science. The principal modern discoveries, gunpowder and the art of printing, have been made by the Germans; and, nevertheless, men's minds in Germany have always tended towards idealism.

Bacon compared speculative philosophy to the lark, that mounts to the sky, and descends again without bringing any thing back from her flight; and experimental philosophy to the falcon, that soars as high, but returns with his prey.

Perhaps in our days Bacon would have felt the inconveniences of the purely experimental philosophy; it has turned thought into sensation, morality into self-interest, and nature into mechanism; for it tends to degrade all things. The Germans have combated its influence in the physical sciences, as well as in science of a higher order; and while they submit Nature to the fullest observation, they consider her phenomena, in general, in a vast and animated manner: the empire of an opinion over the imagination always affords a presumption in its favor; for every thing tells us, that the beautiful, in the sublime conception of the universe, is also the true.

The new philosophy has already exerted its influence, in many respects, over the physical sciences in Germany. In the first place, the same spirit of universality, which I have remarked in literary men and philosophers, also discovers itself among the men of science. Humboldt[1] relates, like an accu-

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"Frederick Henry Alexander von Humboldt was born in Berlin, September 14, 1769. His father, Major von Humboldt, held the office of Chamberlain to Frederick the Great, and the early years of the son were passed under the tuition of Campe, on the paternal estate at Tegel, near Berlin. In 1786, when in his sixteenth year, Alexander entered the University of Frankfort-on-the-Oder, with his brother William; remained in that institution for two years, and was then transferred to the University of Göttingen. In the latter, he made the acquaintance of the naturalists Blumenbach and Forster, and through the friendship of those distinguished men, was enabled to cultivate his natural tastes for scientific study. The brothers quitted college in 1789. William had conceived a fancy for political life, and departed for Paris. Alexander, whose education had been especially directed with a view to employment in the government mines, followed the bent of his inclinations for travel and discovery, and, in company with Forster, made his first scientific journey to the Rhine, through Holland, and to England, early in the ensuing year. His first literary production, *Mineralogical Observations on some Basaltic Formations of the Rhine*, was the fruit of this journey. Returning home, he was sent to Hamburg to acquire a knowledge of commercial affairs, studied book-keeping at an Institute, afterwards removed to Freeburg, and became a student in the Mining Academy, where he remained until 1792. In that year, at the age of twenty-three years, he was appointed Superintendent of Mines in Franconia, an office which he held for three years. During this period, he zealously prosecuted his mineralogical and botanical studies, and made various experiments on the physical and chemical laws of metallurgy. In 1795, he resigned his office, in order to devote himself to the subjects of

rate observer, the perilous travels which he undertook like a brave chevalier; and his writings are equally interesting to naturalists and to poets. Schelling, Bader, Schubert, etc., have published works, in which the sciences are presented

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scientific research which had always been present to his mind. The plan of his great American journey seems to have been suggested during the period of his early intimacy with Forster; and having freed himself from the cares of public duty, he set himself in earnest to the necessary preparations for that expedition. The first step was a series of scientific explorations in different parts of Europe, undertaken with a view to enlarging his experience and improving his powers of observation. He made several visits to Switzerland and the mountains of Silesia, and afterwards assumed the burden of an official visit to Prussian Poland. This yearning desire to see strange lands and to devote himself to scientific exploration, is well described by himself in the opening chapter of his *Personal Narrative:*

"'From my earliest youth, I felt an ardent desire to travel into distant regions, seldom visited by Europeans. This desire is characteristic of a period of our existence when life appears an unlimited horizon, and when we find an irresistible attraction in the impetuous agitation of the mind, and the image of positive danger. Though educated in a country which has no direct communication with either the East or the West Indies, living amid mountains remote from coasts, and celebrated for their numerous mines, I felt an increasing passion for the sea and distant expeditions. Objects with which we are acquainted only by the animated narratives of travellers have a peculiar charm; imagination wanders with delight over that which is vague and undefined; and the pleasures we are deprived of seem to possess a fascinating power, compared with which all we daily feel in the narrow circle of sedentary life appears insipid.'

"Serious preparations for the journey to America were not possible, in consequence of family causes, the death of his mother, and the disposition of the paternal estates, until the year 1797. In that year Humboldt supplied himself with ample means for his new enterprise by the sale of the large inheritance which had fallen to him, and set out with his brother for a preliminary journey to Italy. On reaching Vienna, however, further progress was found to be impracticable, in consequence of the war then raging between France and Austria, and Alexander passed the winter of 1797-8 in Salzburg. In the following spring, receiving intelligence of the contemplated expedition of Baudin, intended for the exploration of the Southern Hemisphere, he hastened to Paris, but was again fated to meet with disappointment. The expedition was abandoned, and Humboldt saw no immediate prospect of carrying his enterprise into effect. During his stay in Paris, on this occasion, however, fortune favored him in one respect. He became acquainted with Bonpland, his future companion to South America, who had been appointed to the *corps* of naturalists to accompany Baudin's expedition. A close friendship sprang up between Bonpland and Humboldt. They entered together on a career of preparatory study and

under a point of view that captivates both our reflection and our imagination; and, long previous to the existence of modern metaphysicians, Kepler and Haller knew the art of observing Nature, and at the same time of conjecturing her operations.

Humboldt united at the same time with the celebrated Gay-Lussac in a series of experiments on the atmosphere. In the fall of 1798, Humboldt, accompanied by Bonpland, went to Marseilles with the intention of embarking for Egypt, to join the scientific *corps* which accompanied the army of Napoleon. But another disappointment awaited him. The Swedish frigate in which he had been offered a passage, had been delayed by a storm, had put into a Portuguese port to repair damages, and could not sail until the following spring. After a delay of two months, the two friends, disliking the prospect of inaction in Marseilles, resolved to spend the winter in Spain, and proceeded to Madrid, taking astronomical and barometrical observations by the way.

"This journey to Madrid proved a hit. After three successive disappointments, Humboldt found himself in a position far better than any he had hoped for. The prime minister, Urquizo, a man of enlightened sagacity, lent a willing ear to the memorial presented by the disappointed traveller, supported the project, overcame obstacles, and obtained for Humboldt enlarged privileges for undertaking a voyage to the New World and the Phillipine Islands. 'Never,' says Humboldt, 'had so extensive a permission been granted to any traveller, and never had any foreigner been honored with more confidence on the part of the Spanish government.' Humboldt, accompanied by Bonpland, left Madrid in May, 1799, for Corunna, where the corvette *Pizarro* lay, ready to receive him. The vessel was bound to Havana and Mexico, but her captain received orders to touch at the Canaries, and allow the travellers time to ascend the Peak of Teneriffe. Humboldt was now thirty years of age. The delays and disappointments which he had been compelled to encounter, had not only better fitted him for the task he had undertaken, by affording him leisure to enlarge his stock of knowledge, but had furnished him, in Bonpland, an able assistant and a fast friend. Humboldt has touchingly recorded his sensations, as he found himself fairly in the way of realizing the hopes of years. The vessel touched at the Canaries, the travellers ascended the Peak, recorded their observations, narrowly escaped capture by British vessels, and departed for Havana. A malignant fever which broke out on shipboard, however, occasioned a change in the destination. The vessel bore away for Venezuela, and the travellers met a favorable reception in that province, where they arrived in July, 1799. They immediately began their explorations, the history of which is familiar. The exploration of the Orinoco, from which so many interesting discoveries resulted, was undertaken in November following. Some months were passed in general observations upon the sea-coast, but in February, 1800, Humboldt, still accompanied by Bonpland, struck into the interior, traversing vast plains under a heat so intense that the journey was made chiefly by night, and on the 4th of April,

The attraction of society is so great in France, that it allows nobody much time for labor. It is natural then not to place reliance upon those who attempt to unite many studies of different kinds. But, in a country where the whole life of a man

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after enduring extraordinary hardships, entered the Orinoco. On the 10th of April the travellers began a canal exploration of that river, voyaged on the Rio Negro and the Cassiquiare, and finally reached the tributary streams of the Amazon. The extension of this voyage to the mouth of the Amazon was fortunately relinquished; else the travellers had fallen into the hands of the Brazilian officials, who had received orders from the jealous government to seize them and transport them to Lisbon. The little party started on its return on the 10th of May, and arrived at Angostura on the 16th of the following June. Thence they sailed for Havana, where they arrived in the middle of December. Tidings of the departure of Baudin's expedition from France reached Humboldt during his sojourn in Cuba, and he determined to sail for Carthagena, cross the Isthmus to the Pacific, and await the arrival of the expedition at Lima or Valparaiso. This journey gave occasion for the famous travels among the Andes. Reaching Carthagena on the 30th of March, 1801, Humboldt relinquished his purpose of proceeding across the Isthmus to Panama, and chose instead the route to Guayaquil, by way of Bogota and Quito. This change of direction gave him opportunity to trace the map of the Rio Magdalena. On the 22d of June, the ascent of Chimborazo was made. The next step was the exploration of the chain of the Andes, undertaken after the reception of further news from the unlucky expedition of Baudin, which, after all, altered its course, and did not touch at Chili or Peru. A visit to Mexico followed, and its results are recorded in Humboldt's volume on *New Spain*. In January, 1804, having completed the objects of their journey, Humboldt and Bonpland turned their faces homeward, making a brief trip of a few weeks through the United States, visiting Washington, Philadelphia, and New York, and sailing from this port for Bordeaux, where he arrived in August, 1804, after an absence of nearly five years. In the spring of 1805, he accompanied his sister-in-law to Rome, and spent part of the ensuing summer at Albano, with his brother Wilhelm. Their society was at that time still further enriched by the presence of Madame de Staël, Schlegel, and Sismondi. An anticipated eruption of Vesuvius led him to Naples, in company with Gay-Lussac, and he was fortunate in being able to witness the grand outbreak of the 12th of August. After completing his observations, he proceeded to Berlin, and did not return to Paris until 1807, when he established himself there permanently, to superintend the publication of his works.

"Humboldt's journey through Russia, Siberia, and Tartary, was his next great enterprise. It was begun in the year 1828. His companions were Ehrenberg and Rose. The results were, like those of his American journey, extremely valuable to the science of physical geography. At his suggestion a regular system of meteorological observations was established

may be given up to meditation, it is reasonable to encourage the multifariousness of knowledge; the student eventually confines his attention to that pursuit which he prefers; but it is, perhaps, impossible to attain a thorough comprehension of one science, and not to touch upon all. Sir Humphry Davy, although the first chemist in England, studies literature with as much taste as success. Literature and science reflect alternate light upon each other; and the connection which exists between all the objects in nature, must also be maintained among the ideas of man.

Universality of knowledge necessarily leads to the desire of discovering the general laws of the order of nature. The Germans descend from theory to experience; while the French ascend from experience to theory. The French reproach the Germans with having no beauties but those of detail in their literature, and with not understanding the composition of a work. The Germans reproach the French with considering

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in Russia by order of the emperor; and during the twelve years which elapsed between the publication of his *Asiatic Fragments* (1831), and his *Central Asia* (1843), Humboldt was in constant communication with Russia, and was regularly furnished with the results of the system of observation which he had instituted.

"In September, 1830, Humboldt was sent to Paris by Frederick William III, with a diplomatic mission to acknowledge Louis Phillippe and the new dynasty. He was sent a second time in 1831, and on his return visited Weimar, and spent a few hours with Goethe, whose death occurred six months afterwards. In the year 1835, he was called to mourn the loss of his brother William, who died on the 8th of April, and whose literary executor he became.

"Since 1842, Humboldt has resided chiefly in Berlin, devoting himself to science and carrying on an enormous correspondence, which continued nearly down to the day of his death, May 6, 1859. The frequent acknowledgments of the labors of the young generation of scientific men, which have appeared from his pen, within the last four or five years, are a sufficient indication of his untiring zeal and well-preserved age. His elaborate work on physical science, entitled *Kosmos*, was interrupted in 1828, but resumed in 1842 on an enlarged scale, and occupied much of his time during his late years. Five volumes of this production have been published. His other principal works were his magnificent *Collections* on all subjects of science, published at great cost; the *Personal Narrative*, *Views of Nature*, *Views in the Cordilleras*, *New Spain*, *Journey to the Ural*, and *Central Asia*."—*Ed.*

only particular facts in the sciences, and with not referring them to a system; in this consists the principal difference between the learned men of the two countries.

In fact, if it were possible to discover the principles which govern the universe, this would be the point, indisputably, from which we ought to commence in studying all that is derived from those principles; but we are almost entirely ignorant of the collective character of every thing, excepting in what detail teaches us; and nature is for man but the scattered Sibyl's leaves, out of which, even to this day, no human being has been able to compose a book. Nevertheless, the learned men of Germany, who are philosophers at the same time, diffuse a surprising interest over the contemplation of the phenomena of this world: they do not examine nature fortuitously, according to the accidental course of what they experience; but they predict, by reflection, what observation is about to confirm.

Two great general opinions serve them for guides in studying the sciences: the one, that the universe is made after the model of the human soul; the other, that the analogy of every part of the universe with the whole is so close, that the same idea is constantly reflected from the whole in every part, and from every part in the whole.

That is a fine conception, which has a tendency to discover the resemblance between the laws of the human understanding and those of nature, and considers the physical world as the representation of the moral. If the same genius was capable of composing the Iliad and of carving like Phidias, the Jupiter of the sculptor would resemble the Jupiter of the poet. Why then should not the supreme Intelligence, which formed nature and the soul, have made one the emblem of the other? There is no vain play of fancy in those continual metaphors, which aid us in comparing our sentiments with external phenomena; sadness, with the clouded heaven; composure, with the silver moonlight; anger, with the stormy sea: it is the same thought of our Creator, transfused into two different languages, and capable of reciprocal interpretation. Almost

all the axioms of physics correspond with the maxims of morals. This species of parallel progress, which may be perceived between the world and the intellect, is the indication of a great mystery; and every mind would be struck with it, if any positive discoveries had yet been drawn from this source; but still, the uncertain lustre that already streams from it carries our views to a great distance.

The analogies between the different elements of physical nature constitute the chief law of the creation,—variety in unity, and unity in variety. For example, what is there more astonishing than the connection between sounds and forms, and between sounds and colors? A German, Chladni, has lately proved by experiment that the vibrations of sound put grains of sand upon a glass plate in motion after such a manner, that when the tones are pure the sand arranges itself into regular forms, and when the tones are discordant there is no symmetry in the figures traced upon the glass. Sanderson, who was blind from his birth, said that the color of scarlet, in his idea, was like the sound of a trumpet; and a savant has wished to make a harpsichord for the eyes, which might imitate, by the harmony of colors, the pleasure excited by music. We incessantly compare painting to music, and music to painting, because the emotions we feel discover analogies where cold observation would see only differences. Every plant, every flower, contains the entire system of the universe; an instant of life conceals eternity within it; the weakest atom is a world, and the world itself, perchance, is but an atom. Every portion of the universe appears to be a mirror, in which the whole creation is represented; and we hardly know which is most worthy of our admiration, thought always the same, or form always different.

The learned among the Germans may be divided into two classes, those who entirely devote themselves to observation, and those who aspire to the honor of foreseeing the secrets of nature. Of the former we ought first to mention Werner, who has drawn from mineralogy his knowledge of the formation of the globe, and of the epochs of its history; Herschel and

Schroeter, who are incessantly making new discoveries in the heavenly regions; the calculating astronomers, such as Zach and Bole; and great chemists, like Klaproth and Bucholz; while in the class of philosophical naturalists we must reckon Schelling, Ritter, Bader, Steffens, etc. The most distinguished minds of these two classes approach and understand each other; for the philosophical naturalists cannot despise experience, and the profound observers do not deny the possible results of sublime contemplations.

Attraction and impulse have already been the objects of novel inquiry, and they have been happily applied to chemical affinities. Light, considered as a medium between matter and mind, has given occasion for several highly philosophical observations. A work of Goethe upon colors is favorably mentioned. In short, throughout Germany emulation is excited by the desire and the hope of uniting experimental and speculative philosophy, and thus enlarging our knowledge of man and of nature.

Intellectual idealism makes the will, which is the soul, the centre of every thing: the principle of idealism in physical sciences is life. Man reaches the highest degree of analysis by chemistry as he does by reasoning; but life escapes him in chemistry, as sentiment does in reasoning. A French writer had pretended that *thought was only a material product of brain.* Another savant has said, that when we are more advanced in chemistry we shall be able to tell *how life is made:* the one outraged nature, as the other outraged the soul.

We must, said Fichte, *comprehend what is incomprehensible, as such.* This singular expression contains a profound meaning: we must feel and recognize what will ever remain inaccessible to analysis, and what the soaring flight of thought alone can approach.

Three distinct modes of existence are thought to have been discovered in nature: vegetation, irritability, and sensibility. Plants, animals, and men are included in these three sorts of life, and if we choose to apply even to individuals of our own species this ingenious division, we shall find it equally discern-

ible among their different characters. Some vegetate like plants; others enjoy themselves, or are irritated like animals; and the more noble possess and display the qualities that distinguish human nature. However this may be, volition, which is life, and life, which also is volition, comprehend all the secret of the universe and of ourselves; and at this secret (as we can neither deny nor explain it) we must necessarily arrive by a kind of divination.

What an exertion of strength would it not require to overturn, with a lever made upon the model of the arm, the weight which the arm uplifts! Do we not see every day anger, or some other affection of the soul, augmenting, as by a miracle, the power of the human body? What, then, is this mysterious power of nature, which manifests itself by the will of man? and how, without studying its cause and effects, could we make any important discovery in the theory of physical powers?

The doctrine of the Scotch writer, Brown, more profoundly analyzed in Germany than elsewhere,[1] is founded upon this same system of central action and unity, which is so fruitful in its consequences. Brown believed that a state of suffering, or of health, did not depend upon partial evils, but upon the intensity of the vital principle, which is lowered or exalted according to the different vicissitudes of existence.

Among the English learned, there is hardly one, besides Hartley, and his disciple Priestley, who has considered metaphysics, as well as physics, under a point of view entirely material. It will be said that physics can be only material; I presume not to be of this opinion. Those who make the soul itself a passive being, have the strongest reason to exclude every spontaneous action of the will of man from the positive sciences; and yet there are many circumstances in which this power of willing influences the energy of life, and in which life acts upon matter. The principle of existence is, as it were, intermediary between body and soul, whose power cannot be calculated, but yet cannot be denied, unless we are ignorant

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[1] See Sir Wm. Hamilton's *Discussions on Philosophy*, etc., pp. 40-99.—*Ed.*

of what constitutes animated nature, and reduce its laws purely to mechanism.

Whatever opinion we may form of the system of Dr. Gall,[1] he is respected by all men of science for his anatomical studies and discoveries; and if we consider the organs of thought as different from thought itself, that is, as the means which it employs, it appears to me that we may admit memory and calculation, the aptitude for this or that science, the talent for any particular art, every thing, in short, which serves as an instrument for the understanding, to depend in some measure on the structure of the brain. If there exists a graduated scale from a stone upwards to the life of man, there must be certain faculties in us which partake of soul and body at once, and of this number are memory and calculation, the most physical of our intellectual, and the most intellectual of our physical faculties. But we should begin to err the moment we attributed an influence over our moral qualities to the structure of the brain; for the will is absolutely independent of our physical faculties: it is in the purely intellectual action of this will that conscience consists; and conscience is, and ought to be, free from the influence of corporeal organization. What should tend to remove from us the responsibility of our actions would be false or bad.

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[1] "Dr. Joseph Francis Gall, born at Tiefenbrunn, in Suabia (some say in France), A. D. 1757, was led by his studies in cerebral anatomy and in connection with the nervous system, to the conclusion that the brain is not only the organ of the mind, but that it is moreover composed of compartments corresponding to the mental faculties. Dr. Gall was regarded as a materialist, though many of his disciples have been decided immaterialists; and he became early associated with his colleague, Dr. Spurzheim, a native of Longwich, near Treves. Having met with little encouragement in Germany, they removed to Paris, where the new science was received with open arms.

"Dr. Gall remained the latter part of his life in France, where he prosecuted his inquiries and promulgated his system with zeal and perseverance. He died in 1828. Dr. Spurzheim became the apostle of the new science in other and remoter lands, having held forth the doctrine of Craniology, before numerous and attentive audiences, in England and America, where he died in 1832."—(Tennemann, *Manual of Philosophy*, p. 485.)—*Ed.*

A young physician of great ability, Koreff, has already attracted the attention of those who understand him by some entirely new observations upon the principle of life, upon the action of death, upon the causes of insanity. All this restlessness among the men of genius announces some revolution in the very manner of studying the sciences. It is impossible, as yet, to foresee the results of this change; but we may affirm with truth, that, if the Germans suffer imagination to guide them, they spare themselves no labor, no research, no study; and that they unite, in the highest degree, two qualities which seem to exclude each other, patience and enthusiasm.

Some learned Germans, pushing their physical idealism still further, contest the truth of the axiom, *that there is no action at a distance*, and wish, on the contrary, to re-establish spontaneous motion throughout nature. They reject the hypothesis of fluids, the effects of which would, in some points, depend upon mechanic forces, which act and react without the guidance of any independent organization.

Those who consider nature as an intelligence, do not attach to this word the same sense which custom has authorized; for the thought of man consists in the faculty of turning back upon itself, and the intelligence of nature advances straight forward, like the instinct of animals. Thought has self-possession, for it can judge itself; intelligence without reflection is a power always attracted to things without. When nature performs the work of crystallization according to the most regular forms, it does not follow that she understands the mathematics; or, at all events, she is ignorant of her own knowledge, and wants self-consciousness. The German savans attribute a certain individual originality to physical forces; and, on the other side, they appear to admit, in their manner of exhibiting some phenomena of animal magnetism, that the will of man, without any external act, exerts a very great influence over matter, and especially over metals.

Pascal says, *that astrologers and alchemists have some principles, but that they abuse them.* There were, perhaps, of old, more intimate relations between man and nature than now

exist. The mysteries of Eleusis, the religion of the Egyptians, the system of emanations among the Indians, the Persian adoration of the elements and the sun, the harmony of numbers, which was the basis of the Pythagorean doctrine, are vestiges of some curious attraction which united man with the universe.

Spiritualism, by fortifying the power of reflection, has separated man more from physical influences; and the Reformation, by carrying still further his tendency towards analysis, has put reason on its guard against the primary impressions of the imagination. The Germans promote the true perfection of the human mind, when they endeavor to awaken the inspirations of nature by the light of thought.

Experience every day leads the learned to recognize phenomena, which men had ceased to believe, because they were mingled with superstitions, and had been the subjects of presages. The ancients have related that stones fell from heaven; and in our days the accuracy of this fact, the existence of which had been denied, is established. The ancients have spoken of showers red as blood, and of earth-lightnings; we have lately been convinced of the truth of their assertions in these respects.

Astronomy and music are the science and art which men have known from all antiquity: why should not sounds and the stars be connected by relations which the ancients perceived, and which we may find out again? Pythagoras maintained that the planets were proportionably at the same distance as the seven chords of the lyre; and it is affirmed, that he predicted the new planet which has been discovered between Mars and Jupiter.[1] It appears that he was not ignorant of the true system of the heavens, the fixedness of the sun; since Copernicus supports himself in this instance upon the opinion of Pythagoras, as recorded by Cicero. From whence then arose these astonishing discoveries, without the aid of

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[1] M. Prevost, Professor of Philosophy at Geneva, has published a very interesting pamphlet on this subject. This philosophical writer is as well known in Europe as esteemed in his own country.

experience, and of the new machines of which the moderns are in possession? The reason is, that the ancients advanced boldly, enlightened by genius. They made use of reason, on which rests human intelligence; but they also consulted imagination, the priestess of nature.

What we call errors and superstitions may, perhaps, depend upon laws of the universe, yet unknown to man. The relations between the planets and metals, the influence of these relations, even oracles and presages, may they not be caused by occult powers, of which we have no idea? And who knows whether there is not a germ of truth hidden under every apologue, under every belief, which has been stigmatized with the name of madness? It assuredly does not follow that we should renounce the experimental method, so necessary in the sciences. But why not furnish a supreme director for this method in a philosophy more comprehensive, which would embrace the universe in its collective character, and would not despise the nocturnal side of nature, in the expectation of being able to throw light upon it?

It is the business of poetry, it may be answered, to consider the physical world in this manner; but we can arrive at no certain knowledge except by experience; and all that is not susceptible of proof may be an amusement to the mind, but can lead to no solid progress. Doubtless the French are right in recommending to Germans respect for experience; but they are wrong in turning into ridicule the presages of reflection, which perhaps will hereafter be confirmed by the knowledge of facts. Most great discoveries have at first appeared absurd; and the man of genius will never do any thing if he dreads ridicule. Ridicule is nerveless when despised, and ascends in influence when feared. We see in fairy tales phantoms that oppose the enterprises of knights, and harass them until they have passed beyond the weird dominion. Then all the witchcraft vanishes, and the fruitful open country is spread before their sight. Envy and mediocrity have also their sorceries; but we ought to march on towards the truth, without caring for the seeming obstacles that impede our progress.

When Kepler had discovered the harmonic laws that regulate the motion of the heavenly bodies, it was thus that he expressed his joy: "At length, after the lapse of eighteen months, the first dawn of light has shone upon me; and, on this remarkable day, I have perceived the pure irradiation of sublime truths. Nothing now represses me; I dare yield myself up to my holy ardor; I dare insult mankind, by acknowledging that I have turned worldly science to advantage, that I have robbed the vessels of Egypt, to erect a temple to my God. If I am pardoned, I shall rejoice; if blamed, I shall endure it. The die is cast; I have written this book; whether it be read by posterity, or by my contemporaries, is of no consequence; it may well wait for a reader during one century, when God himself, during six thousand years, has waited for an observer like myself." This bold ebullition of a proud enthusiasm exhibits the internal force of genius.

Goethe has made a remark upon the perfectability of the human mind, which is full of sagacity: *It is always advancing, but in a spiral line.* This comparison is so much the more just, because at many epochs the improvement of man seems to be checked, and then returns upon its own steps, having gained some degrees in advance. There are seasons when skepticism is necessary to the progress of the sciences; there are others, when, according to Hemsterhuis, *the marvellous spirit ought to supersede the mathematical.* When man is swallowed up, or rather reduced to dust by infidelity, this marvellous spirit can alone restore the power of admiration to the soul, without which we cannot understand nature.

The theory of the sciences in Germany has given minds an impulse like that which metaphysics had excited in the study of the soul. Life holds the same rank in physical phenomena, that the will holds in moral order. If the relations between these two systems have caused certain persons to interdict them both, there are those who will discover in these relations the double guarantee of the same truth. It is at least certain, that the interest of the sciences is singularly increased by this manner of referring them all to some leading ideas. Poets

might find in the sciences a crowd of useful thoughts, if the sciences held communication with each other in the philosophy of the universe; and if this philosophy, instead of being abstract, was animated by the inexhaustible source of sentiment. The universe resembles a poem more than a machine, and if, in order to form a conception of it, we were compelled to avail ourselves of imagination, or of a mathematical spirit, imagination would lead us nearer to the truth. But again let me repeat, we must not make such a choice; since it is the totality of our moral being which ought to be employed in so important a meditation.

The new system of general physics, which in Germany serves for a guide to experimental physics, can only be judged by its results. We must see whether it will conduct the human mind to new and established truths. But it is impossible to deny the connection which it proves to exist between the different branches of study. One student usually revolts from the other when their occupations are different, because they are a reciprocal annoyance. The scholar has nothing to say to the poet; the poet to the physicist; and even among savans, those who are differently occupied avoid each other, taking no interest in what is out of their own circle. This cannot be when a central philosophy establishes connections of a sublime nature between all our thoughts. The scientific penetrate nature by the aid of imagination. Poets find in the sciences the genuine beauties of the universe. The learned enrich poetry with the stores of recollection, and the savans with those of analogy.

The sciences, represented as isolated, and as a domain foreign to the soul, attract not exalted minds. The greater part of those who have devoted themselves to the sciences, with some honorable exceptions, have given to our times that tendency towards calculation which so well teaches us, in all cases, which is the strongest. The German philosophy introduces the physical sciences into that universal sphere of ideas, where the most minute observations, as well as the most important results, pertain to the general interest.

CHAPTER XI.

INFLUENCE OF THE NEW PHILOSOPHY UPON THE CHARACTER OF THE GERMANS.

It would appear that a system of philosophy, which attributes an all-powerful action to what depends upon ourselves, namely, to our will, ought to strengthen the character, and to make it independent of external circumstances; but there is reason to believe that political and religious institutions alone can create public spirit, and that no abstract theory is efficacious enough to give a nation energy: for, it must be confessed, the Germans of our days have not what can be called character. They are virtuous, upright, as private men, as fathers of families, as managers of affairs; but their gracious and complaisant forwardness to support the cause of power gives especial pain to those who love them, and who believe them to be the most enlightened speculative defenders of the dignity of man.

The sagacity of the philosophical spirit alone has taught them, in all circumstances, the cause and the effects of what happens; and they fancy, when they have found a theory for a fact, that it is all right. Military spirit and patriotism have exalted many nations to the highest possible degree of energy; but these two sources of self-devotion hardly exist among the Germans, taken as a mass. They scarcely know any thing of military spirit but a pedantic sort of tactics, which sanctions their being defeated according to the rules, and as little of liberty, beyond that subdivision into petty kingdoms, which, by accustoming the inhabitants to consider themselves weak as a nation, soon leads them to be weak as individuals.[1] Re-

[1] I beg to observe that this chapter, like all the rest of the work, was written at the epoch of Germany's complete servitude. Since, the Ger-

spect for forms is very favorable to the support of law; but this respect, such as it exists in Germany, induces the habit of such punctual and precise proceedings, that they hardly know how to open a new path to reach an object, though it be straight before them.

Philosophical speculations are only suited to a small number of thinking men; and, far from serving to combine the strength of a nation, they only place the ignorant and the enlightened at too great a distance from each other. There are too many new, and not enough common ideas circulating in Germany, for the knowledge of men and things. Common ideas are necessary for the conduct of life; business requires the spirit of execution rather than that of invention: whatever is odd in the different modes of thinking in Germany, tends to separate them from each other; for the thoughts and interests which unite men together must be of a simple nature, and of striking truth.

Contempt of danger, of suffering, and of death, is not sufficiently universal in all the classes of the German nation. Doubtless, life has more value for men capable of sentiments and ideas, than for those who leave behind them neither trace nor remembrance; but, as poetical enthusiasm gathers fresh vigor from the highest degree of learning, rational firmness ought to fill the place of the instinct of ignorance. It belongs alone to philosophy, founded upon religion, to inspire an unalterable courage under all contingencies.

If, however, Philosophy has not appeared to be all-powerful in this respect in Germany, we must not therefore despise her; she supports, she enlightens every man, individually; but a government alone can excite that moral electricity which makes the whole nation feel the same sentiment. We are more offended with the Germans, when we see them deficient in energy, than with the Italians, whose political situation has

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manic nations, awakened by oppression, have lent to their governments the force wanting to them, in order to resist the power of French armies, and it has been seen, by the heroic conduct of sovereigns and peoples, how much the fortune of the world is influenced by opinion.

enfeebled their character for several centuries. The Italians, through the whole of life, by their grace and their imagination, preserve a sort of prolonged right to childhood; but the rude physiognomy and manners of the Germans appear to promise a manly soul, and we are disagreeably surprised not to find it. In a word, timidity of character is pardoned when it is confessed; and in this way the Italians have a peculiar frankness, which excites a kind of interest in their favor; while the Germans, not daring to avow that weakness which fits them so ill, are energetic flatterers and vigorous slaves. They give a harsh accent to their words, to hide the suppleness of their opinions, and they make use of philosophical reasonings to explain that which is the most unphilosophical thing in the world—respect for power, and the effeminacy of fear, which turns this respect into admiration.

To such contrasts as these we must attribute that German gracelessness, which it is the fashion to mimic in the comedies of all countries. It is allowable to be heavy and stiff, while we remain severe and firm; but if this natural stiffness be clothed with the false smile of servility, then all that remains is to be exposed to merited ridicule. In short, there is a certain want of address in the German character, prejudicial even to those who have the selfish intent of sacrificing every thing to their interest; and we are so much the more provoked with them, because they lose the honors of virtue without attaining the profits of adroit management.

While we confess the German philosophy to be inadequate to form a nation, we must also acknowledge that the disciples of the new school are much nearer than any of the others to the attainment of strength of character; they dream of it, they desire it, they conceive it; but they often fail in the pursuit. There are few Germans who can even write upon politics. The greater portion of those who meddle with this subject are systematic, and frequently unintelligible. When there is a question of transcendental metaphysics, when an attempt is made to plunge into the darkness of nature, any view, however indefinite it may be, is not to be despised; every presenti-

ment may guide; every approach to the mark is something. It is not thus with the affairs of the world; it is possible to know them; it is necessary, therefore, to foresee them clearly. Obscurity of style, when we treat of thoughts without bounds, is sometimes the very indication of a comprehensive understanding; but obscurity, in our analysis of the affairs of life, only proves that we do not comprehend them.

When we introduce metaphysics into business, they confound, for the sake of excusing every thing; and we thus provide a dark fog for the asylum of conscience. This employment of metaphysics would require address, if every thing was not reduced in our times to two very simple and clear ideas, interest or duty. Men of energy, whichever of these two directions they follow, go right onward to the mark, without embracing theories which no longer deceive or persuade anybody.

See, then, it may be said, you are reduced to extol, like us, experience and observation. I have never denied that both were necessary for those who meddle with the interests of this world; but it is in the conscience of man that we ought to find the ideal principle of a conduct externally directed by sage calculations. Divine sentiments are subject here below to earthly things; it is the condition of our existence. The beautiful is within our souls, and the struggle is without. We must fight for the cause of eternity, but with the weapons of time; no individual can attain the whole dignity of the human character either by speculative philosophy or by the knowledge of affairs exclusively; and free institutions alone have the advantage of building up a system of public morals in a nation, and of giving exalted sentiments an opportunity of displaying themselves in the practical conduct of life.

CHAPTER XII.

OF ETHICS FOUNDED ON PERSONAL INTEREST.

THE French writers have been perfectly right in considering the ethics founded on interest as the consequence of those metaphysics which attributed all our ideas to our sensations. If there is nothing in the soul but what sensation has introduced, the agreeable or the disagreeable ought to be the sole motive of our volitions.[1] Helvetius, Diderot, Saint-Lambert,

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[1] "The philosophy of sensation, setting out from a single fact, agreeable or painful sensation, necessarily arrives in ethics at a single principle,—interest. The whole of the system may be explained as follows:

"Man is sensible to pleasure and pain: he shuns the one and seeks the other. That is his first instinct, and this instinct will never abandon him. Pleasure may change so far as its object is concerned, and be diversified in a thousand ways: but whatever form it takes,—physical pleasure, intellectual pleasure, moral pleasure, it is always pleasure that man pursues.

"The agreeable generalized is the useful; and the greatest possible sum of pleasure, whatever it may be, no longer concentrated within such or such an instant, but distributed over a certain extent of duration, is happiness.

"Happiness, like pleasure, is relative to him who experiences it; it is essentially personal. Ourselves, and ourselves alone we love, in loving pleasure and happiness.

"Interest is that which prompts us to seek in every thing our pleasure and our happiness.

"If happiness is the sole end of life, interest is the sole motive of all our actions.

"Man is only sensible to his interest, but he understands it well or ill. Much art is necessary in order to be happy. We are not ready to give ourselves up to all the pleasures that are offered on the highway of life, without examining whether these pleasures do not conceal many a pain. Present pleasure is not every thing,—it is necessary to take thought for the future; it is necessary to know how to renounce joys that may bring regret, and sacrifice pleasure to happiness, that is to say, to pleasure still, but pleasure more enduring and less intoxicating. The pleasures of the body are not the only ones,—there are other pleasures, those of mind, even those of opinion: the sage tempers them by each other.

have not deviated from this direction; and they have explained all actions (including the devotion of martyrs) by self-love. The English, who, for the most part, profess the experimental philosophy in metaphysics, have yet never brought themselves to support a moral system founded upon interest. Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Smith, etc., have declared the moral sense and sympathy to be the source of all virtue. Hume himself, the most skeptical of the English philosophers, could not read without disgust this theory of self-love, which deformed the beauty of the soul. Nothing is more opposite than this system to the whole of their opinions in Germany: consequently, their philosophical and moral writers, at the head of whom we must place Kant, Fichte, and Jacobi, have combated it with success.

"The ethics of interest are nothing else than the ethics of perfected pleasure, substituting happiness for pleasure, the useful for the agreeable prudence for passion. It admits, like the human race, the words good and evil, virtue and vice, merit and demerit, punishment and reward, but it explains them in its own way. The good is that which in the eyes of reason is conformed to our true interest; evil is that which is contrary to our true interest. Virtue is that wisdom which knows how to resist the enticement of passions, discerns what is truly useful, and surely proceeds to happiness. Vice is that aberration of mind and character that sacrifices happiness to pleasures without duration or full of dangers. Merit and demerit, punishment and reward, are the consequences of virtue and vice:—for not knowing how to seek happiness by the road of wisdom, we are punished by not attaining it. The ethics of interest do not pretend to destroy any of the duties consecrated by public opinion; it establishes that all are conformed to our personal interest, and it is thereby that they are duties. To do good to men is the surest means of making them do good to us; and it is also the means of acquiring their esteem, their good-will, and their sympathy,—always agreeable, and often useful. Disinterestedness itself has its explanation. Doubtless there is no disinterestedness in the vulgar sense of the word, that is to say, a real sacrifice of self, which is absurd, but there is the sacrifice of present interest to future interest, of gross and sensual passion to a nobler and more delicate pleasure. Sometimes one renders to himself a bad account of the pleasure that he pursues. and in fault of seeing clearly into his own heart, invents that chimera of disinterestedness of which human nature is incapable, which it cannot even comprehend.

"It will be conceded that this explanation of the ethics of interest is not overcharged, that it is faithful."—(Cousin, *Lectures on the True, the Beautiful, and the Good*, pp. 229–231.)—*Ed.*

As the tendency of man towards happiness is the most universal and active of all his inclinations, some have believed that they built morality on the most solid basis, when they said it consisted in the right understanding of our personal interest. This idea has misled men of integrity, and others have purposely abused it, and have only too well succeeded in that abuse. Doubtless the general laws of nature and society make happiness and virtue harmonize; but their laws are subject to very numerous exceptions, and which appear to be more numerous than they really are.

By making happiness consist in a quiet conscience, we elude the arguments drawn from the prosperity of vice, and the misfortunes of virtue; but this inward joy, which is entirely of a religious kind, has no relation to that which we designate upon earth by the name of happiness. To call self-devotion or selfishness, guilt or innocence, our personal interest, well or ill understood, is to aim at filling up that abyss which separates the criminal from the virtuous; is to destroy respect; is to weaken indignation; for if morality is nothing but right calculation, he who wants it can only be accused of a flaw in his understanding. It is impossible to feel the noble sentiment of esteem for any one because he is an accurate accountant; nor an energetic contempt for him who errs in his arithmetic. Men have arrived, therefore, by means of this system, at the principal end of all the profligate, who wish to put justice and injustice upon a level, or at least, to consider both as a game well or ill played: the philosophers of this school, accordingly, more frequently use the word fault than crime; for, in their mode of thinking, there is nothing in the conduct of life but skilful or unskilful combinations.

We can form no better conception how remorse can be admitted into such a system: the criminal, when he is punished, ought to feel that sort of regret which is occasioned by the failure of a speculation; for if our individual happiness is our principal object, if we are the only end of ourselves, peace must soon be restored between these two near allies—between him who has done wrong and him who suffers from it. It

is a proverb almost universally admitted, that every one is free in all that concerns himself alone; now, as in the moral system, founded upon interest, self is the only question, I know not what answer could be returned to such a speech as the following: "You give me, as the motive for my actions, my own individual benefit; I am much obliged; but the manner of conceiving what this benefit is, necessarily depends upon the variety of character. I am courageous; I can therefore risk the dangers attached to an infraction of the laws better than another: I am ingenious; therefore I trust to more means of escaping punishment; lastly, if it turns out ill, I have sufficient fortitude to endure the consequences of having deceived myself; and I prefer the pleasures and the chances of high play to the monotony of a regular existence."

How many French works, in the last century, have commented upon these arguments, which cannot be completely refuted; for, in a matter of chance, one out of a thousand is sufficient to rouse the imagination to every effort for obtaining it; and, certainly, the odds are not a thousand to one against the success of vice. "But," many of the honest partisans of the moral system founded upon interest will say, "this morality does not exclude the influence of religion over the soul." How weak and melancholy a part is left for it! When all the acknowledged philosophical and moral systems are contrary to religion, when metaphysics annihilate the belief of what is invisible, and morals the sacrifice of ourselves, religion remains in our ideas, as the king remained in that constitution which was decreed by the Constituent Assembly. It was a Republic, with a King; and I say the same of all these systems of metaphysical materialism and selfish morality, they are Atheism, with a God. It is easy, then, to foresee what will be sacrificed in the construction of our thoughts, when we only assign a superfluous place to the central idea of the world and of ourselves.[1]

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[1] "Fontenlle seeing a man led to punishment said, 'There is a man who has calculated badly.' Whence it follows that, if this man, in doing

The conduct of man is not truly moral, excepting when he esteems as nothing the happy or unhappy consequences of those actions which his duty has enjoined him. In directing the affairs of the world, we must always keep in our minds the connection of causes and effects, of means and end; but this prudence is to virtue what good sense is to genius: all that is truly beautiful is inspired; all that is disinterested is religious. Calculation is the laborer of genius, the servant of the soul; but if it becomes the master, there is no longer any

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what he did, could have escaped punishment, he would have calculated well, and his conduct would have been laudable. The action then becomes good or ill according to the issue. Every act is of itself indifferent, and it is lot that qualifies it.

"If the honest is only the useful, the genius of calculation is the highest wisdom; it is even virtue!

"But this genius is not within the reach of everybody. It supposes, with long experience of life, a sure insight, capable of discerning all the consequences of actions, a head strong and large enough to embrace and weigh their different chances. The young man, the ignorant, the poor in mind, are not able to distinguish between the good and the evil, the honest and the dishonest. And even in supposing the most consummate prudence, what place remains, in the profound obscurity of human things, for chance and the unforeseen! In truth, in the system of interest well understood, there must be great knowledge in order to be an honest man. Much less is necessary for ordinary virtue, whose motto has always been: Do what you ought, let come what may. But this principle is precisely the opposite of the principle of interest. It is necessary to choose between them. If interest is the only principle avowed by reason, disinterestedness is a lie and madness, and literally an incomprehensible monster in well-ordered human nature.

"Nevertheless humanity speaks of disinterestedness, and thereby it does not simply mean that wise selfishness that deprives itself of a pleasure for a surer, more delicate, or more durable pleasure. No one has ever believed that it was the nature or the degree of the pleasure sought that constituted disinterestedness. This name is awarded only to the sacrifice of an interest, whatever it may be, to a motive free from all interest. And the human race, not only thus understands disinterestedness, but it believes that such a disinterestedness exists; it believes the human soul capable of it. It admires the devotedness of Regulus, because it does not see what interest could have impelled that great man to go far from his country to seek, among cruel enemies, a frightful death, when he might have lived tranquil and even honored in the midst of his family and his fellow-citizens."—(Cousin, *Lectures on the True, the Beautiful, and the Good*, pp. 239, 240.)—*Ed.*

thing grand or noble in man. Calculation, in the conduct of life, ought always to be admitted as the guide, but never as the motive of our actions. It is a good instrument of execution; but the source of the will ought to be of a more elevated nature, and to contain in itself an internal sentiment which compels us to the sacrifice of our personal interests.

When an attempt was made to prevent St. Vincent de Paul from exposing himself to too great danger, in order to succor the unfortunate, he replied, "Do you think me so base as to prefer my life to myself?" If the advocates of the ethical system founded upon interest would retrench from this interest all that concerns earthly existence, they would then agree with the most religious men; but still we might reproach them with the faulty expressions in which they convey their meaning.

"In fact," it may be said, "this is only a dispute about words; we call useful what you call virtuous, but we also place the well understood interest of men in the sacrifice of their passions to their duties." Disputes about words are always disputes about things: for every man of honesty will confess, that he only uses this or that word from preference for this or that idea. How should expressions, habitually employed upon the most vulgar matters, be capable of inspiring generous sentiments? When we pronounce the words Interest and Utility, shall we excite the same thoughts in our hearts, as when we adjure each other in the name of Devotion and of Virtue?

When Sir Thomas Moore preferred perishing on the scaffold to reascending the summit of greatness, by the sacrifice of a scruple of conscience; when, after a year's imprisonment, enfeebled by suffering, he refused to return to the wife and children whom he loved, and to give himself up again to those mental occupations which confer so much vivacity, and at the same time so much tranquillity upon existence; when honor alone, that worldly religion, made an aged king of France return to an English prison, because his son had not kept the promises by means of which he obtained his liberty; when

Christians lived in catacombs, renounced the light of day, and felt the heavens only in their souls; if any one had said, "they had a right understanding of their interest," what an icy chill would have run through the veins at hearing such a speech, and how much better would a compassionate look have revealed to us all that is sublime in such characters!

No, assuredly, life is not such a withered thing as selfishness has made it; all is not prudence; all is not calculation; and when a sublime action agitates all the powers of our nature, we do not consider whether the generous man, who sacrifices himself for a manifest good purpose, judiciously calculated his personal interest; we think that he sacrifices all the pleasures, all the advantages of this world; but that a celestial ray descends into his heart, and excites a happiness within him, which has no more resemblance to what we usually adorn with that name, than immortality has to life.

It was not, however, without a motive, that so much importance has been attached to this system of morals founded upon personal interest. Those who support it have the air of supporting a theory only; and it is, in fact, a very ingenious contrivance, for the purpose of riveting the yoke of every kind. No man, however depraved he may be, will deny the necessity of morality; for the very being who is most decidedly deficient in it, would wish to be concerned with those dupes who maintain it. But what address was there in fixing upon prudence as the basis of morality! what an opening it makes for the ascendency of power over the transactions of conscience, over the springs in the human mind by which events are regulated!

If calculation ought to preside over every thing, the actions of men will be judged according to their success; the man whose good feelings have been the cause of misfortune, will be justly condemned; the corrupt, but adroit manager, will be justly applauded. In a word, individuals, only considering each other as obstacles or instruments, will hate those who impede them, and will esteem those who serve them, only as means of their success. Guilt itself has more grandeur when

it arises from the disorder of inflamed passion, than when personal interest is its object; how then allege that to be the principle of virtue which would dishonor vice itself![1]

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[1] In Bentham's work on Legislation, published, or rather illustrated, by M. Dumont, there are several arguments on the principle of utility, which agree in many respects with the system of morals founded upon personal interest. The well-known anecdote of Aristides making the Athenians reject a project of Themistocles, by simply telling them it was advantageous but unjust, is quoted by M. Dumont; but he refers the consequences which may be drawn from this trait of character, as well as many others, to the general utility admitted by Bentham as the basis of all our duties. The advantage of each individual, he says, ought to be sacrificed to the advantage of the whole; and that of the present moment to futurity, by taking one step in advance: we may confess, that virtue consists in the sacrifice of time to eternity, and this sort of calculation will certainly not be condemned by the advocates for enthusiasm; but whatever effort so superior a man as M. Dumont may make, he never will be able to render utility and self-devotion synonymous. He asserts, that pleasure and pain are the first motives of human actions; and he then supposes that the pleasure of noble minds consists in voluntarily exposing themselves to the sufferings of real life, in order to obtain enjoyments of a higher nature. Doubtless, we may make out of every word a mirror to reflect all ideas; but, if we are pleased to adhere to the natural signification of each term, we shall perceive, that the man who is told that his own happiness ought to be the end of all his actions, will not be prevented from doing the evil which is expedient for him, except by the fear or the danger of punishment;—fear, that passion braves; danger, that ingenuity hopes to escape.—Upon what will you found the idea of justice or injustice, it may be said, if not upon what is useful or hurtful to the greater number? Justice, as to individuals, consists in the sacrifice of themselves to their families; as to families, in their sacrifice to the state; as to the state, in the respect for certain unchangeable principles which constitute the happiness and the safety of the human species. Doubtless, the majority of the generations of men, in the course of ages, will find their account in having followed the path of justice; but, in order to be truly and religiously honest, we ought always to keep in view the worship of moral beauty, independently of all the circumstances which may result from it. Utility is necessarily modified by events; virtue ought never to be liable to this influence.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF ETHICS FOUNDED ON NATIONAL INTEREST.

Not only do the ethics founded on personal interest introduce into the mutual relations of individuals calculations of prudence and selfishness, which banish sympathy, confidence, and generosity; but the ethics of public men, of those who act in the name of nations, must necessarily be perverted by this system. If it is true that the ethics of individuals may be founded upon their interest, it is because entire society tends to order, and punishes those who violate it; but a nation, and especially a powerful state, is an isolated existence, to which the laws of reciprocity cannot be applied. It may be said, with truth, that at the end of a certain number of years unjust nations succumb to the hatred which their injustice inspires; but several generations may pass away before these great crimes are punished; and I know not how we could convince a statesman, under all circumstances, that an action, blamable in itself, is not useful, and that political wisdom and morality are ever in accord: this point, therefore, is not proved; and, on the contrary, it is almost a received axiom, that the two objects cannot be united.

Nevertheless, what would become of the human race if ethics were nothing but an old woman's tale, invented to console the weak, until they become stronger? How should it be honored in the private relations of life, if the government, upon which all turn their eyes, is allowed to dispense with it? and how should this not be allowed, if interest is the foundation of morals? Nobody can deny that there are contingencies, in which those great masses called empires, those great masses which are in a state of nature with relation to each other, find a momentary advantage in committing an act of injustice; and what is momentary with regard to nations, is often a whole age.

Kant, in his writings on political ethics, shows, with the greatest force, that no exception can be admitted in the code of duty. In short, when we rely upon circumstances for the justification of an immoral action, upon what principle can we stop at this or that point? Would not the more impetuous of our natural passions be of much greater power than the calculations of reason, if we admitted public or private interest as an excuse for injustice?

When, at the most bloody era of the Revolution, they wished to authorize all crimes, they gave their government the name of the *Committee of Public Safety;* this was to illustrate the received maxim, that the safety of the people is the supreme law. The supreme law is justice. When it shall be proved that the earthly interests of a nation may be promoted by an act of meanness or of injustice, we shall still be equally vile and criminal in committing it; for the integrity of moral principles is of more consequence than the interests of nations. Individuals and society are answerable, in the first place, for that divine inheritance which ought to be transmitted to the successive generations of mankind. Loftiness of mind, generosity, equity, every magnanimous sentiment, in a word, ought first to be preserved, at our own expense, and even at the expense of others; since they, as well as we, are bound to sacrifice themselves to their sentiments.

Injustice always sacrifices one portion of society to another. According to what arithmetical calculation is this sacrifice enjoined? Can the majority dispose of the minority, if the former only exceeds the latter by a few voices? The members of one and the same family, a company of merchants, nobles, ecclesiastics, whatever may be their numbers, have not the right of saying that every thing ought to yield to their several interests; but when any assembly of men, let it be as inconsiderable as that of the Romans in their origin; when this assembly, I say, calls itself a nation, then it should be allowed to do any thing for its own advantage! This term Nation would thus become synonymous with that of *Legion*, which the devil assumes in the Gospel; but there is no more reason for giving

up the obligations of duty for the sake of a nation than for that of any other collective body of men. It is not the number of individuals which constitutes their importance in a moral point of view. When an innocent person dies on the scaffold, whole generations attend to his misfortune, while thousands perish in a battle without any inquiry after their fate. Whence arises this astonishing difference which men make between an act of injustice committed against an individual, and the death of numbers? The cause is, the importance which all attach to the moral law; it is of a thousand times more consequence than physical life in the universe, and in the soul of each of us, which also is itself a universe.

If we make morals only a calculation of prudence and wisdom, a species of economical management, there is something like energy in not wishing to possess it. A sort of ridicule attaches to persons of condition, who still maintain what are called romantic maxims, fidelity in engagements, respect for the rights of individuals, etc. We forgive these scruples in the case of individuals who are independent enough to be dupes at their own expense; but when we consider those who direct the affairs of nations, there are circumstances in which they may be blamed for being just, and have their integrity objected to them; for if private morals are founded upon personal interest, there is much more reason for public morals to be founded upon national interest; and these morals, upon occasion, may make a duty of the greatest crimes: so easy is it to reduce to an absurdity whatever wanders from the simple grounds of truth. Rousseau said, "that it was not allowable for a nation to purchase the most desirable revolution with the blood of one innocent person:" these simple words comprehend all that is true, sacred, divine, in the destiny of man.

It assuredly was not for the advantages of this life, to secure some additional enjoyments to some days of existence, and to delay a little the death of some dying creatures, that conscience and religion were bestowed upon man. It was for this, that beings in possession of free-will might choose justice and sacrifice utility, might prefer the future to the present, the invisible

to the visible, and the dignity of the human species to the mere preservation of individuals.

Individuals are virtuous when they sacrifice their private interest to the general good ;[1] but governments in their turn, are individuals, who ought to sacrifice their personal advantages to the law of duty : if the morals of statesmen were only

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[1] "If the good is that alone which must be the most useful to the greatest number, where can the good be found, and who can discern it? In order to know whether such an action, which I propose to myself to do, is good or bad, I must be sure, in spite of its visible and direct utility in the present moment, that it will not become injurious in a future that I do not yet know. I must seek whether, useful to mine and those that surround me, it will not have counter-strokes disastrous to the human race, of which I must think before all. It is important that I should know whether the money that I am tempted to give this unfortunate who needs it, could not be otherwise more usefully employed. In fact, the rule is here the greatest good of the greatest number. In order to follow it, what calculations are imposed on me? In the obscurity of the future, in the uncertainty of the somewhat remote consequences of every action, the surest way is to do nothing that is not related to myself, and the last result of a prudence so refined is indifference and egoism. Supposing you have received a deposit from an opulent neighbor, who is old and sick, a sum of which he has no need, and without which your numerous family runs the risk of dying with famine. He calls on you for this sum—what will you do? The greatest number is on your side, and the greatest utility also; for this sum is insignificant for your rich neighbor, while it will save your family from misery, and perhaps from death. Father of a family, I should like much to know in the name of what principle you would hesitate to retain the sum which is necessary to you? Intrepid reasoner, placed in the alternative of killing this sick old man, or of letting your wife and children die of hunger, in all honesty of conscience you ought to kill him. You have the right, it is even your duty to sacrifice the less advantage of a single person to much the greater advantage of a greater number; and since this principle is the expression of true justice, you are only its minister in doing what you do. A vanquishing enemy or a furious people threaten destruction to a whole city if there be not delivered up to them the head of such a man, who is, nevertheless, innocent. In the name of the greatest good of the greatest number, this man will be immolated without scruple. It might even be maintained that innocent to the last, he has ceased to be so, since he is an obstacle to the public good. It having once been declared that justice is the interest of the greatest number, the only question is to know where this interest is. Now, here, doubt is impossible; therefore, it is perfectly just to offer innocence as a holocaust to public safety. This consequence must be accepted, or the principle rejected."—(Cousin, *Lectures on the True, the Beautiful, and the Good*, pp. 267, 268.)—*Ed.*

founded on the public good, their morals might lead them into sin, if not always, at least sometimes; and a single justified exception would be sufficient to annihilate all the morals in the world; for all true principles are absolute: if two and two do not make four, the deepest algebraic computations are absurd; and if, in theory, there is a single case in which a man ought not to do his duty, every philosophical and religious maxim is overturned, and nothing remains but prudence or hypocrisy.

Let me be permitted to adduce the example of my father, since it is directly applicable to the point in question. It has been often repeated, that M. Necker was ignorant of human nature, because on many occasions he refused to avail himself of means of corruption or violence, the advantages of which were believed to be certain. I may venture to say, that nobody can read the works of M. Necker, entitled *The History of the French Revolution,—The Executive Power in Great States*, etc., without finding in them enlightened views of the human heart; and I shall not be contradicted by any of those who have lived in intimacy with M. Necker, when I assert, that, notwithstanding his admirable goodness of disposition, he had to guard himself against a too lively talent for ridicule, and rather a severe mode of estimating mediocrity of mind and soul: what he has written upon the *Happiness of Fools* appears to me enough to prove it. In a word, as, in addition to all these qualities, he was eminently a man of wit, nobody surpassed him in the delicate and profound knowledge of those with whom he was connected; but he was determined, by a decision of his conscience, never to shrink from any consequences whatever which might result from an obedience to the commands of duty. We may judge differently concerning the events of the French Revolution; but I believe it to be impossible for an impartial observer to deny that such a principle, generally adopted, would have saved France from the misfortunes under which she has groaned, and from what is still worse, the example which she has displayed.

During the most fatal epochs of the reign of terror, many

honest men accepted offices in the administration, and even in the criminal tribunals, either to do good or to diminish the evil which was committed in them; and all defended themselves by a mode of reasoning very generally received, that they prevented a villain from occupying the place they filled, and thus rendered service to the oppressed. To allow ourselves the use of a bad means for an end which we believe to be good, is a maxim of conduct singularly vicious in its principle. Men know nothing of the future, nothing of themselves with respect to the morrow; in every circumstance, and at every moment, duty is imperative, and the calculations of wisdom, as to consequences which it may foresee, ought to be of no account in the estimate of duty.

What right have those who were the instruments of a seditious authority to keep the title of honest men, because they committed unjust actions in a gentle manner? Rudeness in the execution of injustice would have been much better, for the difficulty of supporting it would have increased; and the most mischievous of all alliances is that of a sanguinary decree and a polite executioner.

The benevolence we may exercise in detail is no compensation for the evil which we cause by lending the support of our names to the party that uses them. We ought to profess the worship of virtue upon earth, in order that not only our contemporaries, but our posterity may feel its influence. The ascendency of a brave example endures many years after the objects of a transitory charity have ceased to exist. The most important lesson that we can give to a man in this world, and particularly with relation to public affairs, is, not to compromise duty for any consideration.

[1] "When we set about bargaining with circumstances, all is lost; for there is nobody who cannot plead this excuse. One has a wife, children or nephews, who are in need of fortunes; others want active employment, or allege I know not what

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[1] This is the passage which gave the greatest offence to the Literary Police.

virtuous pretexts, which all lead to the necessity of their having a place, to which money and power are attached. Are we not weary of these subterfuges, of which the Revolution furnished incessant examples? We met none but persons who complained of having been forced to quit the repose they preferred to every thing, the domestic life into which they were impatient to return; and we were well aware that these very persons had employed their days and nights in praying that they might be obliged to devote their days and nights to public affairs, which could have entirely dispensed with their services."

The ancient lawgivers made it a duty for the citizens to be concerned in political interests. The Christian religion ought to inspire a disposition of entirely another nature, that of obeying authority, but of keeping ourselves detached from the affairs of state, when they may compromise our conscience. The difference which exists between the ancient and modern governments explains this opposite manner of considering the relations of men towards their country.

The political science of the ancients was intimately united with their religion and morals; the social state was a body full of life. Every individual considered himself as one of its members. The smallness of states, the number of slaves, which still further contracted that of the citizens, all made it a duty to act for a country which had need of every one of its children. Magistrates, warriors, artists, philosophers, almost the gods themselves, mingled together upon the public arena; and the same men, by turns, gained a battle, exhibited a masterpiece of art, gave laws to their country, or endeavored to discover the laws of the universe.

If we make an exception of the very small number of free governments, the greatness of modern states, and the concentration of monarchical power, have rendered politics entirely negative, if we may so express ourselves. The business is, to prevent one person from annoying another; and government is charged with the high sort of police, which permits every one to enjoy the advantages of peace and social order, while

he purchases this security by reasonable sacrifices. The divine Lawgiver of mankind, therefore, enjoined that morality which was most adapted to the situation of the world under the Roman empire, when he laid down as a law the payment of tributes, and submission to government in all that duty does not forbid; but he also recommended a life of privacy in the strongest manner.

Men who are ever desirous of reducing their peculiar inclinations to a theory, adroitly confound ancient and Christian morals. "It is necessary, they say," "like the ancients, to serve our country, and to be useful citizens in the state:" "it is necessary," they say, "like the Christians, to submit ourselves to power established by the will of God." It is thus that a mixture of the system of non-resistance with that of action produces a double immorality; when taken singly, they had both claims to respect. The activity of the Greek and Roman citizens, such as it could be exercised in a republic, was a noble virtue. The force of Christian non-resistance is also a virtue, and one of great power; for Christianity, which is accused of weakness, is invincible in its own spirit, that is, in the energy of refusal. But the tricky selfishness of ambitious men teaches them the art of combining opposite arguments; so that they can meddle with every thing like Pagans, and submit to every thing like Christians.

"The universe, my friend, regards not thee,'

is, however, what we may say to all the universe, phenomena excepted. It would be a truly ridiculous vanity to assign as a motive for political activity in all cases the pretext of that service which we may render our country. This sort of usefulness is hardly ever more than a pompous name, which covers personal interest.

The art of sophists has always been to oppose one duty to another. We incessantly imagine circumstances in which this frightful perplexity may exist. The greater part of dramatic fictions are founded upon it. Yet real life is more simple; we there frequently see virtues opposed to interests; but perhaps

it is true, that no honest man could ever doubt, on any occasion, what his duty enjoined. The voice of conscience is so delicate, that it is easy to stifle it; but it is so clear, that it is impossible to mistake it.

A known maxim contains, under a simple form, all the theory of morals: *Do what you ought, happen what will.* When we decide, on the contrary, that the probity of a public man consists in sacrificing every thing to the temporal advantages of his nation, then many occasions may be found, in which we may become immoral by our morality. This sophism is as contradictory in its substance as in its form: this would be to treat virtue as a conjectural science, and as entirely submitted to circumstances in its application. May God guard the human heart from such a responsibility! the light of our understanding is too uncertain to enable us to judge of the moment when the eternal laws of duty may be suspended; or, rather, this moment does not exist.

If it was once generally acknowledged, that national interest itself ought to be subordinate to those nobler thoughts which constitute virtue, how would the conscientious man be at his ease! how would every thing in politics appear clear to him, when, before, a continual hesitation made him tremble at every step! It is this very hesitation which has caused honest men to be thought incapable of state affairs; they have been accused of pusillanimity, of weakness, of fear; and, on the contrary, those who have carelessly sacrificed the weak to the powerful, and their scruples to their interests, have been called men *of an energetic nature.* It is, however, an easy energy which tends to our own advantage; or, at least, to that of the ruling faction; for every thing that is done according to the sense of the multitude invariably partakes of weakness, let it appear ever so violent.

The race of men, with a loud voice, demand the sacrifice of every thing to their interest; and finish by compromising this interest from the very wish for such a sacrifice: but it should now be said to them, that their happiness itself, which has been made so general a pretext, is not sacred, excepting in its

compatibility with morals; for, without morals, of what consequence would the whole body be to each individual? When once we have said that morals ought to be sacrificed to national interest, we are very liable to contract the sense of the word Nation from day to day, and to make it signify at first our own partisans, then our friends, and then our family; which is but a decent synonym for ourselves.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE PRINCIPLE OF ETHICS IN THE NEW GERMAN PHILOSOPHY.

THE idealistic philosophy has a tendency, from its very nature, to refute the ethics founded on individual or national interest; it does not allow temporal happiness to be the end of our existence; and, referring every thing to the life of the soul, it is to the exercise of the will, and of virtue, that it attaches our thoughts and actions. The works[1] which Kant has written upon ethics have a reputation at least equal to those which he has composed upon metaphysics.

Two distinct inclinations, he says, appear manifest in man: personal interest, which he derives from the attraction of his sensations; and universal justice,[2] which arises from his rela-

[1] Those who are unable to read Kant in German, may consult with profit Semple's translation of the *Metaphysics of Ethics.—Ed.*

[2] "The good for Kant is what is obligatory. But logically, whence comes the obligation of performing an action, if not from the intrinsic goodness of this act? Is it not because that, in the order of reason, it is absolutely impossible to regard a deposit as a property, that we cannot appropriate it to ourselves without a crime? If one action must be performed, and another action must not, it is because there is apparently an essential difference between these two acts. To found the good on obligation, instead of founding obligation on the good, is, therefore, to take the effect for the cause, is to draw the principle from the consequence.

tions to the human race, and to the Divinity : between these two impulses Conscience decides ; she resembles Minerva, who made the balance incline, when the votes were equal in the Areopagus. Have not the most opposite opinions facts for their support? Would not "the for" and "the against" be

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"If I ask an honest man who, in spite of the suggestions of misery, has respected the deposit that was intrusted to him, why he respected it, he will answer me—because it was my duty. If I persist, and ask why it was his duty, he will very rightly answer,—because it was just, because it was good. That point having been reached, all answers are stopped; but questions also are stopped. No one allows a duty to be imposed upon him without rendering to himself a reason for it; but as soon as it is recognized that this duty is imposed upon us because it is just, the mind is satisfied; for it reaches a principle beyond which it has nothing more to seek, justice being its own principle. First truths carry with them their reason for being. Now, justice, the essential distinction between good and evil in the relations of men among themselves, is the primary truth of ethics.

"Justice is not a consequence, since we cannot ascend to another more elevated principle; and duty is not, rigorously speaking, a principle, since it supposes a principle above it, that explains and authorizes it, to wit, justice.

"Moral truth no more becomes relative and subjective, to take for a moment the language of Kant, in appearing to us obligatory, than truth becomes relative and subjective in appearing to us necessary; for in the very nature of truth and the good must be sought the reason of necessity and obligation. But if we stop at obligation and necessity, as Kant did, in ethics as well as in metaphysics, without knowing it, and even against our intention, we destroy, or at least weaken the truth and the good.

"Obligation has its foundation in the necessary distinction between good and evil; and is itself the foundation of liberty. If man has duties, he must possess the faculty of fulfilling them, of resisting desire, passion, and interest, in order to obey law. He ought to be free, therefore he is free, or human nature is in contradiction with itself. The direct certainty of obligation implies the corresponding certainty of liberty.

"This proof of liberty is doubtless good; but Kant is deceived in supposing it the only legitimate proof. It is very strange that he should have preferred the authority of reasoning to that of consciousness, as if the former had no need of being confirmed by the latter; as if, after all, my liberty ought not to be a fact for me. Empiricism must be greatly feared to distrust the testimony of consciousness; and, after such a distrust, one must be very credulous to have a boundless faith in reasoning. We do not believe in our liberty as we believe in the movement of the earth. The profoundest persuasion that we have of it comes from the continual experience that we carry with ourselves."—(Cousin, *Lectures on the True, the Beautiful, and the Good*, pp. 284–286.)—*Ed.*

equally true, if Conscience did not carry with her the supreme certainty.

Man, who is placed between visible and almost equal arguments, which direct the circumstances of his life in favor of good or evil,—man has received from heaven the sentiment of duty, to decide his choice. Kant endeavors to demonstrate that this sentiment is the necessary condition of our moral being; the truth which precedes all those the knowledge of which is acquired by life. Can it be denied that conscience has more dignity, when we believe it to be an innate power, than when we consider it in the light of a faculty acquired, like all others, by experience and habit? And it is in this point, especially, that the idealistic metaphysics exert a great influence over the moral conduct of man: they attribute the same primitive force to the notion of duty as to that of space and time; and, considering them both as inherent in our nature, they admit no more doubt of one than of the other.

All our esteem for ourselves and for others ought to be founded on the relations which exist between our actions and the law of duty; this law depends, in no case, on the desire of happiness; on the contrary, it is often summoned to combat that desire. Kant goes still further; he affirms, that the first effect of the power of virtue is to cause a noble pain by the sacrifices which it demands.

The destination of man upon this earth is not happiness, but the advance towards moral perfection. It is in vain that, by a childish play of words, this improvement is called happiness; we clearly feel the difference between enjoyments and sacrifices; and if language were to adopt the same terms for such discordant ideas, our natural judgment would reject the deception.

It has been often said, that human nature has a tendency towards happiness: this is its involuntary instinct; but the instinct of reflection is virtue. By giving man very little influence over his own happiness, and means of improvement without number, the intention of the Creator was surely not to make the object of our lives an almost unattainable end. De-

vote all your powers to the attainment of happiness; control your character, if you can, to such a degree as not to feel those wandering desires, which nothing can satisfy; and, in spite of all these wise arrangements of self-love, you will be afflicted with disorders, you will be ruined, you will be imprisoned, and all the edifice of your selfish cares will be overturned.

It may be replied to this: "I will be so circumspect, that I will not have any enemies." Let it be so; you will not have to reproach yourself with any acts of generous imprudence; but sometimes we have seen the least courageous among the persecuted. "I will manage my fortune so well, that I will preserve it." I believe it; but there are universal disasters, which do not spare even those whose principle has been never to expose themselves for others; and illness, and accidents of every kind, dispose of our condition in spite of ourselves. How then should happiness be the end of our moral liberty in this short life; happiness, which chance, suffering, old age, and death, put out of our power? The case is not the same with moral improvement; every day, every hour, every minute, may contribute to it; all fortunate and unfortunate events equally assist it; and this work depends entirely on ourselves, whatever may be our situation upon earth.

The moral system of Kant and Fichte is very analogous to that of the Stoics; but the Stoics allowed more to the ascendency of natural qualities; the Roman pride is discoverable in their manner of estimating mankind. The disciples of Kant believe in the necessary and continual action of the will against evil inclinations. They tolerate no exceptions in our obedience to duty, and reject all excuses which can act as motives to such exceptions.

The theory of Kant concerning veracity is an example of this; he rightly considers it as the basis of all morality. When the Son of God called himself the Logos, or the Word, perhaps he wished to do honor to that admirable faculty in language of revealing what we think. Kant has carried his respect for truth so far, as not to permit a violation of it, even if a villain came and demanded, whether your friend, whom he pursued,

was hidden in your house. He pretends, that we ought never to allow ourselves, in any particular instance, to do that which would be inadmissible as a general law; but, on this occasion, he forgets that we may make a general law of not sacrificing truth, excepting to another virtue; for, as soon as personal interest is removed from a question, we need not fear sophisms, and conscience pronounces with equity upon all things.

The theory of Kant in morals is severe, and sometimes dry; for it excludes sensibility. He regards it as a reflex act of sensation, and as certain to lead to passions in which there is always a mixture of selfishness; it is on this account that he does not admit sensibility for a guide, and that he places morals under the safeguard of unchangeable principles. There is nothing more severe than this doctrine; but there is a severity which softens us, even when it treats the impulses of the heart as objects of suspicion, and endeavors to banish them all: however rigorous a moralist may be, when he addresses our conscience, he is sure to touch us. He who says to man, "Find every thing in yourself," always raises up in the soul some noble object, which is connected with that very sensibility whose sacrifice it demands. In studying the philosophy of Kant, we must distinguish sentiment from sensibility; he admits the former as the judge of philosophical truth; he considers the latter as properly subject to the conscience. Sentiment and conscience are terms employed almost as synonyms in his writings; but sensibility approaches much nearer to the sphere of emotions, and consequently to that of the passions which they originate.

We cannot grow weary of admiring those writings of Kant, in which the supreme law of duty is held up as sacred; what genuine warmth, what animated eloquence, upon a subject, where the only ordinary endeavor is restraint! We feel penetrated with a profound respect for the austerity of an aged philosopher, constantly submitted to the invisible power of virtue, which has no empire but that of conscience, no arms but those of remorse; no treasures to distribute but the inward enjoyments of the soul; the hope of which cannot be offered

as a motive for their attainment, because they are incomprehensible until they are experienced.

Among the German philosophers, some men of virtue, not inferior to Kant, and who approach nearer to religion in their inclinations, have attributed the origin of the moral law to religious sentiment. This sentiment cannot be of the nature of those which may grow into passions. Seneca has depicted its calmness and profundity by saying, "In the bosom of the virtuous man I know not what God, but a God has habitation."

Kant pretended, that it was to impair the disinterested purity of morals, to present the perspective of a future life, as the end of our actions; many German writers have completely refuted him on this point. In effect, the immortality of heaven has no relation to the rewards and punishments, of which we form an idea on this earth. The sentiment which makes us aspire to immortality is as disinterested as that which makes us find our happiness in devoting ourselves to the happiness of others; for the first offering of religious felicity is the sacrifice of self; and it is thus necessarily removed from every species of selfishness.

Whatever we may attempt, we must return to the acknowledgment, that religion is the true foundation of morality; it is that sensible and real object within us, which can alone divert our attention from external objects. If piety did not excite sublime emotions, who would sacrifice even sensual pleasures, however vulgar they might be, to the cold dignity of reason? We must begin the internal history of man with religion, or with sensation; for there is nothing animated besides. The moral system, founded upon personal interest, would be as evident as a mathematical truth, were it not for its exercising more control over the passions which overturn all calculations; nothing but a sentiment can triumph over a sentiment; the violence of nature can only be conquered by its exaltation. Reasoning, in such a case, is like the schoolmaster in la Fontaine; nobody listens to him, and all the world is crying out for help.

Jacobi, as I shall show in the analysis of his works, has

opposed the arguments which Kant uses, in order to avoid the admission of religious sentiment as the basis of morality. He believes, on the contrary, that the Divinity reveals himself to every man in particular, as he revealed himself to the human race, when prayers and works had prepared the heart to comprehend him. Another philosopher asserts, that immortality already commences upon this earth, for him who desires and feels in himself the taste for eternal things: another affirms, that nature forces man to understand the will of God; and that there is in the universe a groaning and imprisoned voice, which invites us to deliver the world and ourselves, by combating the principle of evil, under all its fatal appearances. These different systems are influenced by the imagination of each writer, and are adopted by those who sympathize with him; but the general direction of these opinions is ever the same: to free the soul from the influence of external objects; to place the empire of ourselves within us; and to make duty the law of this empire, and its hope another life.

Without doubt, the true Christians have taught the same doctrine at all periods; but what distinguishes the new German school, is their uniting to all these sentiments, which they suppose to be equally inherited by the simple and ignorant, the highest philosophy and the most precise species of knowledge. The era of pride had arrived, in which we were told that reason and the sciences destroyed all the prospects of imagination, all the terrors of conscience, every belief of the heart; and we blushed for the half of our nature which was declared weak and almost foolish. But men have made their appearance, who, by dint of thinking, have found out the theory of all natural impressions; and, far from wishing to stifle them, they have discovered to us the noble source from which they spring. The German moralists have raised up sentiment and enthusiasm from the contempt of a tyrannical reason, which counted as gain only what is destroyed, and placed man and nature on the bed of Procrustes, that every part of them might be cut off, which the philosophy of materialism could not understand.

CHAPTER XV.

OF SCIENTIFIC ETHICS.

SINCE the taste for the exact sciences has taken hold of men's minds, they have wished to prove every thing by demonstration ; and the calculation of probabilities allowing them to reduce even what is uncertain to rules, they have flattered themselves that they could resolve mathematically all the difficulties offered by the nicest questions, and extend the dominion of Algebra over the universe. Some philosophers in Germany have also pretended to give to ethics the advantages of a science rigorously proved in its principles as well as in its consequences, and not admitting either of objection or exception, if the first basis of it be adopted. Kant and Fichte have attempted this metaphysical labor, and Schleiermacher, the translator of Plato, and the author of several religious treatises, of which we shall speak in the next section, has published a very deep book, on the examination of different systems of ethics considered as a science. He wished to find out one, all the reasoning of which should be perfectly linked together, in which the principle should involve all the consequences, and every consequence reproduce the principle ; but, at present, it does not appear that this object is attainable.

The ancients also were desirous of making a science of ethics, but they included in this science laws and government ; in fact, it is impossible to determine beforehand all the duties of life, when we do not know what may be required by the laws and manners of the country in which we are placed ; it is in this point of view that Plato has imagined his *Republic.* Man entire is, in that work, considered in relation to religion, to politics, and to morals ; but, as that republic could not exist, one cannot conceive how, in the midst of the abuses of human

society, a code of morals, such as that would be, could supply the habitual interpretation of conscience. Philosophers aim at the scientific form in all things; one would say, they flatter themselves that they shall thus chain down the future, and withdraw themselves entirely from the yoke of circumstances; but what frees us from them is the soul, the sincerity of our inward love of virtue. The science of morals can no more teach us to be honest men, in all the magnificence of that expression, than geometry to draw, or literary rules to invent.

Kant, who had admitted the necessity of sentiment in metaphysical truths, was willing to dispense with it in morals, and he was never able to establish incontestably more than this one great fact of the human heart, that ethics have duty, and not interest, for their basis; but to understand duty, conscience and religion must be our teachers. Kant, in separating religion from the motives of ethics, could only see in conscience a judge, and not a divine voice, and therefore he has been incessantly presenting to that judge points of difficulty; the solutions of them which he has given, and which he thought evident, have been attacked in a thousand ways; for it is by sentiment alone that we ever arrive at unanimity of opinion among men.

Some German philosophers, perceiving the impossibility of reducing into law all the affections of which our nature is composed, and of making a science, as it were, of all the emotions of the heart, have contented themselves with affirming that ethics consist in a feeling of harmony within ourselves. Undoubtedly, when we feel no remorse, it is probable we are not criminal; and even when we may have committed what are faults according to the opinions of others, if we have done our duty according to our own opinion, we are not guilty; but we must nevertheless be cautious in relying on this self-satisfaction, which ought, it should seem, to be the best proof of virtue. There are men who have brought themselves to take their own pride for conscience; fanaticism, in others, is a disinterested medium, which justifies every thing in their eyes; and in some characters, the habit of committing crimes gives

a kind of strength which frees them from repentance, at least as long as they are untouched by misfortune.

It does not follow from this impossibility of discovering a science in ethics, or any universal signs, by which to know whether its precepts are observed, that there are not some positive duties which may serve as our guides; but as there are in the destiny of man both necessity and liberty, so, in his conduct, there ought to be inspiration and method. Nothing that belongs to virtue can be either altogether arbitrary or altogether fixed: thus, it is one of the miracles of religion, that it unites, in the same degree, the exultation of love and submission to the law; thus the heart of man is at once satisfied and directed.

I shall not here give an account of all the systems of scientific ethics which have been published in Germany; there are some of them so refined, that, although treating of our own nature, one does not know on what to rest for the conception of them. The French philosophers have rendered ethics singularly dry, by referring every thing to self-interest. Some German metaphysicians have arrived at the same result, by nevertheless building all their doctrines on sacrifices. Neither systems of materialism, nor those of abstraction, can give a complete idea of virtue.

CHAPTER XVI.

JACOBI.

It would be difficult in any country, to meet with a man of letters of a more distinguished nature than Jacobi; with every advantage of person and fortune, he devoted himself, from his youth, during forty years, to meditation. Philosophy is ordinarily a consolation or an asylum; but he who makes choice of it when circumstances concur to promise him great success

in the world, is the more worthy of respect. Led by his character to acknowledge the power of sentiment, Jacobi busied himself with abstract ideas, principally to show their insufficiency. His writings on metaphysics are much esteemed in Germany; yet it is chiefly as a great moralist that his reputation is universal.[1]

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[1] "A friend of Hamann E. H. Jacobi, advanced a theory totally at variance with the Critical and Dogmatical systems which then divided the philosophical world, and allied to the more noble kind of mysticism. He possessed a profound and religious mind, with lively and genial powers of expression and a sincere hatred of the empty formularies of system-makers. The last principle he carried so far as almost to show himself an enemy of philosophical reason itself, from a conviction that a consistent dogmatical theory, like that of Spinoza, which admitted no truth without demonstration, could conduct only to Determinism and Pantheism; while the Critical theory, by its prejudice in favor of demonstrative and mediate knowledge, was led to reject all cognitions of supersensuous objects, without being able to establish their reality by means of practical rational belief. He was thus led to found all philosophical knowledge on Belief, which he describes as an instinct of reason,—a sort of knowledge produced by an immediate feeling of the mind,—a direct apprehension without proof of the True and Supersensuous; drawing at the same time a clear distinction between such belief and that which is *positive*. All knowledge gives us only a second-hand conviction. The external world is revealed to us by means of the external senses; but objects imperceptible to the senses, such as the Deity, Providence, Free-will, Immortality, and Morality, are revealed to us by an *internal sense*, the organ of Truth, which assumed at a later date the title of Reason, as being the faculty adapted for the apprehension of Truth. This twofold revelation (of the material and the immaterial worlds) awakens man to self-consciousness, with a feeling of his superiority to external Nature, or a sense of Free-will. Man cognizes God and Freedom immediately through the reason. In the same manner, Jacobi would found the principles of Morality on Sentiment. Reason, as the faculty of the Ideas, which reveal themselves to the Internal Sense, supplies philosophy with its materials: the Understanding, or the faculty of logical conceptions, gives these a form. It is thus that he has expressed himself in his later works. He admits the great merit of Kant in destroying the vain labor of theorists, and establishing a pure system of practical philosophy, but differs from him by asserting that not only practical but also theoretical cognitions, relative to real but supersensuous objects, are immediate; and alleges that the Critical system annihilates not only rational but also sensational apprehension (*Wahrnehmung*). At the same time he maintains the impossibility of any genuine philosophical Science. Jacobi at first expressed himself somewhat obscurely on this principle of an internal revelation and consequent belief, the corner-stone of his sys-

He was the first who attacked ethics founded on interest; and, by assigning as the principle of his own system, religious sentiment considered philosophically, he has created a doctrine distinct from that of Kant, who refers every thing to the inflexible law of duty, and from that of the new metaphysicians, who aim, as I have just said, at applying the strictness of science to the theory of virtue.

Schiller, in an epigram against Kant's system of morals, says, "I take pleasure in serving my friends; it is agreeable to me to perform my duty; this makes me uneasy, for then I am not virtuous." This pleasantry carries with it a deep sense; for, although happiness ought never to be our object in fulfilling our duty, yet the inward satisfaction which it affords us is precisely what may be called the beatitude of virtue. This word Beatitude has lost something of its dignity; it must, however, be recurred to, for it is necessary to express that kind of impression which makes us sacrifice happiness, or at least pleasure, to a gentler and a purer state of mind.

In fact, if sentiment does not second morality, how would the latter make itself respected? How could reason and will be united together, if not by sentiment, when the will has to control the passions? A German philosopher has said, that *there is no philosophy but the Christian religion;* and certainly he did not so express himself to exclude philosophy, but because he was convinced that the highest and the deepest ideas led to the discovery of the singular agreement between that religion and the nature of man. Between these two classes of moralists, that which with Kant, and others still more abstracted, refers all the actions of morality to immutable precepts, and that which with Jacobi declares that every thing is

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tem. In consequence of this obscurity arose a multitude of objections and misapprehensions, which were also provoked by his neglecting to discriminate accurately between Reason and Understanding; and by the opposition between his theistical theory of Belief and Sensation, and the systems of his contemporaries, as well as the want of systematic arrangement it betrayed. We must not, however, be blind to the indirect services which he has rendered to the cause of philosophy in Germany."—(Tennemann, *Manual of Philosophy*, pp. 454–456.)—*Ed.*

to be left to the decision of sentiment, Christianity seems to show the wonderful point, at which the positive law has not excluded the inspiration of the heart, nor that inspiration the positive law.

Jacobi, who has so much reason to confide in the purity of his conscience, was wrong to lay down as a principle, that we should yield entirely to whatever the emotions of the soul may suggest. The dryness of some intolerant writers, who admit no modification or indulgence in the application of some precepts, has driven Jacobi into the contrary excess.

When the French moralists are severe, they are so to a degree that destroys individual character in man; it is the spirit of the nation to love authority in every thing. The German philosophers, and Jacobi above all, respect what constitutes the particular existence of every being, and judge of actions by their source—that is, according to the good or bad impulse which causes them. There are a thousand ways of being a very bad man, without offending against any received law, as a detestable tragedy may be written, without any neglect of theatrical rules and effect. When the soul has no natural spring, it seeks to know what ought to be said, and what ought to be done, in every circumstance, that it may be acquitted towards itself, and towards others, by submitting to what is ordained. The law, however, in morality, as in poetry, can only teach what ought not to be done; but, in all things, what is good and sublime, is only revealed to us by the divinity of our heart.

Public utility, as I have explained it in the preceding chapter, might lead us to be immoral by morality. In the relations of private life, on the contrary, it may sometimes happen, that a conduct which is perfect, according to worldly estimation, may proceed from a bad principle; that is to say, may belong to something dry, malicious, and uncharitable. Natural passions and superior talents are displeasing to those men who are too easily dignified with the name of severe; they avail themselves of their morality, which they say comes from God, as an enemy would take the sword of a father to destroy his children.

At the same time, Jacobi's aversion to the inflexible rigor of law, leads him too far in freeing himself from it. "Yes," says he, "I would be a liar like the dying Desdemona ;[1] I would deceive like Orestes, when he wished to die instead of Pylades ; I would be an assassin like Timoleon ; perjured like Epaminondas and John De Witt ; I would resolve to commit suicide like Cato, or sacrilege like David ; for I have an assurance within me, that in pardoning these things, which are crimes according to the letter, man exercises the sovereign right which the majesty of his nature confers upon him, fixes the seal of his dignity, the seal of his divine nature, to the pardon which he grants.

"If you would establish a system universal and strictly scientific, you must submit conscience to that system which has petrified life : that conscience must become deaf, dumb, and insensible ; even the smallest remains of its root, that is, of the human heart, must be torn up. Yes, as truly as your metaphysical forms fill the place of Apollo and the Muses, it is only by imposing silence on your heart that you will be able implicitly to conform to laws without exception, and that you will adopt the hard and servile obedience which they demand : thus conscience will only serve to teach you, like a professor in his chair, the truth that is without you ; and this inward light will soon be no more than a finger-post set up on the highway to direct travellers on their journey."

Jacobi is so well guided by his own sentiments, that perhaps he has not sufficiently reflected on the consequences of this morality to ordinary men ; for what answer could be given to those who should pretend, in departing from duty, that they obey the suggestions of their conscience ? Undoubtedly, we may discover that they are hypocrites who speak thus ; but we have furnished them with an argument which will serve to justify them, whatever they may do ; and it is a great thing

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[1] Desdemona, in order to save her husband from the disgrace and danger of the crime he has just committed, declares, as she is dying, that she has killed herself.

for men to have phrases to repeat in favor of their conduct: they make use of them at first to deceive others, and end with deceiving themselves.

Will it be said that this independent doctrine can only suit characters which are truly virtuous? There ought to be no privileges even for Virtue; for from the moment she desires them, it is probable she ceases to deserve them. A sublime equality reigns in the empire of duty, and something passes at the bottom of the human heart which gives to every man, when he sincerely desires it, the means of performing all that enthusiasm inspires, without transgressing the limits of the Christian law, which is also the work of a holy enthusiasm.

The doctrine of Kant may in effect be considered as too dry, because it does not attribute sufficient influence to religion; but it is not surprising that he should have been inclined not to make sentiment the basis of his morality, at a time when there was so widely diffused, and especially in Germany, an affectation of sensibility, which necessarily weakened the spring of minds and characters. A genius like Kant's should have for its object, to give a new dye to the mind.

The German moralists of the new school, so pure in their sentiments, to whatever abstract systems they abandon themselves, may be divided into three classes: those who, like Kant and Fichte, have aimed at giving to the law of duty a scientific theory, and an inflexible application; those,[1] at the head of

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[1] "The doctrine of Jacobi found numerous adherents, especially among men accustomed to raise faith and sentiment above the other faculties of the soul. But the vagueness that we have already pointed out in this philosophy, in connection with the relations that exist between the understanding and the reason, appears to have given rise to a kind of schism among those who devoted themselves to its development. Some of them considered ideas as revelations of the Deity, through the medium of perception, and they attributed these ideas to reason, as to their special faculty; they maintain, moreover, that notions play a completely negative part in connection with ideas: that is to say, that ideas could neither be reached, conceived, nor expressed by means of notions; that they manifest themselves in sentiment alone; and lastly, that belief precedes and exceeds all knowledge. Others conceded more to notions, and made philosophy to consist in the oneness of the reason and of the understanding; a one-

whom Jacobi is to be placed, who take religious sentiment and natural conscience for their guides; and those who, making revelation the basis of their belief, endeavor to unite sentiment and duty, and seek to bind them together by a philosophical interpretation. These three classes of moralists equally attack morality founded on self-interest. That morality has now scarcely any partisans in Germany; evil actions may be done there, but at least the theory of what is right is left untouched.

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ness that, according to them would derive its substance from reason, and its form from the understanding. This last opinion was adopted by Jacobi himself, but only in his later years. Among the advocates of the former of these doctrines must be included Frederic Kœppen, a professor of Landshut, and afterwards at Erlangen, a spiritual writer, and the author of an excellent digest of the system of this school. To the second party belong the labors of James Salat. Kœppen, a friend and disciple of Jacobi, starts from the idea of Freedom. According to him, liberty is a power that determines itself, and takes its start from itself; it is consequently a primary cause, the substratum of all existence; in a word, *Being*, properly so called. But at the same time, Freedom is perfectly inconceivable to the understanding; nay, its very possibility cannot be clearly perceived, or its reality demonstrated: it is a fact of knowledge and of activity, perceived immediately, intuitively. Necessity is an order established by liberty. An unlimited, an absolute liberty, is the Divine Being. Reason is the faculty that is cognizant of liberty. The nature of human Individuality consists in the relation between the exterior and the interior. By this relation, liberty is limited in man. Every philosophy is consequently *dualistic.* It is this dualism that causes the eternal and unavoidable contradiction of the science. It would follow, moreover, from this, strictly speaking, that philosophy is impossible; and that scientific pretension, properly so called, is always destined to rebound forever vainly on itself. The writings of Kœppen, like those of Jacobi, whatever may be our judgment of the substance of their doctrine, must be classed among the works that have exerted a salutary influence on the philosophy of our times, in as far as they combat the authority of scholastic philosophy and blind dogmatism; and that we find in them a lively development of numerous ideas, some of which are original, and others borrowed from Platonism. We must also place in this school Gaetan de Weiller, a friend of Jacobi, a Bavarian secret councillor, secretary of the Academy of Sciences, and director of the public schools of Munich, who died in 1826, as well as Christian Weiss, a school and regency councillor at Merseburg, whose psychological researches are deserving of notice."—(Tennemann, *Manual of Philosophy*, pp. 456-458.) —*Ed.*

CHAPTER XVII.

OF WOLDEMAR.

THE romance of Woldemar is the work of the same philosopher, Jacobi, of whom I have spoken in the last chapter. This work contains philosophical discussions, in which the systems of morality professed by the French writers are warmly attacked, and the doctrine of Jacobi is explained in it with admirable eloquence. In this respect *Woldemar* is a very fine book; but as a novel I neither like the conduct nor the end of it.

The author, who, as a philosopher, refers all human destiny to sentiment, describes in his work, as it appears to me, sensibility differently from what it is in fact. An exaggerated delicacy, or rather a whimsical manner of considering the human heart, may interest in theory, but not when it is put in action, and thus attempted to be made something real.

Woldemar feels a warm friendship for a person who will not marry him, although she partakes of his feeling. He marries a woman he does not love, because he thinks he has found in her a submissive and gentle character, which is proper for marriage. Scarcely has he married her, when he is on the point of giving himself up to the love he feels for the other. She, who would not be united to him, still loves him, but she revolts at the idea that it is possible for him to love her; and yet she desires to live near him, to take care of his children, to treat his wife as her sister, and only to know the affections of nature by the sympathy of friendship. It is thus that a piece of Goethe, much boasted of, *Stella*,[1] finishes with a reso-

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[1] "A poorer production," says Mr. Lewes, "was never owned by a great poet."—*Ed.*

lution taken by two women, bound by sacred ties to the same man, to live with him in good understanding with each other. Such inventions only succeed in Germany, because in that country there is frequently more imagination than sensibility. Southern souls would understand nothing of this heroism of sentiment: passion is devoted, but jealous; and that pretended delicacy, which sacrifices love to friendship, without the injunction of duty, is nothing but an affected coldness.

All this generosity at the expense of love is merely an artificial system. We must not admit toleration, or rivalry, into a sentiment which is then only sublime, when, like maternal and filial tenderness, it is exclusive and all-powerful. We ought not, by our own choice, to place ourselves in a situation where morals and sensibility are not of one accord; for what is involuntary is so beautiful, that it is alarming to be condemned to give orders to ourselves in all our actions, and to live as if we were our own victims.

It is, assuredly, neither from hypocrisy, nor from dryness of character, that a writer of real and excellent genius has imagined, in the novel of *Woldemar*, situations in which every personage sacrifices sentiment by means of sentiment, and anxiously seeks a reason for not loving what he loves. But Jacobi, who had felt from his youth a lively inclination towards every species of enthusiasm, has here sought out a romantic mysteriousness in the attachments of the heart, which is very ingeniously described, but is quite foreign to nature.

It seems to me that Jacobi understands religion better than love, for he is too desirous of confounding them. It is not true that love, like religion, can find all its happiness in the renunciation of happiness itself. We change the idea that we ought to entertain of virtue, when we make it consist in a sort of exalted feeling which has no object, and in sacrifices for which there is no necessity. All the characters in Jacobi's novel are continually tilting with their generosity against their love; not only is this unlike what happens in life, but it has no moral beauty when virtue does not require it; for strong and passionate feelings honor human nature; and religion is so impressive

as it is, precisely because it can triumph over such feelings. Would it have been necessary for God himself to condescend to address the human heart, if there were only found in that heart some cold and graceful affections which it would be so easy to renounce?

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF A ROMANTIC BIAS IN THE AFFECTIONS OF THE HEART.

The English philosophers have founded virtue, as we have said, upon feeling, or rather upon the moral sense; but this system has no connection with the *sentimental* morality of which we are here speaking; this morality, the name and idea of which hardly exist out of Germany, has nothing philosophical in it; it only makes a duty of sensibility, and leads to the contempt of those who are deficient in that quality.

Doubtless, the power of feeling love is very closely connected with morality and religion; it is possible then that our repugnance to cold and hard minds is a sublime sort of instinct, an instinct which apprises us, that such beings, even when their conduct is estimable, act mechanically or by calculation; and that it is impossible for any sympathy to exist between us and them. In Germany, where it is attempted to reduce all impressions into precepts, every thing has been deemed immoral which was destitute of sensibility, nay, which was not of a romantic character. Werther had brought exalted sentiments so much into fashion, that hardly any body dared to show that he was dry and cold of nature, even when he was condemned to such a nature in reality. From thence arose that *forced enthusiasm* for the moon, for forests, for the country, and for solitude: from thence those nervous fits, that affectation in the very voice, those looks which wished to be seen; in a word, all that apparatus of sensibility, which vigorous and sincere minds disdain.

The author of *Werther* was the first to laugh at these affectations; but as ridiculous practices must be found in all countries, perhaps it is better that they should consist in the somewhat silly exaggeration of what is good, than in the elegant pretension to what is evil. As the desire of success is unconquerable among men, and still more so among women, the pretensions of mediocrity are a certain sign of the ruling taste at such an epoch, and in such a society; the same persons who displayed their *sentimentality* in Germany, would have elsewhere exhibited a levity and superciliousness of character.

The extreme susceptibility of the German character is one of the great causes of the importance they attach to the least shades of sentiment; and this susceptibility frequently arises from the truth of the affections. It is easy to be firm when we have no sensibility: the sole quality which is then necessary is courage; for a well-regulated severity must begin with *self;* but, when the proofs of interest in our welfare, which others give or refuse us, powerfully influence our happiness, we must have a thousand times more irritability in our hearts than those who use their friends as they would an estate, and endeavor solely to make them profitable.

At the same time we ought to be on our guard against those codes of subtle and many-shaded sentiment, which the German writers have multiplied in such various manners, and with which their romances are filled. The Germans, it must be confessed, are not always perfectly natural. Certain of their own uprightness, of their own sincerity in all the real relations of life, they are tempted to regard the affected love of the beautiful as united to the worship of the good, and to indulge themselves, occasionally, in exaggerations of this sort, which spoil every thing.

This rivalship of sensibility, between some German ladies and authors, would at bottom be innocent enough, if the ridiculous appearance which it gives to affectation did not always throw a kind of discredit upon sincerity itself. Cold and selfish persons find a peculiar pleasure in laughing at passionate affections; and would wish to make every thing appear arti-

ficial which they do not experience. There are even persons of true sensibility whom this sugared sort of exaggeration cloys with their own impressions; and their feelings become exhausted as we may exhaust their religion, by tedious sermons and superstitious practices.

It is wrong to apply the positive ideas which we have of good and evil to the subtilities of sensibility. To accuse this or that character of their deficiencies in this respect, is like making it a crime not to be a poet. The natural susceptibility of those who think more than they act, may render them unjust to persons of a different description. We must possess imagination to conjecture all that the heart can make us suffer; and the best sort of people in the world are often dull and stupid in this respect; they march right across our feelings, as if they were treading upon flowers, and wondering that they fade away. Are there not men who have no admiration for Raphael, who hear music without emotion, to whom the ocean and the heavens are but monotonous appearances? How then should they comprehend the tempests of the soul?

Are not even those who are most endowed with sensibility sometimes discouraged in their hopes? May they not be overcome by a sort of inward aridness, as if the Divinity was retiring from their bosoms? They remain not less faithful to their affections; but there is no more incense in the temple, no more music in the sanctuary, no more emotion in the heart. Often also does misfortune bid us silence in ourselves this voice of sentiment, harmonious or distracting in its tone, as it agrees, or not with our destiny. It is then impossible to make a duty of sensibility: for those who own it suffer so much from its possession, as frequently to have the right and the desire to subject it to restraint.

Nations of ardent character do not talk of sensibility without terror; a peaceable and dreaming people believe they can encourage it without alarm. For the rest, it is possible, that this subject has never been written upon with perfect sincerity; for every one wishes to do himself honor by what he feels, or by what he inspires. Women endeavor to set themselves out

like a romance ; men, like a history ; but the human heart is still far from being penetrated in its most intimate relations. At one time or another, perhaps, somebody will tell us sincerely all he has felt ; and we shall be quite astonished at discovering, that the greater part of maxims and observations are erroneous, and that there is an unknown soul at the bottom of that which we have been describing.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF LOVE IN MARRIAGE.

It is in marriage that sensibility is a duty : in every other relation virtue may suffice ; but in that in which destinies are intertwined, where the same impulse, so to speak, serves for the beatings of two hearts, it seems that a profound affection is almost a necessary tie. The levity of manners has introduced so much misery into married life, that the moralists of the last age were accustomed to refer all the enjoyments of the heart to paternal and maternal love ; and ended by almost considering marriage only in the light of a requisite condition for enjoying the happiness of having children. This is false in morals, and still more false with regard to happiness.

It is so easy to be good for the sake of our children, that we ought not to make a great merit of it. In their first years they can have no will but that of their parents ; and when they have arrived at youth, they exist by themselves. Justice and goodness compose the principal duties of a relation which nature makes easy. It is not thus in our connections with that half of ourselves, who may find happiness or unhappiness in the least of our actions, of our looks, and of our thoughts. It is there alone that morality can exert itself in its complete energy ; it is there also that is placed the true source of felicity.

A friend of the same age, in whose presence you are to live and die; a friend whose every interest is your own; all whose prospects are partaken by yourself, including that of the grave: here is a feeling which constitutes all our fate. Sometimes, it is true, our children, and more often our parents, become our companions through life; but this rare and sublime enjoyment is combated by the laws of nature; while the marriage-union is in accord with the whole of human existence.

Whence comes it, then, that this so holy union is so often profaned? I will venture to say it, the cause is that remarkable inequality which the opinion of society establishes between the duties of the two parties. Christianity has drawn women out of a state that resembled slavery. Equality, in the sight of God, being the basis of this wonderful religion, it has a tendency towards maintaining the equality of rights upon earth; divine justice, the only perfect justice, admits no kind of privilege, and, above all, refuses that of force. Nevertheless, there have been left, by the slavery of women, some prejudices, which, combining with the great liberty that society allows them, have occasioned many evils.

It is right to exclude women from political and civil affairs; nothing is more opposite to their natural destination than all that would bring them into rivalry with men; and glory itself would be for women only a splendid-mourning suit for happiness. But if the destiny of women ought to consist in a continual act of devotion to conjugal love, the recompense of this devotion is the strict faithfulness of him who is its object.

Religion makes no distinction between the duties of the two parties; but the world establishes a wide difference; and out of this difference grows intrigue in women, and resentment in men.

> "What heart can give itself entirely up,
> Nor wish another heart alike entire?"

Who then, in good faith, accepts friendship as the price of love? Who sincerely promises constancy to voluntary infidelity? Religion, without doubt, can demand it; for she alone knows the secret of that mysterious land where sacrifices are enjoy-

ments; but how unjust is the exchange to which man endeavors to make his companion submit!

"I will love you," he says, "passionately, for two or three years; and then, at the end of that time, I will talk reason to you." And this, which they call reason, is the disenchantment of life. "I will show, in my own house, coldness and wearisomeness of spirit; I will try to please elsewhere: but you, who are ordinarily possessed of more imagination and sensibility than I am; you, who have nothing to employ, nor to distract you, while the world offers me every sort of avocation; you, who only exist for me while I have a thousand other thoughts; you will be satisfied with that subordinate, icy, divided affection, which it is convenient to me to grant you; and you will reject with disdain all the homage which expresses more exalted and more tender sentiments."

How unjust a treaty! all human feeling revolts from it. There is a singular contrast between the forms of respect towards women, which the spirit of chivalry introduced in Europe, and the tyrannical sort of liberty which men have allotted to themselves. This contrast produces all the misfortunes of sentiment, unlawful attachments, perfidy, abandonment, and despair. The German nations have been less afflicted than others with these fatal effects; but they ought, upon this point, to fear the influence which is sure to be exerted at length by modern civilization. It would be better to shut up women like slaves, neither to rouse their understanding nor their imagination, than to launch them into the midst of the world, and to develop all their faculties, in order to refuse them at last the happiness which those faculties render necessary to them.

There is an excess of wretchedness in an unhappy marriage which transcends every other misery in the world. The whole soul of a wife reposes upon the attachment of her husband: to struggle alone against fortune; to advance towards the grave without the friend who should regret us; this is an isolated state, of which the Arabian desert gives but a faint idea; and, when all the treasure of your youthful years has been resigned

in vain; when you hope no longer, at the end of life, the reflection of those early rays; when the twilight has nothing more than can recall the dawn, but is pale and discolored as the phantom that foreruns the night; then your heart revolts; it seems to you that you are deprived of the gifts of God on earth; and if you still love the being who treats you as a slave, since he does not belong to you, and yet disposes of you, despair seizes all your faculties, and Conscience herself grows troubled at the intensity of your distress.

Women might address those husbands who treat their fate with levity in these lines of the fable:

> "Yes! for you it is but play,
> But it steals our lives away."

And until some revolution of ideas shall take place, which changes the opinion of men as to the constancy which the marriage-tie imposes upon them, there will be always war between the two sexes; secret, eternal, cunning, perfidious war; and the morals of both will equally suffer by it.

In Germany there is hardly any inequality in marriage between the two sexes; but it is because the women, as often as the men, break the most holy bonds. The facility of divorce introduces in family connections a sort of anarchy which suffers nothing to remain in its proper truth or strength. It would be much better, in order to maintain something sacred upon earth, that there were one slave in marriage, rather than two free-thinkers.

Purity of mind and conduct is the first glory of a woman. What a degraded being would she be, deprived of both these qualities! But general happiness, and the dignity of the human species, would perhaps not gain less by the fidelity of man in marriage. In a word, what is there more beautiful in moral order than a young man who respects this sacred tie? Opinion does not require it of him; society leaves him free; a sort of savage pleasantry would endeavor to ridicule even the complaints of the heart which he had broken; for censure is easily turned upon the sufferer. He then is the master, but he im

poses duties on himself; no disagreeable result can arise to himself from his faults; but he dreads the evil he may do to her who has intrusted herself to his heart; and generosity attaches him so much the more, because society dissolves his attachment.

Fidelity is enjoined to women by a thousand different considerations. They may dread the dangers and the disgraces which are the inevitable consequences of one error. The voice of Conscience alone is audible by man; he knows he causes suffering to another; he knows that he is destroying, by his inconstancy, a sentiment which ought to last till death, and to be renewed in heaven: alone with himself, alone in the midst of seductions of every kind, he remains pure as an angel; for if angels have not been represented under the characters of women, it is because the union of strength and purity is more beautiful, and also more celestial, than even the most perfect modesty itself in a feeble being.

Imagination, when it has not memory for a bridle, detracts from what we possess, embellishes what we fear we shall not obtain, and turns sentiment into a conquered difficulty. But, in the same manner as in the arts, difficulties vanquished do not require real genius; so in sentiment security is necessary, in order to experience those affections which are the pledges of eternity, because they alone give us an idea of that which cannot come to an end.

To the young man who remains faithful, every day seems to increase the preference he feels towards her he loves; nature has bestowed on him unbounded freedom, and for a long time, at least, he never looks forward to evil days: his horse can carry him to the end of the world; war, when to that he devotes himself, frees him, at least momentarily, from domestic relations, and seems to reduce all the interest of existence to victory or death. The earth is his own, all its pleasures are offered to him; no fatigue intimidates him, no intimate association is necessary to him; he clasps the hand of a companion in arms, and the only tie he thinks necessary to him is formed. A time will, no doubt, arrive when Destiny will

reveal to him her dreadful secrets; but, as yet he suspects them not. Every time that a new generation comes into possession of its domain, does it not think that all the misfortunes of its predecessors arose from their weakness? Is it not persuaded that they were born weak and trembling, as they now are seen? Well! From the midst of so many illusions, how virtuous and sensible is he who devotes himself to a lasting attachment,—the tie which binds this life to the other! Ah, how noble is a manly and dignified expression, when, at the same time, it is modest and pure! There we behold a ray of that heavenly shame which beams from the crown of holy virgins, to light up even the warrior's brow.

If a young man chooses to share with one object the bright days of youth, he will, doubtless, among his contemporaries, meet with some who will pronounce the sentence of *dupery* upon him, the terror of the children of our times. But is he, who alone will be truly loved, a dupe? for the distresses, or the enjoyments of self-love, form the whole tissue of the frivolous and deceitful affections. Is he a dupe who does not amuse himself in deceiving others? to be, in his turn, still more deceived, more deeply ruined perhaps than his victim? In short, is he a dupe who has not sought for happiness in the wretched combinations of vanity, but in the eternal beauties of nature, which all proceed from constancy, from duration, and from depth?

No; God, in creating man the first, has made him the noblest of his creatures; and the most noble creature is that one which has the greater number of duties to perform. It is a singular abuse of the prerogative of a superior nature to make it serve as an instrument to free itself from the most sacred ties, whereas true superiority consists in the power of the soul; and the power of the soul is virtue.

CHAPTER XX.

MODERN WRITERS OF THE ANCIENT SCHOOL IN GERMANY.

Before the new school had given birth in Germany to two tendencies which seem to exclude each other, metaphysics and poetry, scientific method and enthusiasm, there were some writers who deserved an honorable place by the side of the English moralists. Mendelssohn, Garve, Sulze, Engel, etc., have written upon sentiments and duties with sensibility, religion, and candor. We do not in their works meet with that ingenious knowledge of the world which characterizes the French authors, la Rochefoucauld, la Bruyère, etc. German moralists paint society with a certain degree of ignorance which is interesting at first, but at last becomes monotonous.

Garve is the writer, of all others, who has attached the highest importance to speaking well of good company, fashion, politeness, etc. There is, throughout his manner of expressing himself on this head, a great desire to appear a man of the world, to know the reason of every thing, to be knowing like a Frenchman, and to judge favorably of the court and of the town; but the common-place ideas which he displays in his writings on these different subjects prove that he knows nothing but by hearsay, and has never taken those refined and delicate views which the relations of society afford.

When Garve speaks of virtue, he shows a pure understanding and a tranquil mind: he is particularly engaging and original in his treatise on *Patience.* Borne down by a cruel malady, he supported it with admirable fortitude; and whatever we have felt ourselves inspires new ideas.

Mendelssohn,[1] a Jew by birth, devoted himself, from com-

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[1] "The history of Mendelssohn is interesting in itself, and full of encouragement to all lovers of self-improvement. At thirteen he was a wander-

merce, to the study of the fine arts and of philosophy, without renouncing, in the smallest degree, either the belief or the rites of his religion; and being a sincere admirer of the *Phædon*, of which he was the translator, he retained the ideas and the sentiments which were the precursors of Jesus Christ; and, educated in the Psalms and in the Bible, his writings preserve the character of Hebrew simplicity. He delighted in making ethics plain by parables, in the Eastern style; and this style is certainly the more pleasing, as it deprives precepts of the tone of reproach.

Among these fables I shall translate one which appears to me remarkable: "Under the tyrannical government of the Greeks, the Israelites were once forbidden, under pain of death, to read among themselves the divine laws. Rabbi Akiba, notwithstanding this prohibition, held assemblies, where he gave lectures on this law. Pappus heard of it, and said to him, 'Akiba, dost thou not fear the threats of these cruel men?' 'I will relate thee a fable,' replied the Rabbi. 'A fox was walking on the bank of a river, and saw the fishes collecting together in terror at the bottom of the river. "What causes your alarm?" said the fox. "The children of men," replied the fishes, "are throwing their lines into the river to catch us

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ing Jewish beggar, without health, without home, almost without a language, for the jargon of broken Hebrew and provincial German which he spoke could scarcely be called one. At middle age he could write this *Phædon;* was a man of wealth and breeding, and ranked among the teachers of his age. Like Pope, he abode by his original creed, though often solicited to change it; indeed, the grand problem of his life was to better the inward and outward condition of his own ill-fated people, for whom he actually accomplished much benefit. He was a mild, shrewd, and worthy man, and might well love *Phædon* and Socrates, for his own character was Socratic. He was a friend of Lessing's—indeed a pupil; for Lessing having accidentally met him at chess, recognized the spirit that lay struggling under such incumbrances, and generously undertook to help him. By teaching the poor Jew a little Greek, he disenchanted him from the Talmud and the Rabbins. The two were afterwards colaborers in Nicolai's *Deutsche Bibliothek*, the first German *Review* of any character; which, however, in the hands of Nicolai himself, it subsequently lost. Mendelssohn's works have mostly been translated into French."—(*Carlyle's Essays*, p. 23.)—*Ed.*

and we are trying to escape from them." "Do you know what you ought to do?" said the fox; "go there upon the rock, where men cannot reach you." "Is it possible," cried the fishes, "that thou canst be the fox, esteemed the most cunning among animals? If thou seriously givest us this advice, thou showest thyself the most ignorant of them all. The water is to us the element of life: and is it possible for us to give it up because we are threatened by dangers?" Pappus, the application of this fable is easy: religious doctrine is to us the source of all good; by that, and for that alone, we exist; if we are pursued into that refuge, we will not withdraw ourselves from danger by seeking shelter in death.'"[1]

The greater part of the world give no better advice than the fox; when they see persons of sensibility agitated by heart-aches, they always propose to them to quit the air where the storm is, to enter into the vacuum which destroys life.

Engel, like Mendelsohn, teaches morals in a dramatic manner. His fictions are trifling, but they bear an intimate relation to the mind. In one of them he represents an old man become mad by the ingratitude of his son; and the old man's smile, while his misfortune is being related, is painted with heart-rending truth. The man who is no longer conscious of his own existence, is as frightful an object as a corpse walking without life. "It is a tree," says Engel, "the branches of which are withered; its roots are still fixed in the earth, but its top is already seized upon by death." A young man, at the sight of this unfortunate creature, asks his father if there is on earth a destiny more dreadful than that of this poor maniac? All the sufferings which destroy, all those of which our reason is witness, seem to him nothing when compared with this deplorable self-ignorance. The father leaves his son to unfold all the horrors of the situation before him; and then suddenly asks him, if that of the wretch who has been the cause of it is not a thousand times more dreadful? The gra-

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[1] We have not the original at hand, and retranslate from Madame de Staël.—*Ed.*

dation of the ideas is very well kept up in this recital, and the picture of the agonies of the mind is represented with eloquence that redoubles the terror caused by the most dreadful of all remorse.

I have in another place quoted a passage from the *Messias*, in which the poet supposes that, in a distant planet, where the inhabitants are immortal, an angel arrived with intelligence that there existed a world where human beings were subject to death. Klopstock draws an admirable picture of the astonishment of those beings who knew not the grief of losing those they loved. Engel ingeniously displays an idea not less striking.

A man has seen all he held most dear, his wife and his daughter, perish. A sentiment of bitterness and of revolt against Providence, takes possession of him; an old friend endeavors to reopen his heart to that deep but resigned grief which pours itself on the bosom of God; he shows him that death is the source of all the moral enjoyments of man.

Would there be affection between parent and child if man's existence was not at once lasting and transitory; fixed by sentiment, hurried away by time? If there was no longer any decline in the world, there would be no longer any progress; how, then, should we experience fear and hope? In short, in every action, in every sentiment, in every thought, death has its share. And not only in reality, but in imagination also, the joys and sorrows which arise from the instability of life are inseparable. Existence consists entirely in those sentiments of confidence and of anxiety with which the soul is filled, wandering between heaven and earth, and death is the principal cause of our actions in life.

A woman, alarmed at the storms of the South, wished to remove to the frigid zone, where thunder is not heard, nor lightning seen. "Our complaints against our lots are much of the same sort," says Engel. In fact, nature must be disenchanted, if all its dangers are to be removed. The charm of the world seems to belong to pain as to pleasure, to fear as much as to hope; and it may be said that human destiny is

ordered like a drama, in which terror and pity are necessary.

Undoubtedly these thoughts are not sufficient to heal up the wounds of the heart; whatever we feel we consider as the overturning of nature, and no one ever suffered without thinking that a great disorder existed in the universe. But when a long space of time has given room for reflection, repose is found in general considerations, and we unite ourselves to the laws of the universe by detaching ourselves from ourselves.

The German moralists of the ancient school are, for the most part, religious and feeling; their theory of virtue is disinterested; they do not admit that doctrine of utility which would lead us, as it does in China, to throw children into the river, if the population became too numerous. Their works are filled with philosophical ideas, and with melancholy and tender affections; but this was not enough to struggle against the selfish morality, armed with its sarcastic irony. This was not enough to refute sophisms, which were used against the truest and the best principles. The soft and sometimes even timid sensibility of the ancient German moralists was not sufficient to combat with success an adroit system of logic, and an elegant style of raillery, which, like all bad sentiments, bowed to nothing but force. More pointed weapons are necessary to oppose those arms which the world has forged; it is therefore, with reason that the philosophers of the new school have thought that a more severe doctrine was requisite, a doctrine of more energy and closer in its arguments, in order to triumph over the depravity of the age.

Assuredly all that is simple is sufficient for all that is good; but when we live at a time in which it has been attempted to range wit on the side of immorality, it is necessary to attempt to gain over genius as the defender of virtue. Doubtless it is a matter of much indifference whether we are accused of silliness, when we express what we feel; but this word *silliness* causes so much alarm among understandings of mediocrity, that we ought, if possible, to preserve them from its infection.

The Germans, fearing that we may turn their integrity into

ridicule, sometimes attempt, although much against their natural disposition, to take a flight towards immortality, that they may acquire a brilliant and easy air. The new philosophers, by elevating their style and their ideas to a great height, have skilfully flattered the self-love of their adepts; and we ought to praise them for this innocent species of art; for the Germans have need of a sentiment of superiority over others to strengthen their minds. There is too much milk of human kindness in their characters, as well as in their understanding. They are, perhaps, the only men to whom we could recommend pride as the means of moral improvement. We cannot deny the fact that the disciples of the new school have followed this advice to rather too great a length; but they are, nevertheless, the most enlightened and the most courageous authors of their country.

What discovery have they made, it will be asked. No doubt what was true in morals two thousand years ago is true at the present moment; but during this period the arguments of meanness and corruption have been multiplied to such an excess, that a philosopher of good feeling ought to proportion his efforts to this fatal progress. Common ideas cannot struggle against a systematic immorality; we must dig deeper inwards, when the exterior veins of the precious metals are exhausted. We have so often seen, in our days, weakness united to a large proportion of virtue, that we have been accustomed to believe in the energy of immorality. The German philosophers (and let them receive the glory of the deed) have been the first in the eighteenth century who have ranged free-thinking on the side of faith, genius on the side of morality, and character on the side of duty.

CHAPTER XXI.

OF IGNORANCE AND FRIVOLITY OF SPIRIT IN THEIR RELATIONS TO ETHICS.

IGNORANCE, such as it appeared some ages ago, respected knowledge, and was desirous of attaining it. The ignorance of our days is contemptuous, and endeavors to turn into ridicule the labors and the meditations of enlightened men. The philosophical spirit has spread over almost all classes a facility of reasoning, which is used to depreciate every thing that is great and serious in human nature, and we are at that epoch of civilization in which all the beauties of the soul are mouldering into dust.

When the barbarians of the North seized upon the possession of the most fertile countries in Europe, they brought with them some fierce and manly virtues; and in their endeavors at self-improvement, they asked from the South her sun, and her arts and sciences. But our civilized barbarians esteem nothing except address in the management of worldly affairs; and only instruct themselves just enough to ridicule, by a few set phrases, the meditations of a whole life.

Those who deny the perfectibility of the human understanding pretend that progression and decline follow each other by turns, and that the wheel of thought rolls round like that of fortune. What a sad spectacle is this! the generations of men employing themselves upon earth, like Sisyphus in hell, in constant and useless labor! And what would then be the destiny of the human race, when it resembled the most cruel punishment which the imagination of poetry has conceived? But it is not thus; and we can perceive a destiny always the same, always sequential, always progressive, in the history of man.

The contest between the interests of this world and more

elevated sentiments has existed at every period, in nations as well as in individuals. Superstition sometimes drives the enlightened into the opposite party of incredulity; and sometimes, on the contrary, knowledge itself awakens every belief of the heart. At the present era, philosophers take refuge in religion, in order to discover the source of high conceptions, and of disinterested sentiments; at this era, prepared by ages, the alliance between philosophy and religion may be intimate and sincere. The ignorant are not, as formerly, the enemies of doubt, and determined to reject all the false lights which might disturb their religious hopes, and their chivalrous self-devotion; the ignorant of our days are incredulous, frivolous, superficial; they know all that selfishness has need to know; and their ignorance is only extended to those sublime studies which excite in the soul a feeling of admiration for nature and for the Deity.

Warlike occupations formerly filled up the life of the nobility, and formed their minds for action; but since, in our days, men of the first rank take no part in government, and have ceased to study any science profoundly, all the activity of their genius, which ought to have been employed in the circle of affairs, or intellectual labors, is directed to the observation of manners, and to the knowledge of anecdotes.

Young persons, just come from school, hasten to put on idleness as soon as the manly robe; men and women act as spies upon each other in the minutest events, not exactly from maliciousness, but in order that they may have something to say when they have nothing to employ their thoughts. This sort of daily censoriousness destroys good nature and integrity. We are not satisfied with ourselves when we abuse the hospitality which we exercise or receive, by criticising those with whom we live; and we thus prevent the growth and the continuance of all sincere affection; for in listening to the ridicule of those who are dear to us, we tarnish all that is pure and exalted in that affection: sentiments in which we do not maintain perfect sincerity, do more mischief than indifference.

Every one has his ridiculous side; it is only at a distance

that a character appears perfect; but that which constitutes the individuality of each person being always some singularity, this singularity affords an opening to ridicule; man, therefore, who fears ridicule above everything, endeavors, as much as possible, to remove the appearance of all that may signalize him in any manner, whether it be good or bad. This sort of effaced nature, in however good taste it may seem to be, has also enough of the ridiculous about it; but few have a sufficiently delicate *tact* to seize its absurdities.

Ridicule has this peculiarity—it is essentially attached to goodness, but not to power. Power has something fierce and triumphant about it which puts ridicule to death; besides, men of frivolous mind respect the *wisdom of the flesh*, according to the expression of a moralist of the sixteenth century; and we are astonished to discover all the depth of personal interest in those who appeared incapable of pursuing an idea or a feeling, when nothing could result from either, advantageous to their calculations of fortune or of vanity.

Frivolity of understanding does not lead men to neglect the affairs of this world. We find, on the contrary, a much more noble carelessness, in this respect, in serious characters than in men of a trivial nature; for their levity in most cases only consists in the contempt of general ideas, for the purpose of more close attention to their personal concerns.

There is sometimes a species of wickedness in men of wit; but genius is almost always full of goodness. Wickedness does not arise from a superfluity of understanding, but from a deficiency. If we could talk upon ideas, we should leave persons at rest; if we believed that we could excel others by our natural talents, we should not wish to level the walk that we are ambitious to command. There are common and moderate minds disguised under a poignant and malicious style of sarcasm; but true superiority is radiant with good feeling as well as with lofty thoughts.

The habit of intellectual employment inspires an enlightened benevolence towards men and things. We no longer cling to ourselves as privileged beings, when we know much of the

destiny of man; we are not offended with every event as if it were unexampled; and as justice consists only in the custom of considering the mutual relations of men under a general point of view, comprehensiveness of understanding serves to detach us from selfish calculations. We have ranged in thought over our own existence as well as that of others, when we have given ourselves up to the contemplation of the universe.

Another great disadvantage of ignorance, in the present times, is that it renders us entirely incapable of having an opinion of our own upon the larger portion of subjects which require reflection; consequently, when this or that manner of thinking becomes fashionable from the ascendency of events, the greater part of mankind believe that these words, "all the world acts, or thinks, in this manner," ought to influence every claim of reason or of conscience.

In the idle class of society, it is almost impossible to have any soul without the cultivation of the mind. Formerly, nature was sufficient to instruct man, and to expand his imagination; but since thought, that fading shadow of feeling, has turned all things into abstractions, it is necessary to have a great deal of knowledge to have any good sentiment. Our choice is no longer balanced between the bursts of the soul, devoid of instruction, and philosophical studies, but between the importunate noise of common and frivolous society, and that language which has been held by men of real genius from age to age, even to our own times.

How then can we, without the knowledge of languages, without the habit of reading, communicate with these men who are no more, and whom we feel so thoroughly our friends, our fellow-citizens, and our allies? We must be mean and narrow of soul to refuse such noble enjoyments. Those only, who fill their lives with good actions can dispense with study: the ignorance of idle men proves their aridness of soul, as well as their frivolity of understanding.

After all, there yet remains something truly beautiful and moral, which ignorance and emptiness cannot enjoy: this is

the union of all thinking men, from one end of Europe to the other. Often they have no mutual relations; often they are dispersed to a great distance from each other; but when they meet, a word is enough for recognition. It is not this religion, or that opinion, or such a sort of study; it is the veneration of truth that forms their bond of union. Sometimes, like miners, they dig into the foundations of the earth, to penetrate the mysteries of the world of darkness in the bosom of eternal night; sometimes they mount to the summit of Chimborazo, to discover, at the loftiest point of the globe, some hitherto unknown phenomena; sometimes they study the languages of the East, to find in them the primitive history of man; sometimes they journey to Jerusalem, to call forth from the holy ruins a spark, which reanimates religion and poetry; in a word, they truly are the people of God; they who do not yet despair of the human race, and wish to preserve to man the dominion of reflection.

The Germans merit our especial gratitude in this respect. Ignorance and indifference, as to literature and the fine arts, is shameful with them; and their example proves, that, in our days, the cultivation of the understanding preserves, in the independent classes of society, some sentiments and some principles.

The direction of literature and philosophy was not good in France during the last part of the eighteenth century; but, if we may so express ourselves, the direction of ignorance is still more formidable; for no book does harm to him who reads every book. If idle men of the world, on the contrary, are busy for a few moments, the work they meet with is an event in their heads, like that of a stranger's arrival in the desert; and when this work contains dangerous sophistries, they have no arguments to oppose to it. The discovery of printing is truly fatal for those who only read by halves, or by hazard; for knowledge, like the spear of Telephus, ought to cure the wounds which it has inflicted.

Ignorance, in the midst of the refinements of society, is the most hateful of all mixtures: it makes us, in some respects,

like the vulgar, who value intrigue and cunning alone; it leads us to look but for good living and physical enjoyments; to make use of a little wit, in order to destroy a great deal of soul; to boast of our ignorance; to demand applause for what we do not feel; in a word, to unite a limited understanding with a hard heart, to such a degree, as to be deprived of that looking upwards to heaven, which Ovid has recorded as the noblest attribute of human nature:

> "Os homini sublime dedit; cœlumque tueri
> Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.

> "He, who to man a form erect has given,
> Bade his exalted looks be fix'd on heaven."

PART IV.

RELIGION AND ENTHUSIASM.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS UPON RELIGION IN GERMANY.

THE nations of German extraction are all naturally religious; and the zealousness of this feeling has given occasion to many wars among them. Nevertheless, in Germany, above all other countries, the bias of mind leans more towards enthusiasm than fanaticism. The sectarian spirit must manifest itself under a variety of forms, in a country where the activity of thought is most observable; but, in general, they do not mix theological discussions with human passions, and the different opinions in regard to religion seldom wander out of that ideal world which enjoys a profound peace.

For a long time they were occupied, as I shall show in the following chapter, with the inquiry into the doctrines of Christianity; but for the last twenty years, since the writings of Kant have had great influence upon the public mind, there have prevailed a liberty and a comprehensiveness in the manner of considering religion, which neither require nor reject any form of worship in particular, but which derive from heavenly things the ruling principle of existence.

Many persons think that the religion of the Germans is too indefinite, and that it is better to rally round the standard of a more positive and severe mode of worship. Lessing says, in

his *Essay on the Education of the Human Race*,[1] that religious revelations have been always proportioned to the degree of knowledge which existed at the time of their appearance. The Old Testament, the Gospel, and, in many respects, the Reformation, were, according to their seasons, perfectly in harmony with the progress of the understanding; and, perhaps, we are on the eve of a development of Christianity which will collect all the scattered rays in the same focus, and which will make us perceive in religion more than morality, more than happiness, more than philosophy, more than sentiment itself, since every one of these gifts will be multiplied by its union with all the others.

However this may be, it is perhaps interesting to know under what point of view religion is considered in Germany, and how they have found means to connect it with the whole literary and philosophical system, of which I have sketched the outline. There is something imposing in this collective mass of thought, which lays the whole moral order completely open to our eyes, and gives this sublime edifice self-devotion for its base, and the Divinity for its capital.

It is to the feeling of the infinite that the greater portion of German writers refer all their religious ideas; but it may be asked, Can we conceive the infinite? Do we not conceive it, at least in a negative manner, when, in the mathematics, we are unable to suppose any boundary to duration or to space? This infinite consists in the absence of limits; but the feeling of the infinite, such as the imagination and the heart experience it, is positive and creative.

The enthusiasm which the ideally beautiful makes us feel, that emotion, so full of agitation and of purity at the same time, is excited by the sentiment of the infinite. We feel ourselves, as it were, disengaged by admiration from the shackles of human destiny; and it seems as if some wondrous scene was revealed to us, to free the soul forever from languor and decline. When we contemplate the starry heavens where the

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[1] A translation of this has recently been published in England.—*Ed.*

sparks of light are universes like our own, where the brilliant dust of the milky way traces with its worlds a circle in the firmament, our thoughts are lost in the infinite, our hearts beat for the unknown, for the immense, and we feel that it is only on the other side of earthly experience that our real life will commence. In a word, religious emotions, more than all others together, awaken in us the feeling of the infinite; but when they awaken they satisfy it; and it is for this reason, doubtless, that a man of great genius has said, "that a thinking being is not happy, until the idea of the infinite becomes an enjoyment instead of a burden to his mind."

In effect, when we give ourselves entirely up to reflections, to images, to desires which extend beyond the limits of experience, it is then only that we freely breathe. When we wish to confine ourselves to the interests, the conveniences, the laws of this world, genius, sensibility, enthusiasm, painfully agitate the soul; but they overflow it with enjoyment when we consecrate them to this remembrance, to this expectation of the infinite, which appears in metaphysics under the form of innate dispositions, in virtue under that of self-devotion, in the arts under that of the ideal, and in Religion herself under that of divine love.

The feeling of the infinite is the true attribute of the soul: all that is beautiful, of every kind, excites in us the hope and the desire of an eternal futurity, and of a sublime existence: we cannot hear the wind in the forest, nor the delicious concords of human voices; we cannot feel the enchantment of eloquence or of poetry; in a word, above all, we cannot innocently, deeply love, without being penetrated with religion and immortality. All the sacrifices of personal interest arise from our wish to bring ourselves into accord with this feeling of the infinite, of which we experience all the charm, without being able to express it. If the power of duty was confined to the short duration of this life, how then would it have more command than the passions over the soul? Who would sacrifice what is unbounded to what is bounded? *All limited things are so short!* said St. Augustine; the moments of enjoyment that

earthly inclinations may induce, and the days of peace that a moral conduct insures, would differ very little, if emotions without limit and without end did not spontaneously spring up in the bottom of that human being's heart who devotes himself to virtue.

Many persons will deny this feeling of the infinite; and, assuredly, they have very good ground to deny it, for we cannot possibly explain it to them; a few additional words will not succeed in making them understand what the universe has failed to teach them. Nature has arrayed the infinite in symbols which may bring it down to us: light and darkness, storm and silence, pleasure and pain, all inspire man with this universal religion, of which his heart is the sanctuary.

A man, of whom I have already had occasion to speak, M. Ancillon, has lately published a work upon the new German philosophy, which unites the perspicuity of French wit with the depth of German genius. M. Ancillon had before acquired a celebrated name as a historian; he is, incontestably, what we are accustomed to call in France a good head; his understanding itself is positive and methodical, and it is by his soul that he has seized all that the thought of the infinite can present most comprehensive and most exalted. What he has written on this subject bears a character entirely original; it is, so to speak, the sublime reduced to logic: he traces, with precision, the boundary where experimental knowledge is stopped, whether in the arts, or in philosophy, or in religion; he shows that sentiment goes much further than knowledge, and that, beyond demonstrative proofs, there is a natural evidence in it; beyond analysis, an inspiration; beyond words, ideas; beyond ideas, emotions; and that the feeling of the infinite is a fact of the soul, a primitive fact, without which there would be nothing in man but physical instinct and calculation.

It is difficult to be religious according to the manner introduced by some arid minds, or some well-meaning persons, who would wish to confer upon religion the honors of scientific demonstration. That which so intimately touches upon the

mystery of existence, cannot be expressed by the regular forms of speech. Reasoning on such subjects serves to show where reasoning comes to an end; and at that conclusion commences true certainty; for the truths of feeling have an intensity of strength which calls all our being to their support. The infinite acts upon the soul so as to exalt and to disengage it from time. The business of life is to sacrifice the interests of our transitory existence to that immortality which even now commences for us, if we are already worthy of it; and not only the greater part of religions have this same object, but the fine arts, poetry, glory, love, are religions, into which there enters more or less alloy.

This expression, *it is divine*, which has become general, in order to extol the beauties of nature and of art, this expression is a species of belief among the Germans; it is not from indifference that they are tolerant, it is because there is a universality in their manner of feeling and conceiving religion. In fact, every man may find, in some different wonder of the universe, that which most powerfully addresses his soul: one admires the Divinity in the character of a father, another in the innocence of a child, a third in the heavenly aspect of Raphael's virgins,—in music, in poetry, in nature, it matters not in what: for all are agreed in admiring, if all are animated by a religious principle, the genius of the world, and of every human being.

Men of superior genius have raised doubts concerning this or that doctrine; and it is a great misfortune that the subtilty of logic, or the pretences of self-love, should be able to disturb and to chill the feeling of faith. Frequently, also, reflection has found itself at a loss in those intolerant religions, of which, as we may say, a penal code has been formed, and which have impressed upon theology all the forms of a despotic government. But how sublime is that worship which gives us a foretaste of celestial happiness, in the inspiration of genius as in the most obscure of virtues, in the tenderest affections as in the severest pains, in the tempest as in the fairest skies, in the flower as in the oak, in every thing except calculation, except

the deadly chill of selfishness, which separates us from the benevolence of nature, which makes vanity alone the motive of our actions—vanity, whose root is ever venomous! How beautiful is that religion which consecrates the whole world to its Author, and makes all our faculties subservient to the celebration of the holy rites of this wonderful universe!

Far from such a belief interdicting literature or science, the theory of all ideas, the secret of all talents belong to it; nature and the Divinity would necessarily be in contradiction to each other, if sincere piety forbade men to make use of their faculties, and to taste the pleasure that results from their exercise. There is religion in all the works of genius; there is genius in all religious thoughts. Wit is of a less illustrious origin; it serves for an instrument of contention; but genius is creative. The inexhaustible source of talents and of virtues is this feeling of the infinite, which claims its share in all generous actions, and in all profound thoughts.

Religion is nothing, if it is not every thing; if existence is not filled with it; if we do not incessantly maintain in the soul this belief in the invisible, this self-devotion, this elevation of desire, which ought to triumph over the low inclinations to which our nature exposes us.

But how can religion be incessantly present to our thoughts, if we do not unite it to every thing which ought to form the occupation of a noble existence, devoted affections, philosophical meditations, and the pleasures of the imagination? A great number of practices are recommended to the faithful, that their religion may be recalled to their minds every moment of the day by the obligations which it imposes; but if the whole life could be naturally, and without effort, an act of worship at every moment, would not this be still better? Since the admiration of the beautiful always has relation to the Divinity, and since the very spring of energetic thought makes us remount to our origin, why should not the power of feeling, love, poetry, philosophy, form the columns of the Temple of Faith?

CHAPTER II.

OF PROTESTANTISM.

It was natural for a revolution, prepared by ideas, to take place in Germany; for the prominent trait of this thinking people is the energy of internal conviction. When once an opinion has taken possession of German heads, their patience, and their perseverance in supporting it, do singular honor to the force of human volition.

When we read the details of the death of John Huss, and of Jerome of Prague, the forerunners of the Reformation, we see a striking example of that which characterized the Protestant leaders in Germany, the union of a lively faith with the spirit of inquiry. Their reason did no injury to their belief, nor their belief any to their reason; and their moral faculties were always put into simultaneous action.

Throughout Germany we find traces of the different religious struggles, which, for many ages, occupied the whole nation. They still show, in the cathedral at Prague, bas-reliefs where the devastations committed by the Hussites are represented; and that part of the church which the Swedes set fire to in the Thirty Years' War is not yet rebuilt. Not far from thence, on the bridge, is placed the statue of St. John Nepomucenus,[1] who preferred

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[1] "The massy bridge over the Moldau, connecting the Altstadt with the Kleinseite, begun in the reign of the Emperor Charles IV, 1358, finished 1507, is celebrated as the longest in Germany; it measures one thousand seven hundred and ninety German feet, and is ornamented on each side with twenty-eight statues of saints. The eighth on the right, in going from the Altstadt, is a well-executed bronze statue of *St. John Nepomuk* (Nepomucenus), who, according to the Popish legend, was thrown from the bridge into the river and drowned (1383) by order of King Wenceslaus IV, because he refused to betray the secrets confided to him by the queen in the holy rite of confession. The spot whence he was cast into the river is still marked by a cross with five stars on the parapet, in imitation of the

perishing in the waves to revealing the weaknesses which an unfortunate queen had confessed to him. The monuments, and even the ruins, which testify the influence of religion over man, interest the soul in a lively manner; for the wars of opinion, however cruel they may be, do more honor to nations than the wars of interest.

Of all the great men produced by Germany, Luther is the one whose character is the most German: his firmness had something rude about it; his conviction rose even to obstinacy; the courage of mind was in him the principle of the courage of action; what there was passionate in his soul did not divert him from abstract studies; and although he attacked certain abuses, and considered certain doctrines as prejudices, it was not a philosophical incredulity, but a species of fanaticism, that excited him.

Nevertheless, the Reformation has introduced into the world inquiry in matters of religion. In some minds its result has been skepticism; in others, a stronger conviction of religious truths: the human mind had arrived at an epoch when it was necessary for it to examine in order to believe. The discovery of printing, the multiplicity of every sort of knowledge, and the philosophical investigation of truth, did not allow any longer that blind faith which was formerly so profitable to its teachers. Religious enthusiasm could not grow again except by inquiry and meditation. It was Luther who put the Old Testament and the Gospel into the hands of all the world; it was he who gave its impulse to the study of antiquity; for in learning Hebrew to read the Old, and Greek to read the New

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miraculous flames, which, three days after he was drowned, were seen flickering over the place where his body lay under the water. They continued unextinguished until curiosity was excited, the river dragged, and the body recovered. The honor of being enrolled in the calendar was deferred for centuries after his death. It was not till 1729 that St. John was received among the saints, and his body encased in the gorgeous silver shrine placed in the cathedral. From the circumstances of his death, this saint has become the patron of bridges in all Catholic countries, and his statue usually occupies elsewhere the same situation as at Prague."—(*Murray's Hand-book for Southern Germany*, p. 62.)—*Ed.*

Testament, the students cultivated the ancient languages, and their minds were turned towards historical researches.[1]

Examination may weaken that habitual faith which men do well to preserve as much as they can; but when man comes out of his inquiries more religious than he was when he entered into them, it is then that religion is built upon an immutable basis; it is then that harmony exists between her and knowledge, and that they mutually assist each other.

Some writers have declaimed much against the system of perfectibility; and, to hear them, we should think that it was a real crime to believe our species capable of perfection. It is enough in France that an individual of such a party should have maintained this or that opinion, to make it bad taste to adopt it; and all the sheep of the same flock, one after the other, hasten to level their wise attacks at ideas, which still remain exactly what they are by nature.

It is very probable that the human species is susceptible of education, as well as each man in particular; and that there are epochs marked for the progress of thought in the eternal career of time. The Reformation was the era of inquiry, and of that enlightened conviction which inquiry produces. Christianity was first established, then altered, then examined, then understood; and these different periods were necessary to its development; they have sometimes lasted a hundred, some-

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1 Madame de Staël forgets Reuchlin, and the Seminary of St. Agnes. "The character of Reuchlin," says Sir Wm. Hamilton (*Discussions*, pp. 211, 212), "is one of the most remarkable in that remarkable age; for it exhibits in the highest perfection, a combination of qualities which are in general found incompatible. At once a man of the world and of books, he excelled equally in practice and speculation; was a statesman and a philosopher, a jurist and a divine. Nobles, and princes and emperors honored him with their favor, and employed him in the most difficult affairs; while the learned throughout Europe looked up to him as the 'trilingue miraculum,' the 'phœnix litterarum,' the 'eruditorum ἄλφα.' In Italy, native Romans listened with pleasure to his Latin declamation; and he compelled the jealous Greeks to acknowledge that 'Greece had overflown the Alps.' Of his countrymen, he was the first to introduce the study of ancient literature into the German Universities; the first who opened the gates of the East, unsealed the word of God, and unveiled the sanctuary of Hebrew wisdom."—*Ed.*

times a thousand years. The Supreme Being, who draws time out of eternity, does not economize that time after our manner.

When Luther appeared, religion was no more than a political power, attacked or defended as an interest of this world. Luther recalled it to the land of thought. The historical progress of the human mind, in this respect, in Germany, is worthy of remark. When the wars occasioned by the Reformation were set at rest, and the Protestant refugees were naturalized in the different northern states of the German empire, the philosophical studies, which had always made the interior of the soul their object, were naturally directed towards religion; and there is no literature of the eighteenth century in which we find so many religious books as in the literature of Germany.

Lessing, one of the most powerful geniuses of his nation never ceased to attack, with all the strength of his logic, that maxim so commonly repeated, *that there are some dangerous truths.* In fact, it is a singular presumption, in certain individuals, to think they have the right of concealing the truth from their fellow-men, and to arrogate the prerogative of placing themselves, like Alexander before Diogenes, in a situation to veil from the eyes that sun which belongs alike to all; this pretended prudence is but the theory of imposture; is but an attempt to play the juggler with ideas, in order to secure the subjection of mankind. Truth is the work of God; lies are the works of man. If we study those eras of history in which truth has been an object of fear, we shall always find them when partial interests contended in some manner against the universal tendency.

The search for truth is the noblest of employments, and its promulgation is a duty. There is nothing to fear for society, or for religion, in this search, if it is sincere; and if it is not sincere, truth no longer, but falsehood, causes the evil. There is not a sentiment in man of which we cannot find the philosophical reason; not an opinion, not even a prejudice, generally diffused, which has not its seat in nature. We ought then

to examine, not with the object of destroying, but to build our belief upon internal, not upon borrowed conviction.

We see errors lasting for a long time; but they always cause a painful uneasiness. When we look at the tower of Pisa, which leans over its base, we imagine that it is about to fall, although it has stood for ages; and our imagination is not at its ease, except in the sight of firm and regular edifices. It is the same with our belief in certain principles; that which is founded upon prejudices makes us uneasy; and we love to see reason supporting, with all its power, the elevated conceptions of the soul.

The understanding contains in itself the principle of every thing which it acquires by experience. Fontenelle has justly said, that "we think we recognize a truth when first we hear it." How then can we imagine, that sooner or later just ideas, and the internal conviction which they cause, will not reappear? There is a pre-established harmony between truth and human reason, which always ends by bringing each nearer to the other.

Proposing to men not to interchange their thoughts, is what is commonly called keeping the secret of the play. We only continue in ignorance because we are unconsciously ignorant; but from the moment that we have commanded silence, it appears that somebody has spoken; and to stifle the thoughts which those words have excited, we must degrade Reason herself. There are men, full of energy and good faith, who never dreamt of this or that philosophical truth; but those who know and conceal their knowledge, are hypocrites, or, at least, are most arrogant and most irreligious beings. Most arrogant; for what right have they to think themselves of the class of the initiated, and the rest of the world excluded from it? Most irreligious; for if there is a philosophical or natural truth, a truth, in short, which contradicts religion, religion would not be what it is, the light of lights.

We must be very ignorant of Christianity, that is to say, of the revelation of the moral laws of man and the universe, to recommend to those who wish to believe in it, ignorance, se-

crecy, and darkness. Open the gates of the temple; call to your support genius, the fine arts, the sciences, philosophy; assemble them in one focus to honor and to comprehend the Author of creation; and if Love has said, that the name of those we love seems written on the leaves of every flower, how should not the impress of God appear in every thought that attaches itself to the eternal chin?

The right of examining what we ought to believe, is the foundation of Protestantism. The first Reformers did not so understand it: they thought they could fix the Pillars of Hercules of the human mind at the boundary of their own knowledge; but they were wrong in fancying that men would submit to their decisions as if they were infallible; they who rejected all authority of this sort in the Catholic religion. Protestantism then was sure to follow the development and the progress of knowledge; while Catholicism boasted of being immovable in the midst of the waves of time.

Among the German writers of the Protestant religion different ways of thinking have prevailed, which have successively occupied attention. Many learned men have made inquiries, unheard of before, into the Old and New Testament. Michaëlis has studied the languages, the antiquities, and the natural history of Asia, to interpret the Bible; and while the spirit of French philosophy was making a jest of the Christian religion, they made it in Germany the object of erudition. However this sort of labor may, in some respects, wound religious minds, what veneration does it not imply for the book which is the object of so serious an inquiry! These learned men attacked neither dogmas, nor prophecies, nor miracles; but a great number of writers have followed them, who have attempted to give an entirely physical explanation to the Old and New Testament; and who, considering them both in the light only of good writings of an instructive kind, see nothing in the mysteries but oriental metaphors.

These theologians called themselves rational, because they believed they could disperse every sort of absurdity; but it was a wrong direction of the spirit of inquiry to attempt apply-

ing it to truths, of which we can have no presentiment, except by elevation and meditation of soul. The spirit of inquiry ought to serve for the demarcation of what is superior to reason, in the same manner that an astronomer defines the heights to which the sight of man cannot attain: thus therefore to point out the incomprehensible regions, without pretending to deny their existence, or to describe them by words, is to make use of the spirit of inquiry, according to its measure and its destination.

The learned mode of interpretation is not more satisfactory than dogmatic authority. The imagination and the sensibility of the Germans could not content itself with this sort of prosaic religion, which paid the respect of reason to Christianity. Herder was the first to regenerate faith by poetry: deeply instructed in the Eastern languages, he felt a kind of admiration for the Bible like that which a sanctified Homer would inspire. The natural bias of the mind in Germany is to consider poetry as a sort of prophetic gift, the forerunner of divine enjoyments; so that it was not profanation to unite to religious faith the enthusiasm which poetry inspires.

Herder was not scrupulously orthodox; but he rejected, as well as his partisans, the learned commentaries which had the simplification of the Bible for their object, and which, by simplifying, annihilated it. A sort of poetical theology, vague but animated, free but feeling, takes the place of that pedantic school which thought it was advancing towards reason, when it retrenched some of the miracles of this universe; though, at the same time, the marvellous is, in some respects, perhaps, still more easy to conceive, than that which it has been agreed to call the natural.

Schleiermacher, the translator of Plato, has written discourses of extraordinary eloquence upon religion; he combated that indifference which has been called *toleration*, and that destructive labor which has passed for impartial inquiry. Schleiermacher is not the more on this account an orthodox theologian; but he shows, in the religious doctrines which he adopts, the power of belief, and a great vigor of metaphysical

conception. He has developed, with much warmth and clearness, the feeling of the infinite, of which I have spoken in the preceding chapter. We may call the religious opinions of Schleiermacher, and of his disciples, a philosophical theology.[1]

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[1] "Frederic Schleiermacher, professor of theology, and preacher, first at Halle and afterwards at Berlin, was born at Breslau in 1768, and contributed greatly, by his addresses and writings, to a more liberal culture of philosophy in general, and especially of moral and religious philosophy. Religion, according to him, attends to the same object as metaphysics and moral science; they only differ as regards the form; their common object is the universe and the relation of man to this same universe. The essence of philosophy consists neither in thought nor in action; it consists in the union of Feeling with Perception. Hence arises a living perception, which cannot take place without our perceiving the Divinity in ourselves as the eternal unity of the universe, which alone in its turn brings God into the consciousness of man. Religion consists in representing all the events of this world as the acts of God; in loving the Being (*Weltgeist*) who presides over the universe; in contemplating His operation with delight. Such is the end of religion. But it is necessary for man to find humanity in order to contemplate the world, and to rise to religion; and the only way by which he can rightly find it is in love and through love. To be united, through the finite, with the infinite, to be eternal for a moment, is the immortality imparted by religion. But religion necessarily appears always under some definite form; accordingly Schleiermacher rejects what is called *natural* religion. In his later works, he maintains that piety considered in itself is neither an acquired knowledge nor a praxis; piety is a particular direction and determination of feeling: in fine, the sublimest degree of feeling. By *feeling*, he implies the immediate consciousness, inasmuch as it falls within the category of time, and appears under opposite forms, more or less marked, composing the agreeable and disagreeable. Feeling gives us, moreover, the consciousness of our dependence on a God, which constitutes the elevated element of all religions.

"Schleiermacher exerted a still greater influence on the progress of philosophy by his *Critique of Morality*, a work displaying a true platonic power of dialects. He points out in this work, with a great display of talent, the defects of the various doctrines of morals from Plato to Kant and Fichte. He proceeds to show indirectly the conditions of Ethics, as a science, both in connection with its highest principle, and in connection with a perfect development of the whole system. He effects his object in such a masterly style, that it would be impossible to treat of Ethics in a complete and fundamental manner without observing the rules that he lays down. Schleiermacher insists especially on the following point: that the notions of duty, of virtue, and of the good or end of this life, are equally essential to morality. Finally, Schleiermacher has deserved well of posterity, by various special treatises on history and philosophy."—(Tennemann, *Manual of Philosophy*, pp. 463–465.)—*Ed.*

At length Lavater, and many men of talent, attached themselves to the mystical opinions, such as Fénelon in France, and different writers in all countries, conceived them. Lavater preceded some of the authors whom I have cited; but it is only for these few years past, that the doctrine, of which he may be considered one of the principal supporters, has gained any great popularity among the Germans. The work of Lavater upon Physiognomy is more celebrated than his religious writings; but that which rendered him especially remarkable was his personal character. There was in this man a rare mixture of penetration and of enthusiasm; he observed mankind with a peculiar sagacity of understanding, and yet abandoned himself, with entire confidence, to a set of ideas which might be called superstitious. He had sufficient self-love; and this self-love, perhaps, was the cause of those whimsical opinions about himself, and his miraculous calling. Nevertheless, nothing could equal the religious simplicity and the candor of his soul. We could not see without astonishment, in a drawing-room of our own times, a minister of the Holy Gospel inspired like an apostle, and animated as a man of the world. The warrant of Lavater's sincerity was to be found in his good actions, and in his fine countenance, which bore the stamp of inimitable truth.[1]

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[1] "In June, Lavater also came to Frankfort. This was a few months before Klopstock's visit. He had commenced a correspondence with Goethe on the occasion of the *Briefe des Pastors.* Those were great days of correspondence. Letters were written to be read in circles, and were shown about like the last new poem. Lavater pestered his friends for their portraits, and for ideal portraits (according to their conception) of our Saviour, all of which were destined for the work on *Physiognomy* on which Lavater was then engaged. The artist who took Goethe's portrait sent Lavater the portrait of Bahrdt instead, to see what he would make of it; the physiognomist was not taken in; he stoutly denied the possibility of such a resemblance. Yet when he saw the actual Goethe he was not satisfied. He gazed in astonishment, exclaiming '*Bist's?* Art thou he?' '*Ich bin's.* I am he,' was the answer; and the two fell on each other's necks. Still the physiognomist was dissatisfied. 'I answered him with my native and acquired Realism, that as God had willed to make me what I was, he, Lavater, must even so accept me.'

"The first surprise over, they began to converse on the weightiest top-

The religious writers of Germany, properly so called, are divided into two very distinct classes, the defenders of the Reformation and the partisans of Catholicism. I shall examine separately the writers who are of these different opinions; but the assertion which it is important to make before every thing is this, that if northern Germany is the country where theological questions have been most agitated, it is also that in which re-

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ics. Their sympathy was much greater than appears in Goethe's narrative, written many years after the real characters of both had developed themselves;—Goethe's into what we shall subsequently see; Lavater's into that superstitious dogmatism and priestly sophistication which exasperated and alienated so many.

"Lavater forms a curious figure in the history of those days: a compound of the intolerant priest and the factitious sentimentalist. He had fine talents, and a streak of genius, but he was ruined by vanity and hypocrisy. Born in Zurich, 1741, he was eight years Goethe's senior. In his autobiographic sketch[1] he has represented himself indicating as a child the part he was to play as a man. Like many other children, he formed for himself a peculiar and intimate relation with God, which made him look upon his playfellows with scorn and pity, because they did not share his 'need and use of God.' He prayed for wonders, and the wonders came. God corrected his school exercises. God concealed his many faults, and brought to light his virtuous deeds. In fact, Lavater was a born hypocrite; and Goethe rightly named him 'from the beginning the friend of Lies, who stooped to the basest flatteries to gain influence.' To this flattering, cringing softness he united the spirit of priestly domination. His first works made a great sensation. In 1769 he translated Bonnet's *Palingénésie*, adding notes in a strain of religious sentimentalism then very acceptable. At a time when the critics were rehabilitating Homer and the early singers, it was natural that the religious world should attempt a restoration of the early Apostolic spirit. At a time when belief in poetic inspiration was a first article of the creed, belief in prophetic inspiration found eager followers. I have already touched on the sentimental extravagance of the time; and for those whom a reasonable repugnance will keep from Lavater's letters and writings, one sentence may be quoted sufficiently significant. To the lovely Countess Branconi he wrote: 'O toi chéri pour la vie, l'âme de mon âme! Ton mouchoir, tes cheveux, sont pour moi ce que mes jarretières sont pour toi!' etc., which from a priest to a married woman is somewhat unctuous, but which is surpassed by what he allowed to be addressed by an admirer to himself, *e. g.*: 'Oh, that I could lie on thy breast in Sabbath holy evening stillness—oh thou angel!' One sees that this rhodomontade went all round. They wept, and were wept on."—(Lewes, *Goethe's Life and Works*, pp. 272-274.)—*Ed.*

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[1] See Gessner's *Biographie Lavaters.*

ligious sentiments are most universal; the national character is impressed with them, and it is from them that the genius of the arts and of literature draws all its inspiration. In short, among the lower orders, religion in the north of Germany bears an ideal and gentle character, which singularly surprises us in a country where we have been accustomed to think the manners very rude.

Once as I was travelling from Dresden to Leipsic, I stopped for the evening at Meissen, a little village situated upon an eminence over the river, and the church of which contains tombs consecrated to illustrious recollections. I walked upon the esplanade, and suffered myself to sink into that sort of reverie which the setting sun, the distant view of the landscape, and the sound of the stream that flows at the bottom of the valley, so easily excite in our souls; I then caught the voices of some common persons, and I was afraid of hearing such vulgar words as are elsewhere sung in the streets. What was my astonishment, when I understood the burden of their song: *They loved each other, and they died, hoping one day to meet again!* Happy that country where such feelings are popular; and spread abroad, even into the air we breathe, I know not what religious fellowship, of which love for heaven and pity for man form the touching union!

CHAPTER III.

MORAVIAN MODE OF WORSHIP.

There is perhaps too much freedom in Protestantism to satisfy a certain religious austerity, which may seize upon the man who is overwhelmed by great misfortunes; sometimes even in the habitual course of life, the reality of this world disappears all at once, and we feel ourselves in the middle of

its interests as we should at a ball, where we did not hear the music; the dancing that we saw there would appear insane. A species of dreaming apathy equally seizes upon the Brahmin and the savage, when one by the force of thought, and the other by the force of ignorance, passes entire hours in the dumb contemplation of destiny. The only activity of which the human being is then susceptible, is that which has divine worship for its object. He loves to do something for Heaven every moment; and it is this disposition which gives their attraction to convents, however great may be their inconvenience in other respects.

The Moravians are the monks of Protestantism; and the religious enthusiasm of northern Germany gave them birth about a hundred years ago. But although this association is as severe as a Catholic convent, it is more liberal in its principles. No vows are taken there; all is voluntary; men and women are not separated, and marriage is not forbidden. Nevertheless the whole society is ecclesiastical; that is, every thing is done there by religion and for it; the authority of the church rules this community of the faithful, but this church is without priests, and the sacred office is fulfilled there in turn by the most religious and venerable persons.

Men and women, before marriage, live separately from each other in assemblies, where the most perfect equality reigns. The entire day is filled with labor; the same for every rank; the idea of Providence, constantly present, directs all the actions of the life of the Moravians.

When a young man chooses to take a companion, he addresses himself to the female superintendents of girls or widows, and demands of them the person he wishes to espouse. They draw lots in the church, to know whether he ought to marry the woman whom he prefers; and if the lot is against him, he gives up his demand. The Moravians have such a habit of resignation, that they do not resist this decision; and as they only see the women at church, it costs them less to renounce their choice. This manner of deciding upon marriage, and upon many other circumstances of life, indicates the general

spirit of the Moravian worship. Instead of keeping themselves submitted to the will of Heaven, they fancy they can learn it by inspirations, or, what is still more strange, by interrogating Chance. Duty and events manifest to man the views of God concerning the earth; how can we flatter ourselves with the notion of penetrating them by other means?

We observe, in other respects, among the generality of Moravians, evangelical manners, such as they must have existed from the time of the Apostles, in Christian communities. Neither extraordinary doctrines nor scrupulous practices constitute the bond of this association; the Gospel is there interpreted in the most natural and clear manner; but they are there faithful to the consequences of this doctrine, and they make their conduct, under all relations, harmonize with their religious principles. The Moravian communities serve, above all, to prove that Protestantism, in its simplicity, may lead to the most austere sort of life, and the most enthusiastic religion; death and immortality, well understood, are sufficient to occupy and to direct the whole of existence.

I was some time ago at Dintendorf, a little village near Erfurt, where a Moravian community is established. This village is three leagues distant from every great road; it is situated between two mountains, upon the banks of a rivulet; willows and lofty poplars environ it; there is something tranquil and sweet in the look of the country, which prepares the soul to free itself from the turbulence of life. The buildings and the streets are marked by perfect cleanliness; the women, all clothed alike, hide their hair, and bind their head with a riband, whose color indicates whether they are married, maidens, or widows; the men are clothed in brown, almost like the Quakers. Mercantile industry employs nearly all of them; but one does not hear the least noise in the village. Everybody works in regularity and silence; and the internal action of religious feeling lulls to rest every other impulse.

The girls and widows live together in a large dormitory, and during the night, one of them has her turn to watch, for the purpose of praying, or of taking care of those who may be ill.

The unmarried men live in the same manner. Thus there exists a great family for him who has none of his own; and the name of brother and sister is common to all Christians.

Instead of bells, wind instruments, of a very sweet harmony, summon them to divine service. As we proceeded to church by the sound of this imposing music, we felt ourselves carried away from the earth; we fancied that we heard the trumpets of the last judgment, not such as remorse makes us fear them, but such as a pious confidence makes us hope them; it seemed as if the divine compassion manifested itself in this appeal, and pronounced beforehand the pardon of regeneration.

The church was dressed out in white roses, and blossoms of white thorn; pictures were not banished from the temple, and music was cultivated as a constituent part of religion; they only sang psalms; there was neither sermon, nor mass, nor argument, nor theological discussion; it was the worship of God in spirit and in truth. The women, all in white, were ranged by each other without any distinction whatever; they looked like the innocent shadows who were about to appear together before the tribunal of the Divinity.

The burying-ground of the Moravians is a garden, the walks of which are marked out by funeral-stones; and by the side of each is planted a flowering shrub. All these gravestones are equal; not one of these shrubs rises above the other; and the same epitaph serves for all the dead: *He was born on such a day; and on such another he returned into his native country.* Excellent expression to designate the end of our life! The ancients said: *He lived;* and thus threw a veil over the tomb, to divest themselves of its idea. The Christians place over it the star of hope.

On Easter-day, divine service is performed in the burying-ground, which is close to the church, and the resurrection is announced in the middle of the tombs. Every one who is present at this act of worship, knows the stone that is to be placed over his coffin; and already breathes the perfume of the young tree, whose leaves and flowers will overhang his tomb. It is thus that we have seen, in modern times, an en-

tire army assisting at its own funeral rites, pronouncing for itself the service of the dead, decided in belief that it was to conquer immortality.[1]

The communion of the Moravians cannot adapt itself to the social state, such as circumstances ordain it to be; but as it has been long and frequently asserted that Catholicism alone addressed the imagination, it is of consequence to remark, that what truly touches the soul in religion is common to all Christian churches. A sepulchre and a prayer exhaust all the power of the pathetic; and the more simple the faith, the more emotion is caused by the worship.

CHAPTER IV.

OF CATHOLICISM.

The Catholic religion is more tolerant in Germany than in any other country. The peace of Westphalia having fixed the rights of the different religions, they no longer feared their mutual invasions; and, besides, this mixture of modes of worship, in a great number of towns, has necessarily induced the occasion of observing and judging each other. In religious as well as in political opinions, we make a phantom of our adversaries, which is almost always dissipated by their presence; sympathy presents a fellow-creature in him whom we believed an enemy.

Protestantism being much more favorable to knowledge than Catholicism, the Catholics in Germany have put themselves in a sort of defensive position, which is very injurious to the progress of information. In the countries where the Catholic religion reigned alone, such as France and Italy, they have known how to unite it to literature and to the fine arts; but

[1] The allusion in this passage is to the siege of Saragossa.

in Germany, where the Protestants have taken possession, by means of the universities, and by their natural tendency to every thing which belongs to literary and philosophical study, the Catholics have fancied themselves obliged to oppose to them a certain sort of reserve, which destroys almost all the means of distinction, in the career of imagination and of reflection. Music is the only one of the fine arts which is carried to a greater degree of perfection in the south of Germany than in the north; unless we reckon in the number of the fine arts a certain convenient mode of life, the enjoyments of which agree well enough with repose of mind.

Among the Catholics in Germany there is a sincere, tranquil, and charitable piety; but there are no famous preachers, nor religious authors who are quoted; nothing there excites the emotions of the soul; they consider religion as a matter of fact, in which enthusiasm has no share; and one might say, that in a mode of religious worship so well consolidated, the future life itself became a positive truth, upon which we no longer exercise our thoughts.

The revolution which has taken place among the philosophical minds in Germany, during the last thirty years, has brought them almost all back to religious sentiments. They had wandered a little from them, when the impulse necessary to propagate toleration had exceeded its proper bounds; but, by recalling idealism in metaphysics, inspiration in poetry, contemplation in the sciences, they have restored the empire of religion; and the reform of the Reformation, or rather the philosophical direction of liberty which it has occasioned, has banished forever (at least in theory) materialism, and all its fatal consequences. In the midst of this intellectual revolution, so fruitful in noble results, some writers have gone too far; as it always happens in the oscillations of thought.

We might say, that the human mind is continually hurrying from one extreme to another; as if the opinions which it has just deserted, were changed into regrets to pursue it. The Reformation, according to some authors of the new school, has been the cause of many religious wars; it has separated the

north from the south of Germany; it has given the Germans the fatal habit of fighting with each other; and these divisions have robbed them of the right of being denominated one nation. Lastly, the Reformation, by giving birth to the spirit of inquiry, has dried up the imagination, and introduced skepticism in the place of faith; it is necessary then, say the same advocates, to return to the unity of the church, by returning to Catholicism.

In the first place, if Charles the Fifth had adopted Lutheranism, there would have been the same unity in Germany, and the whole country, like the northern portion of it, would have formed an asylum for the arts and sciences. Perhaps this harmony would have given birth to free institutions, combined with a real strength; and perhaps that sad separation of character and knowledge would have been avoided, which has yielded up the North to reverie, and kept the South in ignorance. But without losing ourselves in conjectures as to what would have happened, a sort of calculation always very uncertain, we cannot deny that the era of the Reformation was that in which learning and philosophy were introduced into Germany. This country is not perhaps raised to the first rank in war, in the arts, in political liberty: it is knowledge of which Germany has a right to be proud, and its influence upon the thinking part of Europe takes its date from Protestantism. Such revolutions neither proceed nor are brought to an end by arguments; they belong to the historical progress of the human mind; and the men who appear to be their authors, are never more than their consequences.

Catholicism, disarmed in the present day, has the majesty of an old lion, which once made the world tremble; but when the abuses of its power brought on the Reformation, it put fetters on the human mind; and far from want of feeling being then the cause of the opposition to its ascendency, it was in order to make use of all the faculties of the understanding and of the imagination that the freedom of thought was so loudly demanded again. If circumstances, of entirely divine origin, and in which the hand of man was not in the least

operative, were hereafter to bring about a reunion between the two churches, we should pray to God, it appears to me, with new emotion, by the side of those venerable priests, who, in the latter years of the last century, have suffered so much for conscience' sake. But, assuredly, it is not the change of religion in a few individuals, nor, above all, the unjust discredit which their writings have a tendency to throw upon the reformed religion, that can lead to the unity of religious opinions.

There are in the human mind two very distinct impulses; one makes us feel the want of faith, the other that of examination. One of these tendencies ought not to be satisfied at the expense of the other; Protestantism and Catholicism do not arise from the different character of the Popes, and of a Luther; it is a poor mode of examining history to attribute it to accidents. Protestantism and Catholicism exist in the human heart; they are moral powers which are developed in nations, because they are inherent in every individual. If in religion, as in other human affections, we can unite what the imagination and the reason suggest, there is harmony in the whole man; but in man, as in the universe, the power of creating and that of destroying, faith and inquiry, succeed and combat each other.

It has been attempted, in order to harmonize these two inclinations, to penetrate deeper into the soul; and from this attempt have arisen the mystical opinions of which we shall speak in the following chapter; but the small number of persons who have abjured Protestantism have done nothing but revive resentments. Ancient denominations reanimate ancient quarrels; magic makes use of certain words to call up apparitions; we may say, that upon all subjects there are terms which exert this power; these are the watch-words which serve for a rallying-point to party spirit; we cannot pronounce them without agitating afresh the torches of discord. The German Catholics have, to the present moment, shown themselves very ignorant of what was passing on these points in the North. The literary opinions seemed to be the cause of the

small number of persons who changed their religion; and the ancient church has hardly regained any proselytes.

Count Frederic Stolberg, a man of great respectability, both from his character and his talents, celebrated from his youth as a poet, as a passionate admirer of antiquity, and as a translator of Homer, was the first in Germany to set the example of these new conversions, and he has had some imitators. The most illustrious friends of the Count Stolberg, Klopstock, Voss, and Jacobi, separated themselves from him in consequence of this action, which seemed to disavow the misfortunes and the struggles which the reformed have endured during three centuries; nevertheless, Stolberg has lately published a *History of the Religion of Jesus Christ*,[1] which is calculated to merit the approbation of all Christian communities. It is the first time that we have seen the Catholic opinions defended in this manner; and if Count Stolberg had not been educated as a Protestant, perhaps he would not have had that independence of mind which enables him to make an impression upon enlightened men. We find in this book a perfect knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and very interesting researches into the different religions of Asia, which bear relation to Christianity. The Germans of the North, even when they submit to the most positive dogmas, know how to give them the stamp of their philosophy.

Count Stolberg, in his publication, attributed to the Old Testament a much greater importance than Protestant writers in general assign to it. He considers sacrifices as the basis of all religion, and the death of Abel as the first type of that sacrifice which forms the groundwork of Christianity. In whatever way we decide upon this opinion, it affords much room for thought. The greater part of ancient religions instituted human sacrifices; but in this barbarity there was something remarkable, namely, the necessity of a solemn expiation. Nothing, in effect, can obliterate from the soul the idea, that there is a mysterious efficacy in the blood of the innocent, and

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[1] It has been translated, by the order of Rome, into Italian.—*Ed.*

that heaven and earth are moved by it. Men have always believed that the just could obtain, in this life or the other, the pardon of the guilty. There are some primitive ideas in the human species which reappear more or less disfigured, in all times, and among all nations. These are the ideas upon which we cannot grow weary of reflecting; for they assuredly preserve some traces of the lost dignities of our nature.

The persuasion, that the prayers and the self-devotion of the just can save the guilty, is doubtless derived from the feelings that we experience in the relations of life; but nothing obliges us, in respect to religious belief, to reject these inferences. What do we know better than our feelings? and why should we pretend that they are inapplicable to the truths of religion? What can there be in man but himself, and why, under the pretext of anthropomorphism, hinder him from forming an image of the Deity after his own soul? No other messenger, I think, can bring him news from heaven.

Count Stolberg endeavors to show, that the tradition of the fall of man has existed among all the nations of the earth, and particularly in the East; and that all men have in their hearts the remembrance of a happiness of which they have been deprived. In effect, there are in the human mind two tendencies as distinct as gravitation and attraction in the natural world; these are the ideas of decay, and of advance to perfection. One should say, that we feel at once a regret for the loss of some excellent qualities which were gratuitously conferred upon us, and a hope of some advantages which we may acquire by our own efforts; in such a manner that the doctrine of perfectibility, and that of the golden age, united and confounded, excite at the same time in man grief for having lost these blessings, and emulation to recover them. Sentiment is melancholy, and mind is daring; one looks forward, the other back; and from this reverie and this energy together, springs the true superiority of man; that mixture of contemplation and of activity, of resignation and of will, which allows him to connect his worldly existence with heaven.

Stolberg calls those persons alone Christians who receive

the words of the Holy Scriptures with the simplicity of children; but he bestows upon the signification of these words a philosophical spirit which takes away all their dogmatism and intolerance from the Catholic opinions. In what then do they differ, these religious men by whom Germany is honored, and why should the names of Catholic and Protestant divide them? Why should they be unfaithful to the tombs of their ancestors, by giving up these names, or by resuming them? Has not Klopstock consecrated his whole life to the purpose of making a fine poem the temple of the Gospel? Is not Herder, as well as Stolberg, the adorer of the Bible? Does he not penetrate into all the beauties of the primitive language, and of those sentiments of celestial origin which it expresses? Does not Jacobi recognize the Divinity in all the great thoughts of man? Would any of these men recommend religion merely as a restraint upon the people, as an instrument of public safety, as an additional guarantee in the contracts of this world? Do they not all know that every superior mind has more need of piety than the people? For the labor ordained by the authority of society may occupy and direct the working class in all the moments of life, while idle men are incessantly the prey of the passions and the sophistries that disturb existence, and reduce every thing to uncertainty.

It has been pretended that it was a sort of frivolity in the German writers to represent as one of the merits of the Christian religion, the favorable influence that it exercised over the arts, imagination, and poetry; and the same reproach, with respect to this point, has been cast upon that beautiful work of M. de Chateaubriand, *the Genius of Christianity.* The truly frivolous minds are those which take rapid glances for profound examinations, and persuade themselves that we can proceed with nature upon an exclusive principle, and suppress the greater part of the desires and wants of the soul. One of the great proofs of the divinity of the Christian religion is its perfect analogy with all our moral faculties; at least it does not appear to me that we can consider the poetry of Christianity under the same aspect as the poetry of Paganism.

As every thing was external in the Pagan worship, the pomp of images was there prodigally exhibited; the sanctuary of Christianity being at the bottom of the heart, the poetry which it inspires must always flow from tenderness. It is not the splendor of the Christian heaven that we can oppose to Olympus, but grief and innocence, old age and death, which assume a character of exaltation and of repose, under the shelter of those religious hopes whose wings are spread over the miseries of life. It is not then true, it appears to me, that the Protestant religion is unprovided with poetry, because the ritual of its worship has less eclat than that of the Catholics. Ceremonies, better or worse, performed according to the richness of towns, and the magnificence of buildings, cannot be the principal cause of the impression which divine service produces; its connection with our internal feelings is that which touches us, a connection which can subsist in simplicity as well as in pomp.

Some time ago I was present at a church in the country, deprived of all ornament; no picture adorned its white walls; it was newly built, and no remembrance of a long antiquity rendered it venerable: music itself, which the most austere saints have placed in heaven as the employment of the happy, was hardly heard; and the psalms were sung by voices without harmony, which the labor of the world, and the weight of years, rendered hoarse and confused; but in the midst of this rustic assembly, where all human splendor was deficient, one saw a pious man, whose heart was profoundly moved by the mission which he fulfilled.[1] His looks, his physiognomy, might serve for a model to some of the pictures with which other temples are adorned; his accents made the responses to an angelic concert. There was before us a mortal creature convinced of our immortality; of that of our friends whom we have lost; of that of our children, who will survive us by so little in the career of time! and the convincing persuasion of a pure heart appeared a new revelation.

He descended from his pulpit to give the communion to the

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[1] M. Célérier, preacher at Satigny, near Geneva.

faithful, who live under the shelter of his example. His son was with him, a minister of the church; and with more youthful features, his countenance also, like that of his father, had a pious and thoughtful expression. Then, according to custom, the father and the son gave each other the bread and wine, which, among Protestants, serve for the commemoration of the most affecting of mysteries. The son only saw in his father a pastor more advanced than himself in the religious state that he had chosen to adopt; the father respected in his son the holy calling he had embraced. They mutually addressed each other, as they took the Sacrament, in those passages of the Gospel which are calculated to unite in one bond strangers and friends; and, both feeling in their hearts the same inward impulses, they appeared to forget their personal relations in the presence of the Divinity, before whom fathers and sons are alike servants of the tombs and children of hope.

What poetical effect, what emotion, the source of all poetry, could be wanting to the divine service at such a moment!

Men whose affections are disinterested and their thoughts religious; men who live in the sanctuary of their conscience, and know how to concentrate in it, as in a burning-glass, all the rays of the universe; these men, I say, are the priests of the religion of the soul; and nothing ought ever to disunite them. An abyss separates those who conduct themselves according to calculation, and those who are guided by feeling. All other differences of opinion are nothing; this alone is radical. It is possible that one day a cry of union may be raised, and that all Christians may aspire to profess the same theological, political, and moral religion; but before this miracle is accomplished, all men who have a heart, and who obey it, ought mutually to respect each other.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE RELIGIOUS DISPOSITION CALLED "MYSTICISM."

THE religious disposition called *Mysticism* is only a more inward manner of feeling and of conceiving Christianity. As in the word mysticism is comprehended that of mystery, it has been believed that the Mystics professed extraordinary doctrines, and formed a separate sect. There are no mysteries among them but the mysteries of sentiment applied to religion; and sentiment is at once the clearest, the most simple, and the most inexplicable of things: it is necessary, at the same time, to distinguish the *Theosophists*, that is, those who are busied with philosophical theology, such as Jacob Böhme, St. Martin, etc., from the simple Mystics; the former wish to penetrate the secret of the creation; the second confine themselves to their own hearts. Many fathers of the church, Thomas à Kempis, Fénelon, St. François de Sales, etc., and among the Protestants a great number of English and German writers, have been Mystics; that is, men who have made religion a sort of affection, and have infused it into all their thoughts, as well as all their actions.[1]

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1 " 'The epithet sublime is strongly and happily descriptive of the feelings inspired by the genius of Plato, by the lofty *mysticism* of his philosophy, and even by the remote origin of the theological fables which are said to have descended to him from Orpheus.'—Stewart, *Philosoph. Essays*, ii. chap. 5.

" '*Mysticism* in philosophy is the belief that God may be known face to face, without any thing intermediate. It is a yielding to the sentiment awakened by the idea of the infinite, and a running up of all knowledge and all duty to the contemplation and love of Him.'—Cousin, *Hist. de la Philosoph. Mod.*, 1st series, tom. ii. leçon 9, 10.

" *Mysticism* despairs of the regular process of science; it believes that we may attain directly, without the aid of the senses or reason, and by an

The religious feeling which is the foundation of the whole doctrine of the Mystics, consists in an internal peace full of life. The agitations of the passions leave no calm; the tranquillity of a dry and moderate understanding destroys the animation of the soul; it is only in religious feeling that we find a perfect union of repose and motion. This disposition is not continual, I think, in any man, however pious he may be; but the remembrance and the hope of these holy emotions decide the conduct of those who have experienced them. If we consider the pains and the pleasures of life as the effect of chance, or of a well-played game, then despair and joy ought to be, so to speak, convulsive motions. For what a chance is that which disposes of our existence! What pride or what respect ought we not to feel, when we have been considering a mode of action which may influence our destiny? To what torments of uncertainty must we not be delivered up if our reason alone disposed of our fate in this world? But if we believe, on the contrary, that there are but two things important to happiness, purity of intention, and resignation to the event, whatever it may be, when it no longer depends upon ourselves; doubtless many circumstances will still make us cruelly suffer, but none will break our ties to Heaven. To struggle against the impossible is that which begets in us the most bitter feelings; and the anger of Satan is nothing else than liberty quar-

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immediate intuition, the real and absolute principle of all truth, God. It finds God either in nature, and hence a *physical* and *naturalistic mysticism;* or in the soul, and hence a *moral* and *metaphysical mysticism.* It has also its historical views; and in history it considers especially that which represents *mysticism* in full, and under its most regular form, that is religious; and it is not to the letter of religions, but to their spirit, that it clings; hence an *allegorical* and *symbolical* mysticism. Van Helmont Ames, and Pordage, are *naturalistic mystics;* Poiret is *moral*, and Bourignon and Fénelon are *Divine mystics.* Swedenborg's *mysticism* includes them all.

"The Germans have two words for *mysticism: mystik* and *mysticismus.* The former they use in a favorable, the latter in an unfavorable sense. Just as we say *piety* and *pietism*, or *rationality* and *rationalism;* keeping the first of each pair for use, the second for abuse.—Vaughan, *Hours with the Mystics*, vol. i. p. 23."—(Fleming, *Vocab. of Philos.*, pp. 330, 331.)—*Ed.*

relling with necessity, and unable either to subdue or to submit to it.

The ruling opinion among the mystical Christians is this, that the only homage which can please God is that of the will which he gave to man; what more disinterested offering can we in effect offer to the Divinity? Worship, incense, hymns, have almost always for their object the attainment of the good things of this world; and it is on this account that worldly flattery surrounds monarchs; but to resign ourselves to the will of God, to wish nothing but that which he wishes, is the most pure religious act of which the soul is capable. Thrice is man summoned to yield this resignation,—in youth, in manhood, and in age: happy are they who submit at first!

It is pride in every thing which puts the venom into the wound: the rebellious soul accuses Heaven; the religious man suffers grief to act upon him as the intention of him who sent it; he makes use of all the means in his power to avoid or to console it; but when the event is irrevocable, the sacred characters of the supreme will are imprinted there.

What accidental malady can be compared to age and death? And yet almost all men resign themselves to age and death, because they have no defence against them: whence then does it arise that every one revolts against particular misfortunes, when all acquiesce in universal evil? It is because we treat destiny as a government which we allow to make all the world suffer, provided that it grants no privileges to any one. The misfortunes that we endure in company with our fellows are as severe, and cause as much misery, as our individual sufferings; and yet they hardly ever excite in us the same rebellious feeling. Why do not men teach themselves that they ought to support that which concerns them personally, as they support the condition of humanity in general? It is because we fancy there is injustice in our particular allotment. Singular pride of man! to wish to judge the Deity with that instrument which he has received from him! What does he know of the feelings of another? What does he know of himself? What does he know at all, except his internal feeling? And this

feeling, the more inward it is, the more it contains the secret of our felicity; for is it not in the bottom of our soul that we feel happiness or unhappiness? Religious love, or self-love, alone penetrates to the source of our most hidden thoughts. Under the name of religious love are included all the disinterested affections; and under that of self-love, all egotistical propensities: in whatever manner fortune may favor or thwart us, it is always the ascendency of one of these affections over the other, upon which calm enjoyment, or uneasy disquiet depends.

It is to be wanting entirely in respect for Providence, as it appears to me, to suppose ourselves a prey to those phantoms which we call events: their reality consists in their effect upon the soul; and there is a perfect equality between all situations and all circumstances, not viewed externally, but judged according to their influence upon religious improvement. If each of us would attentively examine the texture of his life, we should find there two tissues perfectly distinct: the one which appears entirely subject to natural causes and effects; the other, whose mysterious tendency is not intelligible except by dint of time. It is like a suit of tapestry hangings, whose figures are worked in on the wrong side, until, being put in a proper position, we can judge of their effect. We end by perceiving, even in this life, why we have suffered; why we have not obtained what we desired. The melioration of our own hearts reveals to us the benevolent intention which subjected us to pain; for the prosperities of the earth themselves would have something dreadful about them, if they fell upon us after we had been guilty of great faults: we should then think ourselves abandoned by the hand of Him, who delivered us up to happiness here below, as to our sole futurity.

Either every thing is chance, or there is no such thing in the world; and, if there is not, religious feeling consists in putting ourselves in harmony with the universal order, in spite of that spirit of rebellion and of usurpation with which selfishness inspires each of us individually. All doctrines, and all modes of worship, are the different forms which this religious

feeling has assumed according to times and countries; it may be depraved by fear, although it is built upon confident hope; but it always consists in the conviction, that there is nothing accidental in the events of life, and that our sole manner of influencing our fate lies in our internal commerce with ourselves. Reason is not the less operative in all that relates to the conduct of life; but when this housekeeper of existence has managed matters as well as it can, the bottom of our heart is after all the seat of love; and that which is called Mysticism, is this love in its most perfect purity.

The elevation of the soul towards its Creator is the supreme act of worship among the Christian Mystics; but they do not address the Deity to pray for this or that worldly advantage. A French writer, who has some sublimely bright passages, M. de Saint-Martin, has said, *that prayer was the breathing of the soul.* The Mystics are, for the most part, convinced, that an answer is given to this prayer; and that the grand revelation of Christianity may be in some degree renewed in the soul, every time that it exalts itself with fervor towards Heaven. When we believe that there no longer exists any immediate communication between the Supreme Being and man, prayer is only a monologue, if we may be allowed the expression; but it becomes an act much more beneficial, when we are persuaded that the Divinity makes himself sensibly felt at the bottom of our hearts. In fact, it does not appear to me possible to deny, that there are emotions within us which do not, in the least, take their origin from external things, and which soothe and support us without the possibility of our attributing them to the ordinary concatenation of the events of life.

Men who have introduced self-love into a doctrine entirely founded on the renunciation of self-love, have taken advantage of these unexpected instances of divine support, to deceive themselves with illusions of every description: they have fancied that they were elect persons, or prophets; they have believed in visions; in a word, they have become superstitious in looking at themselves. What must not be the power of human pride, when it insinuates itself into the heart, under the

very shape of humility! But it is not the less true, that there is nothing more simple and more pure than the connections of the soul with the Deity, such as they are conceived by those whom it is the custom to call Mystics; that is, the Christians who introduce love into religion.

In reading the spiritual works of Fénelon, who is not softened? where can we find so much knowledge, consolation, indulgence? There no fanaticism, no austerities but those of virtue, no intolerance, no exclusion appears. The differences of Christian communities cannot be felt at that height which is above all the accidental forms created and destroyed by time.

He would be very rash, assuredly, who should hazard foreseeing any thing relating to such important matters: nevertheless, I will venture to say, that every thing tends to establish the triumph of religious feeling in the soul. Calculation has gained such an empire over the affairs of the world, that those who do not embrace it are naturally thrown into the opposite extreme. It is for this reason that solitary thinkers, from one end of the world to the other, endeavor to assemble in one focus the scattered rays of literature, philosophy, and religion.

It is generally feared that the doctrine of religious resignation, called Quietism in the last ages, will disgust us with the necessary activity of this life. But nature takes care to raise individual passions in us sufficiently to prevent our entertaining much fears of the sentiment that is to tranquillize them.

We neither dispose of our birth, nor of our death; and more than three-fourths of our destiny is decided by these two events. No one can change the primitive effects of his nativity, of his country, of his period, etc. No one can acquire the shape or the genius that he has not gained from nature; and of how many more commanding circumstances still is not life composed? If our fate consists in a hundred different lots, there are ninety-nine which do not depend upon ourselves; and all the fury of our will turns upon the weak portion which yet seems to be in our favor. Now the action of the will itself

upon this weak portion is singularly incomplete. The only act of liberty of the man who always attains his end, is the fulfilment of duty: the issue of all other resolutions depends entirely upon accidents, over which prudence itself has no command. The greater part of mankind do not obtain that which they vehemently wish; and prosperity itself, when it comes, often comes from an unexpected quarter.

The doctrine of Mysticism passes for a severe doctrine, because it enjoins us to discard selfishness, and this with reason appears very difficult to be done. But, in fact, Mysticism is the gentlest of all doctrines; it consists in this proverb, *Make a virtue of necessity.* Making a virtue of necessity, in the religious sense, is to attribute to Providence the government of the world, and to find an inward consolation in this thought. The Mystic writers exact nothing beyond the line of duty, such as honest men have marked it out; they do not enjoin us to create troubles for ourselves; they think that man ought neither to invite affliction, nor be impatient under it when it arrives. What evil then can result from this belief, which unites the calm of stoicism with the sensibility of Christians? It prevents us from loving, some one may say. Ah! it is not religious exaltation which chills the soul; a single interest of vanity has done more to annihilate the affections than any kind of austere opinion: even the deserts of the Thebaïd do not weaken the power of sentiment; and nothing prevents us from loving but the misery of the heart.

A very weighty inconvenience is falsely attributed to Mysticism. In spite of the severity of its principles, it has been said that it renders us too indulgent in relation to actions, by referring religion to the internal impressions of the soul; and that it induces men to resign themselves to their defects as to inevitable events. Nothing, assuredly, would be more contrary to the Gospel than this manner of interpreting submission to the will of God. If we admitted that religious feeling, in any respect, dispensed with action, there would not only result from this a crowd of hypocrites, who pretended that we must not judge them by the vulgar proofs of religion, which are called

works, and that their secret communications with the Deity are of an order greatly superior to the fulfilment of duties; but there would be also hypocrites with themselves, and we should destroy in this manner the power of remorse. In fact, who has not some moments of religious tenderness, however limited his imagination may be? Who has not sometimes prayed with fervor? And if this was sufficient for us to be released from the strict observance of duty, the greater part of poets might fancy themselves more religious than St. Vincent de Paul.

But the Mystics have been wrongfully accused of this manner of thinking. Their writings and their lives attest, that they are as regular in their moral conduct as those who are subjected to the practices of the most severe mode of worship: that which is called indulgence in them, is the penetration which makes us analyze the nature of man, instead of confining ourselves to the injunction of obedience. The Mystics, always considering the bottom of the heart, have the air of pardoning its mistakes, because they study the causes of them.

The Mystics, and almost all Christians, have been frequently accused of a tendency towards passive obedience to authority, whatever it may be; and it has been pretended that submission to the will of God, ill-understood, leads a little too often to submission to the will of man. Nothing, however, is less like condescension to power than religious resignation. Without doubt it may console us in slavery, but it is because it then gives to the soul all the virtues of independence. To be indifferent by religion to the liberty or the oppression of mankind, would be to mistake weakness of character for Christian humility, and no two things are more different. Christian humility bends before the poor and the unhappy; and weakness of character always keeps well with guilt, because it is powerful in the world.

In the times of chivalry, when Christianity had more ascendency, it never demanded the sacrifice of honor; but, for citizens, justice and liberty are also honor. God confounds human pride, but not the dignity of the human race; for this pride

consists in the opinion we have of ourselves; and this dignity in our respect for the rights of others. Religious men have an inclination not to meddle with the affairs of this world, without being compelled to do so by some manifest duty; and it must be confessed, that so many passions are excited by political interests, that it is rare to mix in politics without having to reproach ourselves with any wrong action: but when the courage of conscience is called forth, there is nothing which can contend with it.

Of all nations, that which has the greatest inclination to Mysticism is the German.[1] Before Luther, many authors,

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[1] "Mysticism is a word in the mouths of all; yet, of the hundred, perhaps not one has ever asked himself what this opprobrious epithet properly signified in his mind; or where the boundary between true Science and this Land of Chimeras was to be laid down. Examined strictly, *mystical*, in most cases, will turn out to be merely synonymous with *not understood*. Yet surely there may be haste and oversight here, for it is well known, that, to the understanding of anything, *two* conditions are equally required: *intelligibility* in the thing itself being no whit more indispensable than *intelligence* in the examiner of it. 'I am bound to find you in reasons, sir,' said Johnson, 'but not in brains;' a speech of the most shocking unpoliteness, yet truly enough expressing the state of the case.

"It may throw some light on this question, if we remind our readers of the following fact. In the field of human investigation there are objects of two sorts: first, the *visible*, including not only such as are material, and may be seen by the bodily eye, but all such, likewise, as may be represented in a *shape*, before the mind's eye, or in any way pictured there; and, secondly, the *invisible*, or such as are not only unseen by human eyes, but as cannot be seen by any eye; not objects of sense at all; not capable, in short, of being *pictured* or imaged in the mind, or in any way represented by a *shape* either without the mind or within it. If any man shall here turn upon us, and assert that there are no such invisible objects; that whatever cannot be so pictured or imagined (meaning *imaged*) is nothing, and the science that relates to it nothing; we shall regret the circumstance. We shall request him, however, to consider seriously and deeply within himself what he means simply by these two words, God, and his own Soul; and whether he finds that visible shape and true existence are here also one and the same? If he still persist in denial, we have nothing for it, but to wish him good speed on his own separate path of inquiry; and he and we will agree to differ on this subject of mysticism, as on so many more important ones.

"Now, whoever has a material and visible object to treat, be it of Natural Science, Political Philosophy, or any such externally and sensibly existing department, may represent it to his own mind and convey it to the minds

among whom we must cite Tauler, had written upon religion in this sense. Since Luther, the Moravians have shown this disposition more than any other sect. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Lavater combated with great strength the

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of others, as it were, by a direct diagram, more complex indeed than a geometrical diagram, but still with the same sort of precision; and provided his diagram be *complete*, and the *same* both to himself and his reader, he may reason of it, and discuss it, with the clearness, and, in some sort, the certainty of geometry itself. If he do not so reason of it, this must be for want of comprehension to image out the *whole* of it, or of distinctness to convey the *same* whole to his reader: the diagrams of the two are different; the conclusions of the one diverge from those of the other, and the obscurity here, provided the reader be a man of sound judgment and due attentiveness, results from incapacity on the part of the writer. In such a case, the latter is justly regarded as a man of imperfect intellect; he grasps more than he can carry; he confuses what, with ordinary faculty, might be rendered clear; he is not a mystic, but what is much worse, a dunce. Another matter it is, however, when the object to be treated of belongs to the invisible and immaterial class; cannot be pictured out even by the writer himself, much less, in ordinary symbols, set before the reader. In this case, it is evident, the difficulties of comprehension are increased a hundred fold. Here it will require long, patient and skilful effort, both from the writer and the reader, before the two can so much as speak together; before the former can make known to the latter, not *how* the matter stands, but even *what* the matter *is*, which they have to investigate in concert. He must devise new means of explanation, describe conditions of mind in which this invisible idea arises, the false persuasions that eclipse it, the false shows that may be mistaken for it, the glimpses of it that appear elsewhere; in short, strive by a thousand well-devised methods, to guide his reader up to the perception of it; in all which, moreover, the reader must faithfully and toilsomely co-operate with him, if any fruit is to come of their mutual endeavor. Should the latter take up his ground too early, and affirm to himself that now he has seized what he still has not seized; that this and nothing else is the thing aimed at by his teacher, the consequences are plain enough: disunion, darkness, and contradiction between the two; the writer has written for another man, and this reader, after long provocation, quarrels with him finally, and quits him as a *mystic*.

"Nevertheless, after all these limitations, we shall not hesitate to admit, that there is in the German mind a tendency to mysticism, properly so called; as perhaps there is, unless carefully guarded against, in all minds tempered like theirs. It is a fault; but one hardly separable from the excellences we admire most in them. A simple, tender, and devout nature, seized by some touch of divine Truth, and of this perhaps under some rude, rough symbol, is wrapt with it into a whirlwind of unutterable thoughts; wild gleams of splendor dart to and fro in the eye of the seer, but the vision will not abide with him, and yet he feels that its light is

system of rational Christianity, which the theologians of Berlin had supported; and his manner of feeling religion is, in many respects, completely like that of Fénelon. Several lyric poets, from Klopstock down to our days, have a taint of Mysticism in their compositions. The Protestant religion, which reigns in the North, does not satisfy the imagination of the Germans; and Catholicism being opposed by its nature to philosophical researches, the religious and thinking among the Germans were necessarily obliged to have recourse to a method of feeling religion, which might be applied to every form of worship. Besides, idealism in philosophy has much analogy with Mysticism in religion; the one places all the reality of things in this world in thought, and the other all the reality of things in heaven in feeling.

The Mystics penetrate, with an inconceivable sagacity, into every thing which gives birth in the human mind to fear or hope, to suffering or to happiness; and no sect ascends as they

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light from heaven, and precious to him beyond all price. A simple nature, a George Fox, or a Jacob Böhme, ignorant of all the ways of men, of the dialect in which they speak, or the forms by which they think, is laboring with a poetic, a religious idea, which, like all such ideas, must express itself by word and act, or consume the heart it dwells in. Yet how shall he speak, how shall he pour forth into other souls that of which his own soul is full even to bursting? He cannot speak to us; he knows not *our* state, and cannot make known to us his own. His words are an inexplicable rhapsody, a speech in an unknown tongue. Whether there is meaning in it to the speaker himself, and how much or how true, we shall never ascertain; for it is not in the language of men, but of one man who had not learned the language of men; and, with himself, the key to its full interpretation was lost from among us. These are mystics; men who either know not clearly their own meaning, or at least cannot put it forth in formulas of thought, whereby others, with whatever difficulty, may apprehend it. Was their meaning clear to themselves, gleams of it will yet shine through, how ignorantly and unconsciously soever it may have been delivered; was it still wavering and obscure, no science could have delivered it wisely. In either case, much more in the last, they merit and obtain the name of mystics. To scoffers they are a ready and cheap prey; but sober persons understand that pure evil is as unknown in this lower Universe as pure good; and that even in mystics, of an honest and deep-feeling heart, there may be much to reverence, and of the rest more to pity than to mock."—(*Carlyle's Essays*, pp. 30, 31.)—*Ed.*

do to the origin of emotions in the soul. There is so much interest in this sort of inquiry, that even those who are otherwise of moderate understanding enough, when they have the least mystical inclination in their hearts, attract and captivate by their conversation, as if they were endowed with transcendent genius. That which makes society so subject to *ennui*, is, that the greater portion of those with whom we live, talk only of external objects; and upon this class of things the want of the spirit of conversation is very perceptible. But religious Mysticism includes so extensive a knowledge, that it gives a decided moral superiority to those who have not received it from nature; they apply themselves to the study of the human heart, which is the first of sciences, and give themselves as much trouble to understand the passions, that they may lull them to rest, as the men of the world do to turn them to advantage.

Without doubt, great faults may still appear in the character of those whose doctrine is the most pure; but is it to their doctrine that we should refer them? We pay especial homage to religion by the exactions we make from all religious men the moment we know they are so. We call them inconsistent if they commit any transgressions, or have any weaknesses; and yet nothing can entirely change the conditions of humanity. If religion always conferred moral perfection upon us, and if virtue always led to happiness, freedom of will would no longer exist; for the motives which acted upon volition, would be too powerful for liberty.

Dogmatical religion is a commandment; mystical religion is built upon the inward experience of our heart; the mode of preaching must necessarily be influenced by the direction which the ministers of the Gospel may take in this respect; and perhaps it would be desirable for us to perceive in their discourses more of the influence of those feelings which begin to penetrate all hearts. In Germany, where every sect abounds, Zollikofer, Jerusalem, and many others, have acquired great reputation by the eloquence of the pulpit; and we may read upon all subjects, a quantity of sermons which contain excellent things; nevertheless, although it is very wise to

teach morality, it is still more important to inspire motives to be moral; and these motives consist, above every thing, in religious emotion. Almost all men are nearly equally informed as to the inconveniences and the advantages of vice and virtue; but that which all the world wants, is the strengthening of the internal disposition with which we struggle against the violent inclinations of our nature.

If the whole business was to argue well with mankind, why should those parts of the service, which are only songs and ceremonies, lead us so much more than sermons to meditation and to piety? The greater part of preachers confine themselves to declaiming against evil inclinations, instead of showing how we yield to them, and how we resist them; the greater part of preachers are judges who direct the trial of men: but the priests of God ought to tell us what they suffer and what they hope; how they have modified their characters by certain thoughts; in a word, we expect from them the secret memoirs of the soul in its relations with the Deity.

Prohibitory laws are no more sufficient for the government of individuals than of States. The social system is obliged to put animated interests into action, to give aliment to human life: it is the same with the religious instructors of man; they can only preserve him from his passions by exciting a living and pure ecstasy in his heart: the passions are much better, in many respects, than a servile apathy; and nothing can moderate them but a profound sentiment, the enjoyments of which we ought to describe, if we can, with as much force and truth as we have introduced into our descriptions of the charm of earthly affections.

Whatever men of wit may have said, there exists a natural alliance between religion and genius. The Mystics have almost all a bias towards poetry and the fine arts; their ideas are in accord with true superiority of every sort, while incredulous and worldly-minded mediocrity is its enemy; that mediocrity cannot endure those who wish to penetrate into the soul; as it has put its best qualities on the surface, to touch the core is to discover its wretchedness.

The philosophy of Idealism, the Christianity of Mysticism, and the poetry of nature, have, in many respects, all the same end, and the same origin; these philosophers, these Christians, and these poets, all unite in one common desire. They would wish to substitute for the factitious system of society, not the ignorance of barbarous times, but an intellectual culture, which leads us back to simplicity by the very perfection of knowledge; they would, in short, wish to make energetic and reflecting, sincere and generous men, out of these characters without dignity; these minds without ideas; these jesters without gayety; these Epicureans without imagination, who, for want of better, are called the human species.

CHAPTER VI.

OF PAIN.

THAT axiom of the Mystics has been much blamed, which asserts *that pain is a good.* Some philosophers of antiquity have pronounced it not an evil; it is, however, much more difficult to consider it with indifference than with hope.[1] In effect, if we were not convinced that pain was the means of moral improvement, to what an excess of irritation would it not carry us? Why in that case summon us into life to be consumed by pain? Why concentrate all the torments and all the wonders of the universe in a weak heart, which fears and which desires? Why give us the power of loving, and snatch from us at last all that we hold dear? In short, why bring us to death, terrific death? When the illusion of the world has made us forget it, how is it recalled to our minds! It is in the midst of the splendors of this world that Death unfurls his funereal ensign.

[1] Lord Bacon says that prosperities are the benefactions of the Old Testament, and adversities of the New.

"Così trapassa al trapassar d'un giorno
Della vita mortal il fiore e 'l verde;
Ne perchè faccia indietro April ritorno,
Si rinfiora ella mai ne si rinverde." [1]

We have seen at a fête that princess,[2] who, although the mother of eight children, still united the charm of perfect beauty to all the dignity of the maternal character. She opened the ball; and the melodious sounds of music gave a signal for the moments consecrated to joy. Flowers adorned her lovely head, and dress and the dance must have recalled to her the first days of her youth; nevertheless, she appeared already to fear the very pleasures to which so much success might have attached her. Alas! in what a manner was this vague presentiment realized! On a sudden the numberless torches, which replace the splendor of the day, are about to be changed into devouring flames, and the most dreadful sufferings will take the place of the gorgeous luxury of the fête. What a contrast! and who can grow weary of reflecting upon it? No, never have the grandeur and the misery of man so closely approached each other; and our fickle thoughts, so easily diverted from the dark threatenings of futurity, have been struck in the same hour with all the brilliant and terrible images which destiny, in general, scatters at a distance from each other over the path of time.

No accident, however, had reached her, who would not have died but for her own choice. She was in safety; she might have renewed the thread of that life of virtue which she had been leading for fifteen years; but one of her daughters was still in danger, and the most delicate and timid of beings precipitates herself into the midst of flames which would have made warriors recoil. Every mother would have felt what she did! But who thinks she has sufficient strength to imi-

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[1] "Thus withers in a day the verdure and the flower of mortal life; it is in vain that the month of spring returns in its season; life never resumes her verdure or her flowers."—Verses of Tasso, sung in the gardens of Armida.

[2] The Princess Paulina of Schwartzenberg.

tate her? Who can reckon so much upon the soul, as not to fear those shudderings which nature bids us feel at the sight of a violent death? A woman braved them; and although the fatal blow then struck her, her last act was maternal: it was at this sublime instant that she appeared before God; and it was impossible to recognize what remained of her upon earth except by the impression on a medal, given by her children, which also marked the place where this angel perished. Ah! all that is horrible in this picture is softened by the rays of a celestial glory. This generous Paulina will hereafter be the saint of mothers; and if their looks do not dare to rise to Heaven, they will rest them upon her sweet figure, and will ask her to implore the blessing of God upon their children.

If we had gone so far as to dry up the source of religion upon earth, what should we say to those who see the purest of victims fall? What should we say to those who loved this victim? and with what despair, with what horror for fortune and her perfidious secrets, would not the soul be filled?

Not only what we see, but what we imagine, would strike our minds like a thunderbolt, if there was nothing within us free from the power of chance. Have not men lived in an obscure dungeon, where every moment was a pang, where there was no air but what was sufficient for them to begin suffering again? Death, according to the incredulous, must deliver us from every thing; but do they know what death is? do they know whether this death is annihilation? or into what a labyrinth of terrors reflection without a guide may drag us?

If an honest man (and the events of a life exposed to the passions may bring on this misfortune), if an honest man, I say, had done an irreparable injury to an innocent being, how could he ever be consoled for it without the assistance of religious expiation? When his victim is in the coffin, to whom must he address his sorrows if there is no communication with that victim; if God himself does not make the dead hear the lamentations of the living; if the sovereign Mediator for man did not say to grief, "It is enough;" and to repentance, "You

are forgiven ?" It is thought that the chief advantage of religion is its efficacy in awakening remorse; but it is also very frequently the means of lulling remorse to sleep. There are souls in which the past is predominant; there are those which regret tears to pieces like an active death, and upon which memory falls as furiously as a vulture: it is for them that religion operates as the alleviation of remorse.

An idea always the same, and yet assuming a thousand different dresses, fatigues at once, by its agitation and its monotony. The fine arts, which redoubled the power of imagination, augment with it the vivacity of pain. Nature herself becomes importunate when the soul is no longer in harmony with her; her tranquillity, which we once found so sweet, irritates us like indifference; the wonders of the universe grow dim as we gaze upon them; all looks like a vision, even in mid-day splendor. Night troubles us, as if the darkness concealed some secret misfortune of our own, and the shining sun appears to insult the mourning of our hearts. Whither shall we fly, then, from so many sufferings? Is it to death? But the anxiety of unhappiness makes us doubt whether there is rest in the tomb, and despair, even for atheists, is as a shadowy revelation of an eternity of pains. What shall we do then,—what shall we do, O my God! if we cannot throw ourselves into thy paternal bosom? He who first called God our Father, knew more of the human heart than the most profound thinkers of the age.

It is not true that religion narrows the heart; it is still less so, that the severity of religious principles is to be feared. I only know one sort of severity which is to be dreaded by feeling minds: it is that of the men of the world. These are the persons who conceive nothing, who excuse nothing that is involuntary; they have made a human heart according to their own will, in order to judge it at their leisure. We might address to them what was said to Messrs. de Port-Royal, who, otherwise, deserved much admiration: "It is easy for you to comprehend the man you have created; but, as to the real being, you know him not."

The greater part of men of the world are accustomed to frame certain dilemmas upon all the unhappy situations in life, in order to disencumber themselves as much as possible from the compassion which these situations demand from them. "There are but two parts to take," they say; "you must be entirely one thing, or the other, you must support what you cannot prevent, you must console yourself for what is irrevocable." Or rather, "He who wishes an end, wishes the means also; you must do every thing to preserve that which you cannot do without," etc., and a thousand other axioms of this kind, which all have the form of proverbs, and which are in effect the code of vulgar wisdom. But what connection is there between these axioms and the severe afflictions of the heart? All this serves very well in the common affairs of life; but how apply such counsels to moral pains? They all vary according to the individual, and are composed of a thousand different circumstances, unknown to every one but our most intimate friend, if there is one who knows how to identify himself with us. Every character is almost a new world for him who can observe it with sagacity, and I know not in the science of the human heart one general idea which is completely applicable to particular examples.

The language of religion can alone suit every situation and every mode of feeling. When we read the reveries of J. J. Rousseau, that eloquent picture of a being preyed upon by an imagination stronger than himself, I have asked myself how a man whose understanding was formed by the world, and a religious recluse, would have endeavored to console Rousseau. He would have complained of being hated and persecuted; he would have called himself the object of universal envy, and the victim of a conspiracy which extended even from the people to their monarchs; he would have pretended that all his friends had betrayed him, and that the very services which they had rendered him were so many snares: what then would the man of an understanding formed by society have answered to all these complaints?

"You strangely exaggerate," he would have said, "the effect

that you fancy you produce: you are doubtless a very distinguished person; but, however, as each of us has his own affairs, and also his own ideas, a book does not fill all heads; the events of war or of peace, and still less interests, but which personally concern ourselves, occupy us much more than any writer, however celebrated he may be. They have banished you, it is true, but all countries ought to be alike to a philosopher like you; and to what purpose indeed can the morals and the religion, which you develop so well in your writings, be turned, if you are not able to support the reverses which have befallen you? Without doubt, there are some persons who envy you among the fraternity of learned men; but this cannot extend to the classes of society who trouble themselves very little with literature: besides, if celebrity really annoys you, nothing is so easy as to escape from it. Write no more; at the end of a few years you will be forgotten, and you will be as quiet as if you never had published any thing. You say that your friends lay snares for you, while they pretend to serve you. In the first place, is it not possible that there should be a slight degree of romantic exaltation in your manner of considering your personal relations? Your fine imagination was necessary to compose the *Nouvelle Héloise;* but a little reason is requisite in the affairs of this world, and, when we choose to do so, we see things as they are. If, however, your friends deceive you, you must break with them; but you will be very unwise to grieve on this account; for, one of two things, either they are worthy of your esteem—and in that case you are wrong to suspect them—or, if your suspicions are well founded, then you ought not to regret such friends."

After having heard this dilemma, J. J. Rousseau might very well have taken a third part, that of throwing himself into the river. But what would the religious recluse have said to him?

"My son, I know not the world, and I am ignorant whether it is true that they wish you ill in the world; but if it were so, you would share this fate with all good men, who nevertheless have pardoned their enemies; for Jesus Christ and

Socrates, the God and the man, have set the example. It is necessary for hateful passions to exist here below, in order that the trial of the just should be accomplished. St. Theresa has said of the wicked: *Unhappy men, they do not love!* and yet they live long enough to have time for repentance.

"You have received admirable gifts from Heaven; if they have made you love what is good, have you not already enjoyed the reward of having been a soldier of Truth upon earth? If you have softened hearts by your persuasive eloquence, you will obtain for yourself some of those tears which you have caused to flow. You have enemies near you, but friends at a distance, among the votaries of solitude, who read you; and you have consoled the unfortunate better than we can console yourself. Why have I not your talent, to make you listen to me? That talent, my son, is a noble gift; men often try to asperse it; they tell you, wrongfully, that we condemn it in the name of God: this is not true. It is a divine emotion, which inspires eloquence; and if you have not abused it, learn to endure envy, for such a superiority is well worth the pain it may make you suffer.

"Nevertheless, my son, I fear that pride is mixed with your sufferings; and this it is which gives them their bitterness, for all the griefs that continue humble make our tears flow gently; but there is a poison in pride, and man becomes senseless when he yields to it: it is an enemy that makes her own champion, the better to destroy him.

"Genius ought only to serve to manifest the supreme goodness of the soul. There are many men who have this goodness, without the talent of expressing it: thank God, from whom you receive the charm of those words formed to enchant the imagination of man; but be not proud, except of the feeling which dictates them. Every thing in life will be rendered calm for you, if you always continue religiously good: the wicked themselves grow tired of doing evil; their own poison exhausts them; and, besides, is not God above, to take care of the sparrow that falls, and of the heart of man that suffers?

"You say that your friends wish to betray you; take care

that you do not accuse them unjustly: woe to him that has repelled a sincere affection, for they are the angels of heaven who send it us; they have reserved this part to themselves in the destiny of man! Suffer not your imagination to lead you astray; you must permit her to wander in the regions of the clouds; but nothing except one heart can judge another, and you would be very culpable if you were to forget a sincere friendship; for the beauty of the soul consists in its generous confidence, and human prudence is figured by a serpent.

"It is possible, however, that in expiation of some transgressions, into which your great abilities have led you, you will be condemned upon this earth to drink that impoisoned cup, the treachery of a friend. If it is so, I lament your fate: the Divinity himself laments it while he punishes you. But do not revolt against his blows; still love, although love has distracted your heart. In the most profound solitude, in the cruellest isolation, we must not suffer the source of the devoted affections to be dried up within us. For a long while it was not believed that God could be loved as we love those who resemble ourselves. A voice which answers us, looks which are interchanged with our own, appear full of life, while the immense Heaven is silent; but by degrees the soul exalts itself, even to feel its God near it as a friend.

"My son, we ought to pray as we love, by mingling prayer with all our thoughts; we ought to pray, for then we are no more alone; and when resignation shall descend softly into your heart, turn your eyes upon nature; it might be said that every one there finds again his past life, when no traces of it exist among men. Think of your regrets as well as your pleasures, when you contemplate those clouds, sometimes dark and sometimes brilliant, which the wind scatters; and whether death has snatched your friends from you, or life, still more cruel, has broken asunder your bonds of union with them, you will perceive in the stars their deified images; they will appear to you such as you will see them again hereafter."

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHERS CALLED THEOSOPHISTS.

When I gave an account of the modern philosophy of the Germans, I endeavored to trace the line of demarcation between that philosophy which attempts to penetrate the secrets of the universe, and that which is confined to an inquiry into the nature of our souls. The same distinction may be remarked among religious writers; those of whom I have already spoken in the preceding chapters have kept to the influence of religion upon our hearts; others, such as Jacob Böhme in Germany, St. Martin in France, and very many more, have believed that they found in the relation of Christianity mysterious words, which might serve to develop the laws of creation. We must confess, when we begin to think, it is difficult to stop; and whether reflection leads to skepticism, or to the most universal faith, we are sometimes tempted to pass whole hours, like the Faquirs, in asking ourselves what is life? Far from despising those who are thus devoured by contemplation, we cannot help considering them as the true lords of the human species, in whose presence those who exist without reflection are only vassals attached to the soil. But how can we flatter ourselves with the hope of giving any consistency to these thoughts, which, like flashes of lightning, plunge again into darkness, after having for a moment thrown an uncertain brilliance upon surrounding objects?

It may, however, be interesting to point out the principal direction of the systems of the Theosophists;[1] that is, of those

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[1] "'The *Theosophists*, neither contented with the natural light of human reason, nor with the simple doctrines of Scripture understood in their literal sense, have recourse to an internal supernatural light, superior to all

religious philosophers who have always existed in Germany, from the establishment of Christianity, and particularly since the revival of letters. The greater part of the Greek philosophers have built the system of the world upon the action of the elements; and if we except Pythagoras and Plato, who derived from the East their tendency to idealism, the thinking men of antiquity explain all the organization of the universe by physical laws. Christianity, by lighting up the internal life in the breast of man, naturally excited the mind to exaggerate its power over the body. The abuses to which the most pure doctrines are subject have introduced visions and white magic (that is, the magic which attributes to the will of man the power of acting upon the elements without the intervention of infernal spirits), all the whimsical reveries, in short, which spring from the conviction that the soul is more powerful than nature. The sects of Alchemists, of Magnetizers, and of the Illuminati, are almost all supported upon this ascendency of the will, which they carry much too far, but which,

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other illuminations, from which they profess to derive a mysterious and divine philosophy, manifested only to the chosen favorites of heaven.'—Enfield, *Hist. of Phil.*, vol. ii.

"The Theosophists are a school of philosophers who would mix enthusiasm with observation, alchemy with theology, metaphysics with medicine, and clothe the whole with a form of mystery and inspiration. It began with Paracelsus at the opening of the sixteenth century, and has survived in St. Martin to the end of the eighteenth. Paracelsus, Jacob Böhme, and St. Martin, may be called popular, while Cornelius Agrippa, Valentine Weigelius, Robert Fludd, and Van Helmont, are more philosophical in their doctrines. But they all hold different doctrines; so that they cannot be reduced to a system.

"'The *theosophist* is one who gives you a theory of God, or of the works of God, which has not reason, but an inspiration of his own for its basis.'—Vaughan, *Hours with Mystics*, vol. i. p. 45.

"'Both the politics and the *theosophy* of Coleridge were at the mercy of a discursive genius, intellectually bold, but educationally timid, which, anxious, or rather willing, to bring conviction and speculation together, mooting all points as it went, and throwing the subtlest glancing lights on many, ended in satisfying nobody, and concluding nothing. Charles Lamb said of him, that he had the art of making the unintelligible appear intelligible.''—Hunt, *Imagination and Fancy*, 12mo, 1844, p. 276.—(Fleming, *Vocab. of Philos.*, pp. 518, 519.)—*Ed.*

nevertheless, in some manner belongs to the moral grandeur of man.

Not only has Christianity, by affirming the spiritual nature of the soul, led them to believe the unlimited power of religious or philosophical faith, but revelation has seemed to some men a continual miracle, which is capable of being renewed for every one of them; and some have sincerely believed that a supernatural power of divination was granted them, and that truths were manifested in them to which they testified more clearly than the inventors.

The most famous of these religious philosophers was Jacob Böhme, a German shoemaker, who lived at the beginning of the seventeenth century; he made so much noise in his time, that Charles the First sent a person to Görlitz, the place of his abode, expressly to study his work, and bring it back to England. Some of his writings have been translated into French by M. de St. Martin; they are very difficult to comprehend; nevertheless we cannot but be astonished that a man without cultivation of mind should have gone so far in the contemplation of nature. He considers it in general as an emblem of the principal doctrines of Christianity; he fancies he sees everywhere, in the phenomena of the world, traces of the fall of man, and of his regeneration; the effects of the principle of anger, and of that of pity; and while the Greek philosophers attempted to explain the world by the mixture of the elements of air, water, and fire, Jacob Böhme only admits the combination of moral forces, and has recourse to passages of the Gospel to interpret the universe.

In whatever manner we consider those singular writings, which for two hundred years have always found readers, or rather adepts, we cannot avoid remarking the two opposite roads which are followed, in order to arrive at the truth, by the spiritualistic philosophers, and by the materialistic philosophers. The former imagine that it is by divesting ourselves of all impressions from without, and by plunging into the ecstasy of thought, that we can interpret nature. The latter pretend that we cannot too much guard against enthusiasm and imagi-

nation in our inquiry into the phenomena of the universe. They would seem to say that the human understanding must be freed from matter or from mind to comprehend nature, while it is in the mysterious union of these two that the secret of existence consists.

Some learned men in Germany assert, that we find in the works of Jacob Böhme very profound views upon the physical world. We may say, at least, that there is as much originality in the theories of the religious philosophers concerning creation, as in those of Thales, of Xenophon, of Aristotle, of Descartes, and Leibnitz. The Theosophists declare, that what they think, has been revealed to them, while philosophers, in general, believe they are solely conducted by their own reason. But, as both aspire to know the mystery of mysteries, of what signification, at this high point, are the words of reason and folly? and why disgrace with the name of insensate persons those who believe they find great lights in their exaltation of mind? It is a movement of the soul of a very remarkable nature, and which assuredly has not been conferred upon us merely for the sake of opposing it.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE SPIRIT OF SECTARISM IN GERMANY.

The habit of meditation leads us to reveries of every kind upon human destiny; active life alone can divert our interest from the source of things; but all that is grand or absurd in respect to ideas is the result of that internal emotion which we cannot expend upon external objects. Many people are very angry with religious or philosophical sects, and give them the name of follies, and of dangerous follies. It appears to me that the wanderings even of thought are much less to be feared than the absence of thought, in respect to the repose and mo-

rality of men. When we have not within ourselves that power of reflection which supplies material activity, we must be incessantly in action, and frequently at random. The fanaticism of ideas has sometimes led, it is true, to violent actions, but it has almost always been because the advantages of this world have been sought for by the aid of abstract opinions. Metaphysical systems are very little to be feared in themselves; they do not become dangerous till they are united to the interests of ambition, and it is therefore upon these interests that we must gain a hold, if we wish to modify such systems; but men who are capable of a lively attachment to an opinion, independently of the results which it may have, are always of a noble nature.

The philosophical and religious sects, which under different names, have existed in Germany, have hardly had any connection with political affairs; and the sort of talent necessary to lead men to vigorous resolutions, has been rarely manifested in this country. We may dispute upon the philosophy of Kant, upon theological questions, upon idealism or empiricism, without producing any thing but books.

The spirit of sect and the spirit of party differ in many points. The spirit of party represents opinions by that which is most prominent about them, in order to make the vulgar understand them; and the spirit of sect, particularly in Germany, always leads to what is most abstract. In the spirit of party we must seize the points of view taken by the multitude to place ourselves among them; the Germans only think of Theory, and if she was to lose herself in the clouds, they would follow her there. The spirit of party stirs up certain common passions in men which unite them in a mass. The Germans subdivide every thing by means of distinction and comment. They have a philosophical sincerity singularly adapted to the inquiry after truth, but not at all to the art of putting her into action. The spirit of sect aspires only to convince; that of party wishes to rally men round it. The former disputes about ideas, the latter wishes for power over men. There is discipline in the party spirit, and anarchy in the sectarian

spirit. Authority, of whatever kind it may be, has hardly any thing to fear from the spirit of sectarism; we satisfy it by leaving a great latitude for thought at its disposal. But the spirit of party is not so easily contented, and does not confine itself to these intellectual contests, in which every individual may create an empire for himself without expelling one present possessor.

In France, they are much more susceptible of the party spirit than of the sectarian: every one there too well understands the reality of life, not to turn his wishes into actions, and his thoughts into practice; but perhaps they are too foreign from the sectarian spirit: they do not sufficiently hold to abstract ideas, to have any warmth in defending them; besides, they do not choose to be bound by any sort of opinions, for the purpose of advancing the more freely in the face of all circumstances. There is more good faith in the spirit of sect than in the party spirit; the Germans, therefore, are naturally more fitted for one than the other.

We must distinguish three sorts of religious and philosophical sects in Germany: first, the different Christian communities which have existed, particularly at the epoch of the Reformation, when all writings have been directed towards theological questions; secondly, the secret associations; and lastly, the adepts of some particular systems, of which one man is the chief. We must range the Anabaptists and the Moravians in the first class; in the second, that most ancient of secret associations, the Freemasons; and in the third, the different sorts of the Illuminati.

The Anabaptists were rather a revolutionary than a religious sect; and as they owed their existence to political passions, and not to opinions, they passed away with circumstances. The Moravians, entirely strangers to the interests of this world, are, as I have said, a Christian community of the greatest purity. The Quakers carry into the midst of society the principles of the Moravians: the Moravians withdraw from the world, to be the more sure of remaining faithful to their principles.

Freemasonry[1] is an institution much more serious in Scotland and in Germany than in France. It has existed in all countries; but it nevertheless appears that it was from Germany especially that this association took its origin; that it was afterwards transported to England by the Anglo-Saxons, and renewed at the death of Charles the First by the partisans of the Restoration, who assembled somewhere near St. Paul's Church for the purpose of recalling Charles the Second to the throne. It is also believed that the Freemasons, especially in Scotland, are, in some manner, connected with the order of Templars. Lessing has written a dialogue upon Freemasonry, in which his luminous genius is very remarkable. He believes that this association has for its object the union of men, in spite of the barriers of society; for if, in certain respects, the social state forms a bond of connection between men, by subjecting them to the empire of the laws, it separates them by the differences of rank and government: this sort of brotherhood, the true image of the golden age, has been mingled with many other ideas equally good and moral in Freemasonry. However, we cannot dissemble that there is something in the nature of secret associations which leads the mind to independence; but these associations are very favorable to the development of knowledge; for every thing which men do by themselves and spontaneously, gives their judgment more strength and more comprehensiveness. It is also possible that the principles of democratic equality may be propagated by this species of institution, which exhibits mankind according to their real value, and not according to their several ranks in the world. Secret associations teach us what is the power of number and of union, while insulated citizens are, if we may use the expression, abstract beings with relation to each other. In this point of view these associations may have a great influence in the State; but it is, nevertheless, just to acknowledge,

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[1] We need remind no Masonic reader how faulty *Madame* de Staël's account of the ancient and honorable institution *must* be.—*Ed.*

that Freemasonry, in general, is only occupied with religious and philosophical interests.

Its members are divided into two classes: the Philosophical Freemasonry, and the Hermetic or Egyptian Freemasonry. The first has for its object the internal church, or the development of the spirituality of the soul; the second is connected with the sciences, with those sciences which are employed upon the secrets of nature. The Rosicrucian brotherhoood, among others, is one of the degrees of Freemasonry, and this brotherhood originally consisted of Alchemists. At all times, and in every country, secret associations have existed, whose members have aimed at mutually strengthening each other in their belief of the soul's spirituality. The mysteries of Eleusis among the Pagans, the sect of the Essenes among the Hebrews, were founded upon this doctrine, which they did not choose to profane by exposing it to the ridicule of the vulgar. It is nearly thirty years since there was an assembly of Freemasons, presided over by the Duke of Brunswick, at Wilhelmsbad; this assembly had for its object the reform of the Freemasons in Germany, and it appears, that the opinions of the Mystics in general, and those of St. Martin in particular, had much influence over this society. Political institutions, social relations, and often those of the family even, comprehend only the exterior of life. It is then natural, that at all times men should have sought some intimate manner of knowing and understanding each other, and also those whose characters have any depth believe they are adepts, and endeavor to distinguish themselves, by some signs, from the rest of mankind. Secret associations degenerate with time, but their principle is almost always an enthusiastic feeling restrained by society.

There are three classes of the Illuminati:[1] the Mystical, the

[1] "ILLUMINATI, *The Enlightened*, a name applied to the members of a secret society of the last century. It is said that a society had been formed by a disciple of Swedenborg, for the purpose of ostensibly bringing about a social reform in Europe; and that from this society, as well as from the societies of Jesuits and Freemasons, Adam Weishaupt, professor of canon-law at Ingolstadt, took the idea of forming a society whose professed object was, by one single tie, to unite men of all countries, in spite

Visionary, and the Political! The first class, that of which Jacob Böhme, and in the last age Pasqualis and St. Martin, might be considered as the chiefs, is united by many ties to that internal church which is the sanctuary of reunion for all religious philosophers; these Illuminati are only occupied with religion and with nature, interpreted by the doctrines of religion. The Visionary Illuminati, at the head of whom we must place the Swedish Swedenborg, believe that, by the power of the will, they can make the dead appear, and work other miracles. The late King of Prussia, Frederick William, has been led into error by the credulity of these men, or by their artifices, which had the appearance of credulity. The Ideal

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of different opinions, religions, and ranks; to instruct all classes, and to surround sovereigns with men of integrity, justice, truth, and courage. His adherents were at first called *Perfectibilists*, but afterwards designated themselves the *Enlightened*. From the ablest of his law students he chose apostles for his new scheme. These apostles he called *areopagists*, and sent to various parts of Europe to work out his system. Before the existence of the society was known at Ingolstadt, several *lodges* had been established at Bavaria, Suabia, Franconia, Milan, and Holland, numbering 1000 disciples. Weishaupt succeeded in gaining over the Baron de Knigge, and Bode, the philosopher, to his system. The whole society formed a hierarchy which consisted of eight grades, independent of minor subdivisions, viz., the Novice, the Minerval, the *Illuminatus Minor*, the *Illuminatus Major*, the Scottish Cavalier, the Priest, the Regent, and the King. Young men between eighteen and thirty were preferred, and Lutherans were taken rather than Catholics. The Baron de Knigge was a zealous promoter of their views. At the Congress of Wilhelmsbad, 1783, when there were present men from all parts of the world, he made many converts. The society numbered 2000, of whom he himself had converted 500. A dispute arose between Weishaupt and Knigge; the latter was deposed, retired to Brême, and wrote against the society. In 1785, the system was divulged, and Weishaupt retired to Ratisbon. On the seizure of the papers and documents of the leaders in the following year, Weishaupt fled to Halle, where he died in 1830, at the age of 83.

"A new combination was soon formed, under the name of the *Germanic Union*, the founder of which was Dr. Bahrdt. Its political intrigues favored and hastened on the French Revolution. Mirabeau, Talleyrand, and others, are said to have adopted the principles of the new union, which Bode is said to have expounded in person at the Masonic lodges of Paris. It has been doubted, however, whether the society ever attained to a perfect organization, or whether it ever exerted any extensive influence."—(*Encyclopædia Britannica.*)—*Ed.*

Illuminati look down upon these visionaries as empirics; they despise their pretended prodigies, and think that the wonderful sentiments of the soul belong to them only in an especial manner.

In a word, men who have had no other object than that of securing the chief authority in all States, and of getting places for themselves, have taken the name of the Illuminati. Their chief was a Bavarian, Weishaupt, a man of superior understanding, and who had thoroughly felt the power that we may acquire, by uniting the scattered strength of individuals, and by directing them all to the same object. The possession of a secret, whatever it may be, flatters the self-love of men; and when they are told that they are something that their equals are not, they always gain a command over them. Self-love is hurt by resembling the multitude; and, from the moment that we choose to assume public or private marks of distinction, we are sure to set in motion the fancy of vanity, which is the most active of all fancies.

The political Illuminati have only borrowed from the others some signs of recognition; but interests, and not opinions, are their rallying-points. Their object, it is true, was to reform the social order upon new principles; but while they waited the accomplishment of this great work, their first aim was to seize upon public offices. Such a sect has adepts enough in every country, who initiate themselves into its secrets. In Germany, however, perhaps this sect is the only one which has been founded upon a political combination; all the others have taken their rise from some sort of enthusiasm, and have only had for their object the inquiry after truth.

Among these men who endeavor to penetrate the secrets of nature, we must reckon the Magnetizers, the Alchemists, etc. It is probable that there is much folly in these pretended discoveries, but what can we find alarming in them? If we come to the detection of that which is called marvellous in physical phenomena, we shall have reason to think there are moments when Nature appears a machine which is constantly moved by the same springs, and it is then that her inflexible regularity

alarms us; but when we fancy we occasionally see in her something voluntary, like thought, a confused hope seizes upon the soul, and steals us away from the fixed regard of necessity.

At the bottom of all these attempts, and of all these scientific and philosophical systems, there is always a very marked bias towards the spirituality of the soul. Those who wish to divine the secrets of nature, are entirely opposed to the materialists; for it is always in thought that they seek the solution of the enigma of the physical world. Doubtless, such a movement in the mind may lead to great errors, but it is so with every thing animated; as soon as there is life there is danger.

Individual efforts would end by being interdicted, if we were to subject ourselves to that method which aims at regulating the movements of the mind, as discipline commands those of the body. The difficulty then consists in directing the faculties without restraining them, and we should wish that it was possible to adapt to the imagination of men, the art yet unknown of still rising on wings, and of directing our flight in the air.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE CONTEMPLATION OF NATURE.

In speaking of the influence of the new philosophy upon the sciences, I have already made mention of some of the new principles adopted in Germany, relative to the study of nature. But as religion and enthusiasm have a great share in the contemplation of the universe, I shall point out, in a general manner, the political and religious views that we may collect upon this point in the writings of the Germans.

Many naturalists, guided by a pious feeling, have thought it their duty to limit themselves to the examination of final causes. They have endeavored to prove that every thing in

the world tends to the support and the physical well-being of individuals and of classes. It appears to me that we may make very strong objections to this system. Without doubt it is easy to see, that, in the order of things, the means are admirably adapted to their ends. But in this universal concatenation, where are those causes bounded which are effects, and those effects which are causes? If we choose to refer every thing to the preservation of man, we shall find it difficult to conceive what he has in common with the majority of beings; besides, it is to attach too much value to material existence, to assign that as the ultimate object of creation.

Those who, notwithstanding the great crowd of particular misfortunes, attribute a certain sort of goodness to Nature, consider her as a merchant, who, making speculations on a large scale, balances small losses by greater advantages. This system is not suitable even to the governments of men; and scrupulous writers in political economy have opposed it. What then will be the case, if we consider the intentions of the Deity? A man, regarded in a religious light, is as much as the entire human race; and from the moment that we have conceived the idea of an immortal soul, we have no right to decide what is the degree of importance which an individual holds in his relation to the whole body. Every intelligent being is of an infinite value, because his soul is eternal. It is then in the most elevated point of view that the German philosophers have considered the universe.

There are those who believe they see in every thing two principles, that of good and that of evil, continually opposing each other; and whether we attribute this contest to an infernal power, or whether, according to a simpler thought, the natural world may be the image of the good and bad propensities of man, it is true that the universe always offers to our observation two faces, which are absolutely contrary to each other. There is, we cannot deny it, a terrible side in nature as well as in the human heart, and we feel there a dreadful power of anger. However good may be the intention of the partisans of optimism, more depth is apparent, I think, in those

who do not deny evil, but who acknowledge the connection of this evil with the liberty of man, with the immortality which he may deserve by the right use of that liberty.

The mystical writers, of whom I have spoken in the preceding chapters, see in man the abridgment of the world, and in the world, the emblem of the doctrines of Christianity. Nature seems to them the corporeal image of the Deity, and they are continually plunging further into the profound signification of things and beings.

Among the German writers, who have been employed upon the contemplation of nature under a religious point of view, there are two who merit particular attention: Novalis as a poet, and Schubert as a naturalist. Novalis, who was a man of noble birth, was initiated from his youth in the studies of every kind which the new school has developed in Germany; but his pious soul has given a great character of simplicity to his poems. He died at the age of twenty-six; and, when he was no more, the religious hymns which he had composed acquired a striking celebrity in Germany. This young man's father is a Moravian; and, some time after the death of his son, he went to visit a community of that persuasion, and heard his son's hymns sung in their church, the Moravians having chosen them for their own edification, without knowing the author of them.

Among the works of Novalis, some *Hymns to the Night*[1]

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[1] "These *Hymns to the Night*, it will be remembered, were written shortly after the death of his mistress: in that period of deep sorrow, or rather of holy deliverance from sorrow. Novalis himself regarded them as his most finished productions. They are of a strange, veiled, almost enigmatical character; nevertheless, more deeply examined, they appear nowise without true poetic worth; there is a vastness, an immensity of idea; a still solemnity reigns in them, a solitude almost as of extinct worlds. Here and there, too, some lightbeam visits us in the void deep; and we cast a glance, clear and wondrous, into the secrets of that mysterious soul. A full commentary on the *Hymns to the Night* would be an exposition of Novalis's whole theological and moral creed; for it lies recorded there, though symbolically, and in lyric, not in didactic language. We have translated the third, as the shortest and simplest; imitating its light, half-measured style; above all, deciphering its vague, deep-laid

are distinguished, which very forcibly depict the train of recollections which it awakens in the mind. The blaze of day may agree with the joyous doctrines of Paganism; but the starry heaven seems the real temple of the purest worship. It is in the darkness of night, says a German poet, that immortality is revealed to man; the light of the sun dazzles the eyes, which imagine they see. Some stanzas of Novalis, on the life of miners, contain some spirited poetry, of very great effect. He questions the earth which is found in the deep caverns, because it has been the witness of the different revolutions which nature has undergone; and he expresses a vehement desire to penetrate still further towards the centre of the globe. The contrast of this boundless curiosity with the frail life, which is to be exposed to gratify it, causes a sublime emotion. Man is placed on earth, between infinity in the heavens and infinity in the abysses; and his life, spent under the influence of time, is likewise between two eternities. Surrounded on all sides

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sense, as accurately as we could. By the word 'Night,' it will be seen, Novalis means much more than the common opposite of Day. 'Light' seems, in these poems, to shadow forth our terrestrial life; Night, the primeval and celestial life:

"'Once when I was shedding bitter tears, when, dissolved in pain, my Hope had melted away, and I stood solitary by the grave that in its dark narrow space concealed the Form of my life; solitary as no other had been; chased by unutterable anguish; powerless; one thought, and that of misery;—here now as I looked round for help; forward could not go, nor backward, but clung to a transient extinguished Life with unutterable longing;—lo, from the azure distance, down from the heights of my old Blessedness, came a chill Breath of Dusk, and suddenly the band of Birth, the fetter of Light was snapped asunder. Vanishes the Glory of Earth, and with it my Lamenting; rushes together the infinite Sadness into a new unfathomable World: thou Night's-inspiration, Slumber of Heaven, camest over me; the scene rose gently aloft; over the scene hovered my enfranchised new-born spirit; to a cloud of dust that grave changed itself; through the cloud I beheld the transfigured features of my Beloved. In her eyes lay Eternity; I clasped her hands, and my tears became a glittering indissoluble chain. Centuries of Ages moved away into the distance, like thunder-clouds. On her neck I wept, for this new life, enrapturing tears. It was my first, only Dream; and ever since then do I feel this changeless everlasting faith in the Heaven of Night, and its Sun my Beloved.'"—(*Carlyle's Essays*, p. 183.)—*Ed.*

by boundless ideas and objects, innumerable thoughts appear to him like millions of lights, which throw their blaze together to dazzle him.

Novalis[1] has written much upon nature in general; he calls

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[1] "We might say that the chief excellence we have remarked in Novalis, is his to us truly wonderful subtlety of intellect; his power of intense abstraction, of pursuing the deepest and most evanescent ideas, through their thousand complexities, as it were, with lynx vision, and to the very limits of human Thought. He was well skilled in mathematics, and, as we can easily believe, fond of that science; but his is a far finer species of endowment than any required in mathematics, where the mind, from the very beginning of *Euclid* to the end of *Laplace*, is assisted with visible symbols, with safe *implements* for thinking; nay, at least in what is called the higher mathematics, has often little more than a mechanical superintendence to exercise over these. This power of abstract meditation, when it is so sure and clear as we sometimes find it with Novalis, is a much higher and rarer one; its element is not mathematics, but that *Mathesis*, of which it has been said many a Great Calculist has not even a notion. In this power truly, so far as logical and not moral power is concerned, lies the summary of all Philosophic talent: which talent accordingly we imagine Novalis to have possessed in a very high degree; in a higher degree than almost any other modern writer we have met with. . . . . .

"In regard to the character of his genius, or rather perhaps of his literary significance, and the form under which he displayed his genius, Tieck thinks he may be likened to Dante. 'For him,' says he, 'it had become the most natural disposition to regard the commonest and nearest as a wonder, and the strange, the supernatural, as something common; men's every-day life itself lay round him like a wondrous fable, and those regions which the most dream of, or doubt of, as of a thing distant, incomprehensible, were for him a beloved home. Thus did he, uncorrupted by examples, find out for himself a new method of delineation; and in his multiplicity of meaning, in his view of Love, and his belief in Love, as at once his Instructor, his Wisdom, his Religion; in this too that a single grand incident of life, and one deep sorrow and bereavement grew to be the essence of his Poetry and Contemplation,—he alone among the moderns resembles the lofty Dante; and sings us, like him, an unfathomable, mystic song, far different from that of many imitators, who think to put on mysticism and put it off, like a piece of dress.' Considering the tendency of his poetic endeavors, as well as the general spirit of his philosophy, this flattering comparison may turn out to be better founded than at first sight it seems to be. Nevertheless, were we required to illustrate Novalis in this way, which at all times must be a very loose one, we should incline rather to call him the German Pascal than the German Dante. Between Pascal and Novalis, a lover of such analogies might trace not a few points of resemblance. Both are of the purest, most affectionate moral nature; both of a high, fine, discursive intellect; both are mathematicians and

himself, with reason, the disciple of Saïs, because in that city the temple of Isis was built, and the traditions that remain of the Egyptian mysteries lead us to believe that their priests had a profound knowledge of the laws of the universe.

"Man," says Novalis,[1] "is united to nature by relations almost as various, almost as inconceivable, as those which he maintains with his kind; as she brings herself down to the comprehension of children, and takes delight in their simple hearts, so does she appear sublime to exalted minds, and divine to divine beings. The love of nature assumes various forms, and while it excites in some persons nothing but joy and pleasure, it inspires the arts with the most pious religion, with that which gives a direction and a support to the whole of life. Long since, among the ancient nations, there have been men of serious spirit, for whom the universe was the image of the Deity; and others, who believed they were only invited to the banquet of the world: the air, for these convivial guests of existence, was only a refreshing draught; the stars were only torches which lit the dance during the night; and plants and animals only the magnificent preparations for a splendid feast: Nature did not present herself to their eyes as a majestic and tranquil temple, but as the brilliant theatre of entertainments ever new.

"At the same time, however, some more profound minds were employed without relaxation in rebuilding that ideal world, the traces of which had already disappeared; they partook, like brothers, the most sacred labors; some endeavored

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naturalists, yet occupy themselves chiefly with Religion: nay, the best writings of both are left in the shape of 'Thoughts,' materials of a grand scheme, which each of them, with the views peculiar to his age, had planned, we may say, for the furtherance of Religion, and which neither of them lived to execute. Nor in all this would it fail to be carefully remarked, that Novalis was not the French but the *German* Pascal; and from the intellectual habits of the one and the other, many national contrasts and conclusions might be drawn; which we leave to those that have a taste for such parallels."—(*Carlyle's Essays*, pp. 185, 186.)—*Ed.*

[1] We have no copy of Novalis at hand, and are obliged to content ourselves with a second-hand version.—*Ed.*

to reproduce in music the voice of the woods and winds; others impressed the image and the presentiment of a more noble race upon stone and brass, changed the rocks into edifices, and brought to light the treasures hidden under the earth. Nature, civilized by man, seemed to answer his desires: the imagination of the artist dared to question her, and the golden age seemed to reappear, by the help of thought.

"In order to understand Nature, we must be incorporated with her. A poetical and reflective life, a holy and religious soul, all the strength and all the bloom of human existence are necessary to attain this comprehension; and the true observer is he who can discover the analogy of that nature with man, and that of man with heaven."

Schubert has composed a book upon Nature that never tires in the perusal, so filled is it with ideas that excite meditation; he presents the picture of new facts, the concatenation of which is conceived under new points of view. We derive two principal ideas from his work. The Indians believe in a descending metempsychosis, that is, in the condemnation of the soul of man to pass into animals and plants, as a punishment for having misused this life. It would be difficult for us to imagine a system of more profound misery; and the writings of the Indians bear the melancholy stamp of their doctrine. They believe they see everywhere, in animals as in plants, thought as a captive, and feeling enslaved, vainly endeavoring to disengage themselves from the gross and silent forms which imprison them. The system of Schubert is more consolatory. He represents Nature as an ascending metempsychosis, in which, from the stone to human life, there is a continual promotion, which makes the vital principle advance by degrees, even to the most complete perfection.

Schubert also believes that there have been epochs, where man had so lively and so delicate a feeling of existing phenomena, that, by his own impressions, he conjectured the most hidden secrets of Nature. These primitive faculties have become dull; and it is often the sickly irritability of the nerves, which, while it weakens the power of reasoning, restores to

man that instinct which he formerly owed to the very plenitude of his strength. The labors of philosophers, of learned men, and of poets, in Germany, aim at diminishing the dry power of argumentation, without in the least obscuring knowledge. It is thus that the imagination of the ancient world may be born again, like the phœnix, from the ashes of all errors.

The greater number of naturalists have attempted to explain Nature like a good government, in which every thing is conducted according to wise principles of administration; but it is in vain that we try to transfer this prosaic system to creation. Neither the terrible, nor even the beautiful, can be explained by this circumscribed theory; and Nature is by turns too cruel and too magnificent to permit us to subject her to that sort of calculation which directs our judgment in the affairs of this world.

There are objects hideous in themselves, whose impression upon us is inexplicable. Certain figures of animals, certain forms of plants, certain combinations of colors, revolt our senses, without our being at all able to give an account of the causes of this repugnance; we should say, that these ungraceful contours, these repulsive images, suggest the ideas of baseness and perfidy; although nothing in the analogies of reason can explain such an association of ideas. The physiognomy of man does not exclusively depend, as some writers have pretended, upon the stronger or weaker character of the features; there is transmitted through the look and the change of countenance, I know not what expression of the soul, impossible to be mistaken; and it is above all, in the human form, that we are taught what is extraordinary and unknown in the harmonies of mind and body.

Accidents and misfortunes, in the course of nature, have something so rapid, so pitiless, and so unexpected about them, that they appear to be miraculous. Disease and its furies are like a wicked life, which seizes on a sudden upon a life of tranquillity. The affections of the heart make us feel the cruelty of that nature, which it is attempted to represent as so sweet

and so gentle. What dangers threaten a beloved person! under how many shapes is death disguised around us! There is not a fine day which may not conceal the thunderbolt; not a flower whose juices may not be impoisoned; not a breath of air which may not bring a fatal contagion; and Nature appears like a jealous mistress, ready to pierce the bosom of man at the very moment that she animates him with her kindness.

How can we comprehend the object of all these phenomena, if we confine ourselves to the ordinary connection of our thoughts on these subjects? How can we consider animals without being plunged into the astonishment which their mysterious existence causes? A poet has called them *the dreams of Nature, and man her waking.* For what end were they created? what mean those looks which seem covered with an obscure cloud, behind which an idea strives to show itself? what connection have they with us? what part of life is it they enjoy? A bird survives a man of genius, and I know not what strange sort of despair seizes the heart when we have lost what we love, and when we see the breath of existence still animate an insect which moves upon the earth, from which the most noble object has disappeared.

The contemplation of Nature overwhelms our thoughts. We feel ourselves in a state of relation with her, which does not depend upon the good or evil which she can do; but her visible soul endeavors to find ours in her bosom, and holds converse with us. When darkness alarms us, it is not always the peril to which it exposes us that we dread, but it is the sympathy of night with every sort of privation or grief with which we are penetrated. The sun, on the contrary, is like an emanation from the Deity, like a glorious messenger, who tells us that our prayer is heard; his rays descend upon the earth not only to direct the labors of man, but to express a feeling of love for Nature. The flowers turn towards the light, in order to receive it; they are closed during the night, and at morn and eve they seem in aromatic perfume to breathe their hymns of praise. When these flowers are reared in the shade, they are of pallid hue, and no longer clad in their ac-

customed colors; but when we restore them to the day, in them the sun reflects his varied beams, as in the rainbow. And one should say, that he gazes upon himself with pride, in the mirror of that beauty which he has conferred upon them. The sleep of vegetables, during certain hours, and at certain seasons of the year, is in accord with the motion of the earth; the globe, in its revolving motion, hurries away, through various regions, the half of plants, of animals, and of man, asleep; the passengers in this great vessel, which we call the world, suffer themselves to be rocked in the circle which their journeying habitation describes.

The peace and discord, the harmony and dissonance, which a secret bond unites, are the first laws of Nature; and whether she appears fearful, terrible, or attractive, the sublime unity, which is her character, always makes her known. Fire rushes in waves, like the torrent; the clouds that travel through the air sometimes assume the form of mountains and of valleys, and appear to imitate in their sport the image of the earth. It is said in Genesis, that the Almighty divided the waters of the earth from the waters of heaven, and suspended these last in the air. The heavens are in fact a noble ally of the ocean. The azure of the firmanent is reflected in the waters, and the waves are painted in the clouds. Sometimes, when the storm is preparing in the atmosphere, the sea trembles at a distance, and one should say that it answers, by the agitation of its waves, to the mysterious signal of the tempest which it has received.

M. de Humboldt says, in his scientific and poetical Views of South America, that he has witnessed a phemomenon, which is also to be observed in Egypt, and which is called *mirage*. On a sudden, in the most arid deserts, the reverberation of the air assumes the appearance of a lake, or of the sea; and the very animals, panting with thirst, rush towards these deceitful images, hoping to allay that thirst. The different figures that the hoar-frost traces on the window, present another example of these strange analogies. The vapors condensed by the cold designate landscapes, like those which are remarked in north-

ern countries: forests of pines, mountains bristling with ice, reappear in their robes of white, and frozen Nature takes pleasure in counterfeiting the productions of animated Nature.

Not only does Nature reflect herself, but she seems to wish to imitate the works of man; and to give them, by these means, a singular testimony of her correspondence with them. It is related that in the islands near Japan, the clouds assume the appearance of regular fortifications.

The fine arts also have their type in Nature; and this luxury of existence is more the object of her care than existence itself: the symmetry of forms, in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, has served for a model to architects; and the reflection of objects and colors in the water, gives an idea of the illusions of painting; the wind, whose murmurs are prolonged in the trembling leaves, discovers the secret of music; and it has been said, on the shores of Asia, where the atmosphere is most pure, that sometimes, in the evening, a plaintive and sweet harmony is heard, which Nature seems to address to man, in order to tell him that she herself breathes, that she herself loves, that she herself suffers.

Often at the sight of a lovely country we are tempted to believe that its only object is to excite in man exalted and spotless sentiments. I know not what connection it is which exists between the heavens and the pride of the human heart; between the rays of the moon, that repose upon the mountain, and the calm of conscience; but these objects hold a beautiful language to man, and we are capable of wholly yielding to the agitation which they cause: this abandonment would be good for the soul. When, at eve, at the boundary of the landscape, the heaven appears to recline so closely on the earth, imagination pictures beyond the horizon an asylum of hope, a native land of love, and Nature seems silently to repeat that man is immortal.

The continual succession of birth and death, of which the natural world is the theatre, would produce the most mournful impression, if we did not fancy we saw in that world the indication of the resurrection of all things; and it is the truly

religious point of view, in the contemplation of Nature, to regard it in this manner. We should end by dying of compassion, if we were confined in every thing to the terrible idea of what is irreparable: no animal perishes without our feeling it possible to regret it; no tree falls, without the idea that we shall never see it again in its beauty, exciting in us a mournful reflection. In a word, inanimate objects themselves affect us when their decay obliges us to quit them: the house, the chair, the table, which have been used by those we loved, interest us; and these objects even excite in us sometimes a sort of compassion, independent of the recollections which they awaken; we regret their well-known form, as if by this form they were made into beings who have seen our daily life, and who ought to have seen us die. If eternity were not the antidote to time, we should attach ourselves to every moment in order to retain it; to every sound, to prolong its vibrations; to every look, to fix its radiance; and our enjoyments would only last for that instant which is necessary to make us feel that they are going, and to bedew their traces with tears, traces which the abyss of days must also swallow up.

A new thought struck me in some writings which were communicated to me by an author of a pensive and profound imagination; he is comparing the ruins of nature with those of art, and of the human species. "The first," he says, "are philosophical; the second poetical; the third mysterious." A thing highly worthy of remark, in fact, is the very different action of years upon nature, upon the works of genius, and upon living creatures. Time injures man alone: when rocks are overturned, when mountains sink into valleys, the earth only changes her appearance; her new aspect excites new thoughts in our minds, and the vivifying force undergoes a metamorphose, but not a destruction. The ruins of the fine arts address the imagination; Art rebuilds what time has defaced, and never, perhaps, did a masterpiece of art, in all its splendor, impress us with such grand ideas as its own ruins. We picture to ourselves half-destroyed monuments adorned with all that beauty which ever clothes the objects of our

regret: but how different is this from the ravages of old age!

Scarcely can we believe that youth once embellished that countenance, of which death has already taken possession: some physiognomies escape degradation by the lustre of the soul; but the human figure, in its decline, often assumes a vulgar expression which hardly allows even of pity. Animals, it is true, lose their strength and their activity with years, but the glowing hue of life does not with them change into livid colors, and their dim eyes do not resemble funeral lamps, throwing their pallid flashes over a withered cheek.

Even when, in the flower of age, life is withdrawn from the bosom of man, neither the admiration excited by the convulsions of nature, nor the interest awakened by the wreck of monuments, can be made to belong to the inanimate corpse of the most lovely of created beings. The love which cherished this enchanting form—love itself cannot endure the remains of it; and nothing of man exists after him on earth but what makes even his friends tremble.

Ah! what a lesson do the horrors of destruction thus incarnate in the human race afford! Is not this to announce to man that his life is to be elsewhere? Would nature humble him so low, if the Divinity were not willing to raise him up again?

The true final causes of nature are these relations with our soul and our immortal destiny. Physical objects themselves have a destination which is not bounded by the contracted existence of man below; they are placed here to assist in the development of our thoughts, in the work of our moral life. The phenomena of nature must not be understood according to the laws of matter alone, however well combined those laws may be; they have a philosophical sense and a religious end, of which the most attentive contemplation will never know the extent.

CHAPTER X.

OF ENTHUSIASM.

Many people are prejudiced against Enthusiasm; they confound it with Fanaticism, which is a great mistake. Fanaticism is an exclusive passion, the object of which is an opinion; enthusiasm is connected with the harmony of the universe: it is the love of the beautiful, elevation of soul, enjoyment of devotion, all united in one single feeling which combines grandeur and repose. The sense of this word among the Greeks affords the noblest definition of it: enthusiasm signifies *God in us*. In fact, when the existence of man is expansive, it has something divine.

Whatever leads us to sacrifice our own comfort, or our own life, is almost always enthusiasm; for the high road of reason, to the selfish, must be to make themselves the object of all their efforts, and to value nothing in the world but health, riches, and power. Without doubt, conscience is sufficient to lead the coldest character into the track of virtue; but enthusiasm is to conscience what honor is to duty: there is in us a superfluity of soul which it is sweet to consecrate to what is fine, when what is good has been accomplished. Genius and imagination also stand in need of a little care for their welfare in the world; and the law of duty, however sublime it may be, is not sufficient to enable us to taste all the wonders of the heart, and of thought.

It cannot be denied that his own interests, as an individual, surround a man on all sides; there is even in what is vulgar a certain enjoyment, of which many people are very susceptible, and the traces of ignoble passions are often found under the appearance of the most distinguished manners. Superior talents are not always a guarantee against that degra-

dation of nature which disposes blindly of the existence of men, and leads them to place their happiness lower than themselves. Enthusiasm alone can counterbalance the tendency to selfishness; and it is by this divine sign that we recognize the creatures of immortality. When you speak to any one on subjects worthy of holy respect, you perceive at once whether he feels a noble trembling; whether his heart beats with elevated sentiments; whether he has formed an alliance with the other life, or whether he has only that little portion of mind which serves him to direct the mechanism of existence. And what then is human nature when we see in it nothing but a prudence, of which its own advantage is the object? The instinct of animals is of more worth, for it is sometimes generous and proud; but this calculation, which seems the attribute of reason, ends by rendering us incapable of the first of virtues, self-devotion.

Among those who endeavor to turn exalted sentiments into ridicule, many are, nevertheless, susceptible of them, though unknown to themselves. War, undertaken with personal views, always affords some of the enjoyments of enthusiasm; the transport of a day of battle, the singular pleasure of exposing ourselves to death, when our whole nature would enjoin us to love life, can only be attributed to enthusiasm. The martial music, the neighing of the steeds, the roar of the cannon, the multitude of soldiers clothed in the same colors, moved by the same desire, assembled around the same banners, inspire an emotion capable of triumphing over that instinct which would preserve existence; and so strong is this enjoyment, that neither fatigues, nor sufferings, nor dangers, can withdraw the soul from it. Whoever has once led this life loves no other. The attainment of our object never satisfies us; it is the action of risking ourselves which is necessary, it is that which introduces enthusiasm into the blood; and, although it may be more pure at the bottom of the soul, it is still of a noble nature, even when it has been able to become an impulse almost physical.

Sincere enthusiasm is often reproached with what belongs

only to affected enthusiasm; the more pure a sentiment is, the more odious is a false imitation of it. To tyrannize over the admiration of men is what is most culpable, for we dry up in them the source of good emotions when we make them blush for having felt them. Besides, nothing is more painful than the false sounds which appear to proceed from the sanctuary of the soul itself: Vanity may possess herself of whatever is external; conceit and disgrace are the only evils which will result from it; but when she counterfeits our inward feelings, she appears to violate the last asylum in which we can hope to escape her. It is easy, nevertheless, to discover sincerity in enthusiasm; it is a melody so pure, that the smallest discord destroys its whole charm; a word, an accent, a look, expresses the concentrated emotion which answers to a whole life. Persons who are called severe in the world, very often have in them something exalted. The strength which reduces others to subjection may be no more than cold calculation. The strength which triumphs over ourselves is always inspired by a generous sentiment.

Euthusiasm, far from exciting a just suspicion of its excesses, perhaps leads in general to a contemplative disposition, which impairs the power of acting: the Germans are a proof of it; no nation is more capable of feeling or thinking; but when the moment for taking a side has arrived, the very extent of their conceptions detracts from the decision of their character. Character and enthusiasm differ in many respects: we ought to choose our object by enthusiasm, but to approach it by character; thought is nothing without enthusiasm, and action without character; enthusiasm is every thing for literary nations, character is every thing to those which are active; free nations stand in need of both.

Selfishness takes pleasure in speaking incessantly of the dangers of enthusiasm; this affected fear is in truth derision; if the cunning men of the world would be sincere, they would say, that nothing suits them better than to have to do with persons with whom so many means are impossible, and who can so easily renounce what occupies the greater part of mankind.

This disposition of the mind has strength, notwithstanding its sweetness; and he who feels it knows how to draw from it a noble constancy. The storms of the passions subside, the pleasures of self-love fade away, enthusiasm alone is unalterable; the mind itself would be lost in physical existence, if something proud and animated did not snatch it away from the vulgar ascendency of selfishness: that moral dignity, which is proof against all attempts, is what is most admirable in the gift of existence; it is for this that in the bitterest pains it is still noble to have lived as it would be noble to die.

Let us now examine the influence of enthusiasm upon learning and happiness. These last reflections will terminate the train of thoughts to which the different subjects that I had to discuss have led me.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF ENTHUSIASM ON LEARNING.

This chapter is, in some respects, the recapitulation of my whole work; for enthusiasm being the quality which really distinguishes the German nation, we may judge of the influence it exerts over learning, according to the progress of human nature in Germany. Enthusiasm gives life to what is invisible, and interest to what has no immediate action on our comfort in this world; no sentiment, therefore, is more adapted to the pursuit of abstract truths; they are, therefore, cultivated in Germany with a remarkable ardor and firmness.

The philosophers who are inspired by enthusiasm are those, perhaps, who have the most exactness and patience in their labors, and at the same time those who the least endeavor to shine; they love science for itself, and set no value upon themselves, when the object of their pursuit is in question; physical nature pursues its own invariable march over the destruction

of individuals; the thought of man assumes a sublime character when it arrives at the power of examining itself from a universal point of view; it then silently assists the triumphs of truth, and truth is, like nature, a force which acts only by a progressive and regular development.

It may be said, with some reason, that enthusiasm leads to a systematizing spirit; when we are much attached to our ideas, we endeavor to connect every thing with them; but in general, it is easier to deal with sincere opinions, than with opinions adopted through vanity. If, in our relations with men, we had to do only with what they really think, we should easily understand one another; it is what they affect to think that breeds discord.

Enthusiasm has been often accused of leading to error, but perhaps a superficial interest is much more deceitful; for, to penetrate the essence of things, it is necessary there should be an impulse to excite our attention to them with ardor. Besides, in considering human destiny in general, I believe it may be affirmed, that we shall never arrive at truth, but by elevation of soul; every thing that tends to lower us is falsehood, and, whatever they may say of it, the error lies on the side of vulgar sentiments

Enthusiasm, I repeat, has no resemblance to fanaticism, and cannot mislead as it does. Enthusiasm is tolerant, not through indifference, but because it makes us feel the interest and the beauty of all things. Reason does not give happiness in the place of that which it deprives us of; enthusiasm finds, in the musing of the heart, and in depth of thought, what fanaticism and passion comprise in a single idea, or a single object. This sentiment, on account even of its universality, is very favorable to thought and to imagination.

Society develops wit, but it is contemplation alone that forms genius. Self-love is the spring of countries where society prevails, and self-love necessarily leads to jesting, which destroys all enthusiasm.

It is amusing enough, it cannot be denied, to have a quick perception of what is ridiculous, and to paint it with grace and

gayety; perhaps it would be better to deny ourselves this pleasure, but, nevertheless, that is not the kind of jesting the consequences of which are the most to be feared; that which is attached to ideas and to sentiments is the most fatal of all, for it insinuates itself into the source of strong and devoted affections. Man has a great empire over man; and of all the evils he can do to his fellow-creature, the greatest perhaps is to place the phantoms of ridicule between generous emotions and the actions they would inspire.

Love, genius, talent, distress itself, all these sacred things are exposed to irony, and it is impossible to calculate to what point the empire of this irony may extend. There is a relish in wickedness; there is something weak in goodness. Admiration for great things may be made the sport of wit; and he who attaches no importance to any thing, has the air of being superior to every thing: if, therefore, our hearts and our minds are not defended by enthusiasm, they are exposed on all sides to be surprised by this darkest shade of the beautiful, which unites insolence to gayety.

The social spirit is so formed that we are often commanded to laugh, and much oftener are made ashamed of weeping: from what does this proceed? From this,—that self-love thinks itself safer in pleasantry than in emotion. A man must be able to rely well on his wit before he can dare to be serious against a jest; it requires much strength to disclose sentiments which may be turned into ridicule. Fontenelle said: *I am eighty years old; I am a Frenchman, and I have never, through all my life, treated the smallest virtue with the smallest ridicule.* This sentence argued a profound knowledge of society. Fontenelle was not a sensible man, but he had a great deal of wit; and whenever a man is endowed with any superiority, he feels the necessity of seriousness in human nature. It is only persons of middling understanding who would wish that the foundation of every thing should be sand, in order that no man might leave upon the earth a trace more durable than their own.

The Germans have not to struggle among themselves against

the enemies of enthusiasm, which is a great obstacle, at least to distinguished men. Wit grows sharper by contest, but talent has need of confidence. It is necessary to expect admiration, glory, immortality, in order to experience the inspiration of genius; and what makes the distinction between different ages is not nature, which is always lavish of the same gifts, but the opinion which prevails at the epoch in which we live; if the tendency of that opinion is towards enthusiasm, great men spring up on all sides; if discouragement is proclaimed in one country, when in others noble efforts would be excited, nothing remains in literature but judges of the time past.

The terrible events of which we have been witnesses have dried up men's hearts, and every thing that belongs to thought appeared tarnished by the side of the omnipotence of action. Difference of circumstances has led minds to support all sides of the same questions; the consequence has been, that people no longer believe in ideas, or consider them at best as means. Conviction does not seem to belong to our times; and when a man says he is of such an opinion, that is understood to be a delicate manner of expressing that he has such an interest.

The most honest men, then, make to themselves a system which changes their idleness into dignity; they say that nothing can be done with nothing; they repeat, with the Hermit of Prague, in Shakspeare, that *what is, is*, and that theories have no influence on the world. Such men leave off with making what they say true; for with such a mode of thinking, they cannot act upon others; and if wit consisted in seeing the *pro* and *con* of every subject, it would make the objects which encompass us turn round in such a manner that we could not walk with a firm step upon this tottering ground.

We also see young people, ambitious of appearing free from all enthusiasm, affect a philosophical contempt for exalted sentiments: they think by that to display a precocious force of reason; but it is a premature decay of which they are boasting. They treat talent like the old man who asked, *whether love still existed.* The mind deprived of imagination would

gladly treat even nature with disdain, if nature were not too strong for it.

We certainly do great mischief to those persons who are yet animated with noble desires, by incessantly opposing them with all the argument which can disturb the most confiding hope; nevertheless, good faith cannot grow weary of itself, for it is not the appearance but the reality of things which employs her. With whatever atmosphere we may be surrounded, a sincere word was never completely lost; if there is but one day on which success can be gained, there are ages for the operation of the good which may be done by truth.

The inhabitants of Mexico, as they pass along the great road, carry each a small stone to the grand pyramid which they are raising in the midst of their country. No individual will confer his name upon it, but all will have contributed to this monument, which must survive them all.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF ENTHUSIASM UPON HAPPINESS.

The course of my subject necessarily leads me here to treat of happiness. I have hitherto studiously avoided the word, because now, for almost a century, it has been the custom to place it principally in pleasures so gross, in a way of life so selfish, in calculations so narrow and confined, that its very image is sullied and profaned. It, however, may be pronounced with confidence, that of all the feelings of the human heart, enthusiasm confers the greatest happiness, that indeed it alone confers real happiness, alone can enable us to bear the lot of mortality in every situation in which fortune has the power to place us.

Vainly would we reduce ourselves to sensual enjoyments; the soul asserts itself on every side. Pride, ambition, self-love, all these are still from the soul, although in them a poisonous

and pestilential blast mixes with its essence. Meanwhile, how wretched is the existence of that crowd of mortals, who, playing the hypocrite with themselves almost as much as with others, are continually employed in repressing the generous emotions which struggle to revive within their bosoms, as diseases of the imagination, which the open air should at once dispel! How impoverished is the existence of those who content themselves with abstaining from doing evil, and treat as weakness and delusion the source of the most beautiful deeds, and the most noble conceptions! From mere vanity they imprison themselves in obstinate mediocrity, which they might easily have opened to the light of knowledge which everywhere surrounds them; they sentence and condemn themselves to that monotony of ideas, to that deadness of feeling, which suffers the days to pass, one after the other, without deriving from them any advantage, without making in them any progress, without treasuring up any matter for future recollection. If time in its course had not cast a change upon their features, what proofs would they have preserved of its having passed at all? If to grow old and to die were not the necessary law of our nature, what serious reflection would ever have arisen in their minds?

Some reasoners there are, who object that enthusiasm produces a distaste for ordinary life; and that, as we cannot always remain in the same frame of mind, it is more for our advantage never to indulge it: and why, then, I would ask them, have they accepted the gift of youth, why of life itself, since they well knew that they were not to last forever? Why have they loved (if indeed they ever have loved), since death at any moment might separate them from the objects of their affection? Can there be a more wretched economy than of the faculties of the soul? They were given us to be improved and expanded, to be carried as near as possible to perfection, even to be prodigally lavished for a high and noble end.

The more we benumb our feelings and render ourselves insensible, the nearer, it will be said, we approach to a state of material existence, and the more we diminish the dominion of

pain and sorrow over us. This argument imposes upon many; it consists, in fact, in recommending us to make an attempt to live with as little of life as possible. But our own degradation is always accompanied by an uneasiness of mind for which we cannot account, and which unremittingly attends upon us in secret. The discontent, the shame, and the weariness which it causes, are arrayed by vanity in the garb of impertinence and contempt; but it is very rare that any man can settle peaceably in this confined and desert sphere of being, which leaves him without resource in himself when he is abandoned by the prosperity of the world. Man has a consciousness of the beautiful as well as of the virtuous; and in the absence of the former he feels a void, as in a deviation from the latter he finds remorse.

It is a common accusation against enthusiasm, that it is transitory; man were too much blessed, if he could fix and retain emotions so beautiful; but it is because they are so easily dissipated and lost, that we should strive and exert ourselves to preserve them. Poetry and the fine arts are the means of calling forth in man this happiness of illustrious origin, which raises the depressed heart; and, instead of an unquiet satiety of life, gives an habitual feeling of the divine harmony, in which nature and ourselves claim a part. There is no duty, there is no pleasure, there is no sentiment, which does not borrow from enthusiasm I know not what charm, which is still in perfect unison with the simple beauty of truth.

All men take up arms indeed for the defence of the land which they inhabit, when circumstances demand this duty of them; but if they are inspired by the enthusiasm of their country, what warm emotions do they not feel within them? The sun, which shone upon their birth, the land of their fathers, *the sea which bathes their rocks*,[1] their many recollections of the past, their many hopes for the future, every thing around

[1] It is easy to perceive, that by this phrase, and by those which follow, I have been trying to designate England; in fact, I could not speak of war with enthusiasm, without representing it to myself as the contest of a free nation for her independence.

them presents itself as a summons and encouragement for battle; and in every pulsation of the heart rises a thought of affection and of honor. God has given this country to men who can defend it; to women, who, for its sake, consent to the dangers of their brothers, their husbands, and their sons. At the approach of the perils which threaten it, a fever, exempt from shuddering as from delirium, quickens the blood in the veins. Every effort, in such a struggle, comes from the deepest source of inward thought. As yet nothing can be seen in the features of these generous citizens but tranquillity; there is too much dignity in their emotions for outward demonstration; but let the signal once be heard, let the banner of their country wave in the air, and you will see those looks, before so gentle, and so ready to resume that character at the sight of misfortune, at once animated by a determination holy and terrible! They shudder no more, neither at wounds nor at blood; it is no longer pain, it is no longer death, it is an offering to the God of armies; no regret, no hesitation, now intrudes itself into the most desperate resolutions; and when the heart is entirely in its object, then is the highest enjoyment of existence! As soon as man has, within his own mind, separated himself from himself, to him life is only an evil; and if it be true, that of all the feelings enthusiasm confers the the greatest happiness, it is because, more than any other, it unites all the forces of the soul in the same direction for the same end.

The labors of the understanding are considered by many writers as an occupation almost merely mechanical, and which fills up their life in the same manner as any other profession. It is still something that their choice has fallen upon literature; but have such men even an idea of the sublime happiness of thought when it is animated by enthusiasm? Do they know the hope which penetrates the soul, when there arises in it the confident belief, that by the gift of eloquence we are about to demonstrate and declare some profound truth, some truth which will be at once a generous bond of union between us and every soul that sympathizes with ours?

Writers without enthusiasm, know of the career of literature nothing but the criticisms, the rivalries, the jealousies which attend upon it, and which necessarily must endanger our peace of mind, if we allow ourselves to be entangled among the passions of men. Unjust attacks of this nature may, indeed, sometimes do us injury; but, can the true, the heartfelt internal enjoyment which belongs to talent, be affected by them? Even at the moment of the first public appearance of a work, and before its character is yet decided, how many hours of happiness has it not already been worth to him who wrote it from his heart, and as an act and office of his worship! How many tears of rapture has he not shed in his solitude over those wonders of life, love, glory, and religion! Has he not, in his transports, enjoyed the air of heaven like a bird; the waters like a thirsty hunter; the flowers like a lover, who believes that he is breathing the sweets which surround his mistress? In the world, we have the feeling of being oppressed beneath our own faculties, and we often suffer from the consciousness that we are the only one of our own disposition, in the midst of so many beings, who exist so easily, and at the expense of so little intellectual exertion; but the creative talent of imagination, for some moments at least, satisfies all our wishes and desires; it opens to us treasures of wealth; it offers to us crowns of glory; it raises before our eyes the pure and bright image of an ideal world; and so mighty sometimes is its power, that by it we hear in our hearts the very voice and accents of one whom we have loved.

Does he who is not endowed with an enthusiastic imagination flatter himself that he is, in any degree, acquainted with the earth upon which he lives, or that he has travelled through any of its various countries? Does his heart beat at the echo of the mountains? or has the air of the South lulled his senses in its voluptuous softness? Does he perceive wherein countries differ, the one from the other? Does he remark the accent, and does he understand the peculiar character of the idioms of their languages? Does he hear in the popular song, and see in the national dance, the manners and the genius of

the people? Does one single sensation at once fill his mind with a crowd of recollections?

Is Nature to be felt without enthusiasm? Can common men address to her the tale of their mean interests and low desires? What have the sea and the stars to answer to the little vanities with which each individual is content to fill up each day? But if the soul be really moved within us, if in the universe it seeks a God, even if it be still sensible to glory and to love, the clouds of heaven will hold converse with it, the torrents will listen to its voice, and the breeze that passes through the grove seems to deign to whisper to us something of those we love.

There are some who, although devoid of enthusiasm, still believe that they have a taste and relish for the fine arts; and indeed they do love the refinement of luxury, and they wish to acquire a knowledge of music and of painting, that they may be able to converse upon them with ease and with taste, and even with that confidence which becomes the man of the world, when the subject turns upon imagination, or upon Nature; but what are these barren pleasures, when compared with true enthusiasm? What an emotion runs through the brain when we contemplate in the Niobe that settled look of calm and terrible despair which seems to reproach the gods with their jealousy of her maternal happiness! What consolation does the sight of beauty breathe upon us! Beauty also is from the soul, and pure and noble is the admiration it inspires. To feel the grandeur of the Apollo demands in the spectator a pride which tramples under foot all the serpents of the earth. None but a Christian can penetrate the countenance of the Virgins of Raphael, and the St. Jerome of Domenichino. None but a Christian can recognize the same expression in fascinating beauty, and in the depressed and grief-worn visage; in the brilliancy of youth, and in features changed by age and disfigured by suffering,—the same expression which springs from the soul, and which, like a ray of celestial light, shoots across the early morning of life, or the closing darkness of age.

Can it be said that there is such an art as that of music for those who cannot feel enthusiasm? Habit may render harmonious sounds, as it were, a necessary gratification to them, and they enjoy them as they do the flavor of fruits, or the ornament of colors; but has their whole being vibrated and trembled responsively, like a lyre, if at any time the midnight silence has been suddenly broken by the song, or by any of those instruments which resemble the human voice? Have they in that moment felt the mystery of their existence in that softening emotion which reunites our separate natures, and blends in the same enjoyment the senses of the soul? Have the beatings of the heart followed the cadence of the music? Have they learned, under the influence of these emotions so full of charms, to shed those tears which have nothing of self in them; those tears which do not ask for the compassion of others, but which relieve ourselves from the inquietude which arises from the need of something to admire and to love?

The taste for public spectacles is universal; for the greater part of mankind have more imagination than they themselves think, and that which they consider as the allurement of pleasure, as a remnant of the weakness of childhood which still hangs about them, is often the better part of their nature; while they are beholding the scenes of fictions, they are true, natural, and feeling; whereas in the world, dissimulation, calculation, and vanity, are the absolute masters of their words, sentiments, and actions. But do they think that they have felt all that a really fine tragedy can inspire, who find in the representation of the strongest affections nothing but a diversion and amusement? Do they doubt and disbelieve that rapturous agitation which the passions, purified by poetry, excite within us? Ah! how many and how great are the pleasures which spring from fictions! The interest they raise is without either apprehension or remorse; and the sensibility which they call forth has none of that painful harshness from which real passions are scarcely ever exempt.

What enchantment does not the language of love borrow from poetry and the fine arts! How beautiful is it to love at

once with the heart and with the mind! thus to vary in a thousand fashions a sentiment which one word is indeed sufficient to express, but for which all the words of the world are but poverty and weakness! to submit entirely to the influence of those masterpieces of the imagination, which all depend upon love, and to discover in the wonders of nature and genius new expressions to declare the feelings of our own heart!

What have they known of love who have not reverenced and admired the woman whom they loved, in whom the sentiment is not a hymn breathed from the heart, and who do not perceive in grace and beauty the heavenly image of the most touching passions? What has she felt of love who has not seen in the object of her choice an exalted protector, a powerful and a gentle guide, whose look at once commands and supplicates, and who receives upon his knees the right of disposing of her fate? How inexpressible is the delight which serious reflections, united and blended with warm and lively impressions, produce! The tenderness of a friend, in whose hands our happiness is deposited, ought, at the gates of the tomb, in the same manner as in the beautiful days of our youth, to form our chief blessing; and every thing most serious and solemn in our existence transforms itself into emotions of delight, when, as in the fable of the ancients, it is the office of love to light and to extinguish the torch of life.

If enthusiasm fills the soul with happiness, by a strange and wondrous charm, it forms also its chief support under misfortune; it leaves behind it a deep trace and a path of light, which do not allow absence itself to efface us from the hearts of our friends. It affords also to ourselves an asylum from the utmost bitterness of sorrow, and is the only feeling which can give tranquillity without indifference.

Even the most simple affections which every heart believes itself capable of feeling, even filial and maternal love, cannot be felt in their full strength, unless enthusiasm be blended with them. How can we love a son without indulging the flattering hope that he will be generous and gallant, without wishing him that renown which may, as it were, multiply his existence,

and make us hear from every side the name which our own heart is continually repeating? Why should we not enjoy with rapture the talents of a son, the beauty of a daughter? Can there be a more strange ingratitude towards the Deity than indifference for his gifts? Are they not from heaven, since they render it a more easy task for us to please him whom we love?

Meanwhile, should some misfortune deprive our child of these advantages, the same sentiment would then assume another form; it would increase and exalt within us the feeling of compassion, of sympathy, the happiness of being necessary to him. Under all circumstances, enthusiasm either animates or consoles; and even in the moment when the blow, the most cruel that can be struck, reaches us, when we lose him to whom we owe our own being, him whom we loved as a tutelary angel, and who inspired us at once with a fearless respect and a boundless confidence, still enthusiasm comes to our assistance and support. It brings together within us some sparks of that soul which has passed away to heaven; we still live before him, and we promise ourselves that we will one day transmit to posterity the history of his life. Never, we feel assured, never will his paternal hand abandon us entirely in this world; and his image, affectionate and tender, still inclines towards us, to support us, until we are called unto him.

And in the end, when the hour of trial comes, when it is for us in our turn to meet the struggle of death, the increasing weakness of our faculties, the loss and ruin of our hopes, this life, before so strong, which now begins to give way within us, the crowd of feelings and ideas which lived within our bosoms, and which the shades of the tomb already surround and envelope, our interests, our passions, this existence itself, which lessens to a shadow, before it vanishes away—all deeply distress us, and the common man appears, when he expires, to have less of death to undergo. Blessed be God, however, for the assistance which he has prepared for us even in that moment; our utterance shall be imperfect, our eyes shall no longer distinguish the light, our reflections, before clear and connected, shall wan-

der vague and confused; but enthusiasm will not abandon us, her brilliant wings shall wave over the funeral couch; she will lift the veil of death; she will recall to our recollection those moments, when, in the fulness of energy, we felt that the heart was imperishable; and our last sigh shall be a high and generous thought, reascending to that heaven from which it had its birth.

"O France! land of glory and of love! if the day should ever come when enthusiasm shall be extinct upon your soil, when all shall be governed and disposed upon calculation, and even the contempt of danger shall be founded only upon the conclusions of reason, in that day what will avail you the loveliness of your climate, the splendor of your intellect, the general fertility of your nature? Their intelligent activity, and an impetuosity directed by prudence and knowledge, may indeed give your children the empire of the world; but the only traces you will leave on the face of that world will be like those of the sandy whirlpool, terrible as the waves, and sterile as the desert!"[1]

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[1] This last sentence is that which excited in the French police the greatest[2] indignation against my book. It seems to me, that Frenchmen at least cannot be displeased with it.

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[2] Madame de Staël has said the same of another passage, p. 244.—*Ed.*

APPENDIX A.

General Survey of German Literature to the close of the Eighteenth Century.[1] By Max Müller, M. A., Professor of European Languages and Literature at Oxford.

There is no country where so much interest is taken in the literature of Germany as in England, as there is no country where the literature of England is so much appreciated as in Germany. Some of our modern classics, whether poets or philosophers, are read by Englishmen with the same attention as their own; and the historians, the novel-writers, and the poets of England have exercised, and continue to exercise, a most powerful and beneficial influence on the people of Germany. In recent times, the literature of the two countries has almost grown into one. Lord Macaulay's History has not only been translated into German, but reprinted at Leipsig in the original; and it is said to have had a larger sale in Germany than the work of any German historian. Baron Humboldt and Baron Bunsen address their writings to the English as much as to the German public. The novels of Dickens and Thackeray are expected with the same impatience at Leipsig and Berlin as in London. The two great German classics, Schiller and Goethe, have found their most successful biographers in Carlyle and Lewes; and several works of German scholarship have met with more attentive and thoughtful read-

[1] We take this from the introduction to Müller's *German Classics*, recently published in England.—*Ed.*

ers in the colleges of England than in the universities of Germany. Goethe's idea of a world-literature has, to a certain extent, been realized; and the strong feeling of sympathy, particularly between the middle classes of the two countries, holds out a hope that, for many years to come, the supremacy of the Teutonic race, not only in Europe but over all the world, will be maintained in common by the two champions of political freedom and of the liberty of thought—Protestant England and Protestant Germany.

The interest, however, which Englishmen take in German literature, has hitherto been confined almost exclusively to the literature of the last fifty years, and very little is known of those fourteen centuries during which the German language had been growing up and gathering strength for the great triumphs which were achieved by Lessing, Schiller, and Goethe. Nor is this to be wondered at. The number of people in England, who take any interest in the early history of their own literature, is extremely small, and there is as yet no history of English literature worthy of that name.

The history of literature reflects and helps us to interpret the political history of a country. It contains, as it were, the confession which every generation, before it passed away, has made to posterity. "Without Literary History," as Lord Bacon says, "the History of the World seemeth to be as the Statue of Polyphemus with his eye out; that part being wanting which doth most shew the spirit and life of the person." From this point of view the historian of literature learns to value what to the critic would seem unmeaning and tedious, and he is loth to miss the works even of mediocre poets, where they throw light on the times in which they lived, and serve to connect the otherwise disjointed productions of men of the highest genius, separated, as these necessarily are, by long intervals in the annals of every country.

The student of German history should know something of *Ulfilas*, the great Bishop of the Goths, who anticipated the work of Luther by more than a thousand years, and who, at a time when Greek and Latin were the only two respectable

and orthodox languages of Europe, dared for the first time to translate the Bible into the vulgar tongue of Barbarians, as if foreseeing with a prophetic eye the destiny of these Teutonic tribes, whose language, after Greek and Latin had died away, was to become the life-spring of the Gospel over the whole civilized world. He ought to know something of those early missionaries and martyrs, most of them sent from Ireland and England to preach the Gospel in the dark forests of Germany —men like St. Gall (died 638), St. Kilian (died 689), and St. Boniface (died 755), who were not content with felling the sacred oak-trees and baptizing unconverted multitudes, but founded missionary stations, and schools, and monasteries; working hard themselves, in order to acquire a knowledge of the language and the character of the people, and drawing up those curious lists of barbarous words, with their no less barbarous equivalents in Latin, which we still possess, though copied by a later hand. He ought to know the gradual progress of Christianity and civilization in Germany, previous to the time of Charlemagne; for we see from the German translations of the Rules of the Benedictine monks, of ancient Latin Hymns, the Creeds, the Lord's Prayer, and portions of the New Testament, that the good sense of the national clergy had led them to do what Charlemagne had afterwards to enjoin by repeated Capitularia.[1] It is in the history of German literature that we learn what Charlemagne really was. Though claimed as a Saint by the Church of Rome, and styled *Empereur Français* by modern French historians, Karl was really and truly a German king, proud, no doubt, of his Roman subjects, and of his title of Emperor, and anxious to give to his uncouth Germans the benefit of Italian and English teachers, but fondly attached in his heart to his own mother tongue, to the lays and laws of his fatherland: feelings displayed in his own attempt to compose a German grammar, and in his col-

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[1] "Ut easdem homilias quisque (episcopus) aperte transferre studeat in *rusticam romanam* linguam aut *theodiscam*, quo facilius cunctí possint intelligere quae dicantur."—*Conc. Tur.*, can. 17. Wackernagel, *Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur*, § 26.

lection of old national songs, fragments of which may have been preserved to us in the ballads of *Hildebrand* and *Hadubrand*. After the death of Charlemagne, and under the reign of the good but weak King Ludwig, the prospects of a national literature in Germany became darkened. In one instance, indeed, the king was the patron of a German poet; for he encouraged the author of the *Heliand* to write that poem for the benefit of his newly converted countrymen. But he would hardly have approved of the thoroughly German and almost heathen spirit which pervades that Saxon epic of the New Testament, and he expressed his disgust at the old German poems which his great father had taught him in his youth. The seed, however, which Charlemagne had sown had fallen on healthy soil, and grew up even without the sunshine of royal favor. The monastery of *Fulda*, under *Hrabanus Maurus*, the pupil of *Alcuin*, became the seminary of a truly national clergy. Here it was that *Otfried*, the author of the rhymed Gospel-book, was brought up. In the mean time, the heterogeneous elements of the Carlovingian empire broke asunder. Germany, by losing its French and Italian provinces, became Germany again. Ludwig the German was king of Germany, Hrabanus Maurus, archbishop of Mayence; and the spirit of Charlemagne, Alcuin, and Eginhard, was revived at Aachen, Fulda, and many other places, such as St. Gall, Weissenburg, and Corvey, where schools were founded on the model of that of Tours. The translation of the *Harmony of the Gospels* gives us a specimen of the quiet studies of those monasteries, whereas the lay on the victory of Lewis III over the Normans, in 881, reminds us of the dangers that threatened Germany from the West, at the same time that the Hungarians began their inroads from the East. The Saxon Emperors had hard battles to fight against these invaders, and there were few places in Germany where the peaceful pursuits of the monasteries and schools could be carried on without interruption. St. Gall is the one bright star in the approaching gloom of the next centuries. Not only was the Bible read, and translated, and commented upon in German at St. Gall, as for-

merly at Fulda, but Greek and Roman classics were copied and studied for educational purposes. Notker Teutonicus is the great representative of that school, which continued to maintain its reputation for theological and classical learning, and for a careful cultivation of the national language, nearly to the close of the eleventh century. At the court of the Saxon Emperors, though their policy was thoroughly German, there was little taste for German poetry. The queen of Otto I was a Lombard, the queen of Otto II a Greek lady; and their influence was not favorable to the rude poetry of national bards. If some traces of their work have been preserved to us, we owe it again to the more national taste of the monks of St. Gall and Passau. They translated some of the German epics into Latin verse, such as the poem of the *Nibelunge*, of *Walther of Aquitain*, and of *Ruodlieb*. The first is lost; but the other two have been preserved and published.[1] The stories of the *Fox and the Bear*, and the other animals,—a branch of poetry so peculiar to Germany, and epic rather than didactic in its origin,—attracted the attention of the monks; and it is owing again to their Latin translations that the existence of this curious style of poetry can be traced back so far as the tenth century.[2] As these poems are written in Latin, they could not find a place in a German reading-book; but they, as well as the Latin plays of the nun Hrosvitha, throw much light on the state of German civilization during the tenth and eleventh centuries.

The eleventh century presents almost an entire blank in the history of literature. Under the Frankish or Salic dynasty, Germany had either to defend herself against the inroads of Hungarian and Slavonic armies, or was the battle-field of violent feuds between the Emperors and their vassals. The second half of that century was filled with the struggles between

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[1] Lateinische Gedichte des X. und XI. Jahrhunderts von J. Grimm und A. Schmeller: Göttingen, 1838.

[2] Reinhard Fuchs, von Jacob Grimm: Berlin, 1834. Sendschreiben an Karl Lachmann: Leipsig, 1840.

Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII. The clergy, hitherto the chief support of German literature, became estranged from the German people; and the insecurity of the times was unfavorable to literary pursuits. Williram's German had lost the classical correctness of Notker's language, and the *Merigarto*, and similar works, are written in a hybrid style, which is neither prose nor poetry. The Old High-German had become a literary language chiefly through the efforts of the clergy, and the character of the whole Old High-German literature is pre-eminently clerical. The Crusades put an end to the preponderance of the clerical element in the literature of Germany. They were the work of the clergy. By using to the utmost the influence which they had gradually gained and carefully fomented, the priests were able to rouse a whole nation to a pitch of religious enthusiasm never known before or after. But the Crusades were the last triumph of the clergy; and with their failure the predominant influence of the clerical element in German society is checked and extinguished.

From the first beginning of the Crusades the interest of the people was with the knight—no longer with the priest. The chivalrous emperors of the Hohenstaufen dynasty formed a new rallying-point for all national sympathies. Their courts, and the castles of their vassals, offered a new and more genial home to the poets of Germany than the monasteries of Fulda and St. Gall. Poetry changed hands. The poets took their inspirations from real life, though they borrowed their models from the romantic cycles of Brittany and Provence. Middle High-German, the language of the Swabian court, became the language of poetry. The earliest compositions in that language continue for awhile to bear the stamp of the clerical poetry of a former age. The first Middle High-German poems are written by a nun, and the poetical translation of the Books of Moses, the poem on Anno, Bishop of Cologne, and the Chronicle of the Roman Emperors, all continue to breathe the spirit of cloisters and cathedral-towns. And when a new taste for chivalrous romances was awakened in Germany; when the stories of Arthur and his knights, of Charlemagne and his

champions, of Achilles, Æneas, and Alexander, in their modern dress, were imported by French and Provençal knights, who came to stay at the castles of their German allies, on their way to Jerusalem, the first poets who ventured to imitate these motley compositions were priests, not laymen. A few short extracts from Konrad's *Roland* and Lamprecht's *Alexander* are sufficient to mark this period of transition. Like Charlemagne, who had been changed into a legendary hero by French poets before he became again the subject of German poetry, another German worthy returned at the same time to his native home, though but slightly changed by his foreign travels, *Reinhard the Fox*. The influence of Provence and of Flanders is seen in every branch of German poetry at that time: and yet nothing can be more different than the same subject, as treated by French and German poets. The German Minnesänger in particular were far from being imitators of the Trouvères or Troubadours. There are a few solitary instances of lyric poems translated from Provençal into German;[1] as there is, on the other hand, one poem translated from German into Italian,[2] early in the thirteenth century. But the great mass of German lyrics are of purely German growth. Neither the Romans, nor the lineal descendants of the Romans, the Italians, the Provençals, the Spaniards, can claim that poetry as their own. It is Teutonic, purely Teutonic in its heart and soul, though its utterance, its rhyme and metre, its grace and imagery, have been touched by the more genial rays of the brilliant sun of a more southern sky. The same applies to the great romantic poems of that period. The first impulse came from abroad. The subjects were borrowed from a foreign source, and the earlier poems, such as Heinrich von Veldecke's *Eneid*, might occasionally paraphrase the sentiments of French poets. But in the works of Hartmann von Aue, of Wolfram

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[1] Poems of Grave Ruodolf von Fenis, Her Bernger von Horheim; see "Des Minnesangs Frühling," by Lachmann and Haupt: Leipzig, 1857.

[2] Poem of the Kürenberger; see "Des Minnesangs Frühling." pp. 8 and 230.

von Eschenbach, of Gottfried von Strassburg, we breathe again the pure German air; and we cannot but regret that these men should have taken the subjects of their poems, with their unpronounceable names, extravagant conceits, and licentious manners, from foreign sources, while they had at home their grand mythology, their heroic traditions, their kings and saints, which would have been more worthy subjects than *Tristan* and *Isold*, *Schionatulander* and *Sigune*. There were new thoughts stirring in the hearts and minds of those men of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A hundred years before Dante, the German poets had gazed with their eyes wide open into that infinite reality which underlies our short existence on earth. To Wolfram, and to many a poet of his time, the human tragedy of this world presented the same unreal, transitory, and transparent aspect which we find again in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Every thing points to another world. Beauty, love, virtue, happiness,—every thing, in fact, that moves the heart of the poet,—has a hidden reference to something higher than this life; and the highest object of the highest poetry seems to be to transfer the mind to those regions where men feel the presence of a Divine power and a Divine love, and are lost in blissful adoration. The beginning of the thirteenth century is as great an era in the history of German literature as the beginning of the nineteenth. The German mind was completely regenerated. Old words, old thoughts, old metres, old fashions were swept away, and a new spring dawned over Germany. The various branches of the Teutonic race which, after their inroad into the seats of Roman civilization, for a time became separated, had now grown up into independent nations,—when suddenly a new age of migration threatens to set in. The knights of France and Flanders, of England, Lombardy, and Sicily, leave their brilliant castles. They march to the East, carrying along with them the less polished, but equally enthusiastic nobility of Germany. From the very first the spirit of the Roman towns in Italy and Gaul had exercised a more civilizing influence on the Barbarians who had crossed the Alps and the Rhine, whereas the Germans of Germany proper had

been left to their own resources, assisted only by the lessons of the Roman clergy. Now, at the beginning of the Crusades, the various divisions of the German race meet again, and they meet as strangers; no longer with the impetuosity of Franks and Goths, but with the polished reserve of a Godefroy of Bouillon, and the chivalrous bearing of a Frederick Barbarossa. The German emperors and nobles opened their courts to receive their guests with brilliant hospitality. Their festivals, the splendor and beauty of their tournaments, attracted crowds from great distances, and foremost among them poets and singers. It was at such festivals as Heinrich von Veldecke describes,[1] that French and German poetry were brought face to face. It was here that high-born German poets learnt from French poets the subjects of their own romantic compositions. German ladies became the patrons of German poets; and the etiquette of French chivalry was imitated at the castles of German knights. Poets made bold for the first time to express their own feelings, their joys and sufferings, and epic poetry had to share its honors with lyric songs. Not only France and Germany, but England and Northern Italy were drawn into this gay society. Henry II married Eleanor of Poitou, and her grace and beauty found eloquent admirers in the army of the Crusaders. Their daughter Mathilde was married to Henry the Lion, of Saxony, and one of the Provençal poets has celebrated her loveliness. Frenchmen became the tutors of the sons of the German nobility. French manners, dresses, dishes, and dances were the fashion everywhere. The poetry which flourished at the castles was soon adopted by the lower ranks. Travelling poets and jesters are frequently mentioned, and the poems of the *Nibelunge* and *Gudrun*, such as we now possess them, were composed at that time by poets who took their subjects, their best thoughts and expressions, from the people, but imitated the language, the metre, and the manners of the court-poets. The most famous courts to which the German poets resorted, and where they were entertained with

[1] At Mayence, in 1184, under Frederick I.

generous hospitality, were the court of Leopold, Duke of Austria (1198–1230), and of his son Frederick II; of Hermann, Landgrave of Thuringia, who resided at the Wartburg, near Eisenach (1190–1215); of Berthold, Duke of Zähringen (1186–1218); and of the Swabian emperors in general. At the present day, when not only the language, but even the thoughts of these poets have become to most of us unintelligible and strange, we cannot claim for their poetry more than an historical interest. But if we wish to know the men who took a leading part in the Crusades, who fought with the Emperors against the Pope, or with the Pope against the Emperors, who lived in magnificent castles like that of the Wartburg, and founded cathedrals like that of Cologne (1248), we must read the poetry which they admired, which they composed or patronized. The subjects of their Romances cannot gain our sympathy. They are artificial, unreal, with little of humanity, and still less of nationality in them. But the mind of a poet like Wolfram von Eschenbach rises above all these difficulties. He has thoughts of his own, truly human, deeply religious, and thoroughly national; and there are expressions and comparisons in his poetry which had never been used before. His style, however, is lengthy, his descriptions tiresome, and his characters somewhat vague and unearthly. As critics, we should have to bestow on Wolfram von Eschenbach, on Gottfried von Strassburg, even on Hartmann von Aue and Walther von der Vogelweide, as much of blame as of praise. But as historians, we cannot value them too highly. If we measure them with the poets that preceded and those that followed them, they tower above all like giants. From the deep vestiges which they left behind, we discover that they were men of creative genius, men who had looked at life with their own eyes, and were able to express what they had seen and thought and felt in a language which fascinated their contemporaries, and which even now holds its charm over all who can bring themselves to study their works in the same spirit in which they read the tragedies of Æschylus, or the *Divina Commedia* of Dante.

But the heyday of German chivalry and chivalrous poetry was of short duration. Towards the end of the thirteenth century we begin to feel that the age is no longer aspiring, and hoping, and growing. The world assumes a different aspect. Its youth and vigor seem spent; and the children of a new generation begin to be wiser and sadder than their fathers. The Crusades languish. Their object, like the object of many a youthful hope, has proved unattainable. The Knights no longer take the Cross "because God wills it;" but because the Pope commands a Crusade, bargains for subsidies, and the Emperor cannot decline his demands. Walther von der Vogelweide already is most bitter in his attacks on Rome. Walther was the friend of Frederick II (1215–50), an emperor who reminds us, in several respects, of his namesake of Prussia. He was a sovereign of literary tastes,—himself a poet and a philosopher. Harassed by the Pope, he retaliated most fiercely, and was at last accused of a design to extirpate the Christian religion. The ban was published against him, and his own son rose in rebellion. Germany remained faithful to her Emperor, and the Emperor was successful against his son. But he soon died in disappointment and despair. With him the star of the Swabian dynasty had set, and the sweet sounds of the Swabian lyre died away with the last breath of Corradino, the last of the Hohenstaufen, on the scaffold at Naples, in 1268. Germany was breaking down under heavy burdens. It was visited by the Papal interdict, by famine, by pestilence. Sometimes there was no Emperor, sometimes there were two or three. Rebellion could not be kept under, nor could crime be punished. The only law was the "Law of the Fist." The Church was deeply demoralized. Who was to listen to Romantic poetry? There was no lack of poets or of poetry. Rudolf von Ems, a poet called Der Stricker, and Konrad von Würzburg, all of them living in the middle of the thirteenth century, were more fertile than Hartmann von Aue and Gottfried von Strassburg. They complain, however, that no one takes notice of them, and they are evidently conscious themselves of their inferiority. Lyric poetry continued to flourish for a time, but it

degenerated into an unworthy idolatry of ladies, and affected sentimentality. There is but one branch of poetry in which we find a certain originality, the didactic and satiric. The first beginnings of this new kind of poetry carry us back to the age of Walther von der Vogelweide. Many of his verses are satirical, political, and didactic; and it is supposed, on very good authority, that Walther was the author of an anonymous didactic poem, *Freidank's Bescheidenheit.* By Thomasin von Zerclar we have a metrical composition on manners, the *Italian Guest*, which likewise belongs to the beginning of the thirteenth century. Somewhat later we meet, in the works of the Stricker, with the broader satire of the middle classes; and towards the close of the century, Hugo von Trimberg, in his *Renner*, addresses himself clearly to the lower ranks of German society, and no longer to princes, knights, and ladies.

How is this to be accounted for? Poetry was evidently changing hands again. The Crusades had made the princes and knights the representatives and leaders of the whole nation; and during the contest between the imperial and the papal powers, the destinies of Germany were chiefly in the hands of the hereditary nobility. The literature, which before that time was entirely clerical, had then become worldly and chivalrous. But now, when the power of the Emperors began to decline, when the clergy was driven into taking a decidedly anti-national position, when the unity of the empire was well-nigh destroyed, and princes and prelates were asserting their independence by plunder and by warfare, a new element of society rose to the surface—the middle classes—the burghers of the free towns of Germany. They were forced to hold together, in order to defend themselves against their former protectors. They fortified their cities, formed corporations, watched over law and morality, and founded those powerful leagues, the first of which, the Hansa, dates from 1241. Poetry also took refuge behind the walls of free towns; and at the fireside of the worthy citizen had to exchange her gay, chivalrous, and romantic strains, for themes more subdued, practical, and homely. This accounts for such works as Hugo von Trim-

berg's *Renner*, as well as for the general character of the poetry of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Poetry became a trade like any other. Guilds were formed, consisting of master-singers and their apprentices. Heinrich Frauenlob is called the first Meistersänger; and during the fourteenth, the fifteenth, and even the sixteenth centuries, new guilds or schools were founded in all the principal towns of Germany. After order had been restored by the first Hapsburg dynasty, the intellectual and literary activity of Germany retained its centre of gravitation in the middle classes. Rudolf von Hapsburg was not gifted with a poetical nature, and contemporaneous poets complain of his want of liberality. Attempts were made to revive the chivalrous poetry of the Crusades by Hugo von Montfort and Oswald von Wolkenstein in the beginning of the fifteenth century, and again at the end of the same century by the "Last of the German Knights," the Emperor Maximilian. But these attempts could not but fail. The age of chivalry had passed, and there was nothing great or inspiring in the wars which the Emperors had to wage during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries against their vassals, against the Pope, against the precursors of the Reformation—the Hussites, and against the Turks. In Fritsche Closener's *Chronicle* there is a description of the citizens of Strassburg defending themselves against their Bishop in 1312; in Twinger's *Chronicle* a picture of the processions of the Flagellants and the religious enthusiasm of that time (1349). The poems of Suchenwirt and Halbsuter represent the wars of Austria against Switzerland (1386), and Niclas von Weyl's translation gives us a glimpse into the Council of Constance (1414) and the Hussite wars, which were soon to follow. The poetry of those two centuries, which was written by and for the people, is interesting historically; but, with few exceptions, without any further worth. The poets wish to amuse or to instruct their humble patrons, and they do this, either by giving them the dry bones of the romantic poetry of former ages, or by fables, or by telling them the quaint stories of the "Seven Wise Masters." What beauty there was in a Meistergesang

may be fairly seen from the poem of Michael Beheim; and the Easter play by no means shows the lowest ebb of good taste in the popular literature of that time. It might seem, indeed, as if all the high and noble aspirations of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had been lost and forgotten during the fourteenth and fifteenth. And yet it was not quite so. There was one class of men on whom the spirit of true nobility had descended, and whose works form a connecting chain between the great era of the Crusades and the still greater era of the Reformation. These are the so-called Mystics,—true Crusaders, true knights of the spirit, many of whom sacrificed their lives for the cause of truth, and who at last conquered from the hands of the infidels that Holy Sepulchre in which the true Christian faith had been lying buried for centuries. The name of Mystics, which has been given to these men, is apt to mislead. Their writings are not dark or unintelligible, and those who call them so must find Christianity itself unintelligible and dark. There is more broad daylight in Eckhart and Tauler than in the works of all the Thomists and Scotists. Eckhart was not a dreamer. He had been a pupil of Thomas Aquinas, and his own style is sometimes painfully scholastic. But there is a fresh breeze of thought in his works, and in the works of his disciples. They knew that whenever the problems of man's relation to God, the creation of the world, the origin of evil, and the hope of salvation come to be discussed, the sharpest edge of logical reasoning will turn, and the best defined terms of metaphysics die away into mere music. They did not handle the truths of Christianity as if they should or could be proved by the syllogisms of our human reasoning. Nevertheless these Mystics were hard and honest thinkers, and never played with words and phrases. Their faith is to them as clear and as real as sunshine; and instead of throwing scholastic dust into the eyes of the people, they boldly told them to open their eyes and to look at the mysteries all around them, and to feel the presence of God within and without, which the priests had veiled by the very revelation which they had preached. For a true appreciation of the times in

which they lived, the works of these Reformers of the faith are invaluable. Without them we should try in vain to explain how a nation which, to judge from its literature, seemed to have lost all vigor and virtue, could suddenly rise and dare the work of a Reformation of the Church. With them we learn how that same nation, after groaning for centuries under the yoke of superstition and hypocrisy, found in its very prostration the source of an irresistible strength. The higher clergy contributed hardly any thing to the literature of these two centuries; and what they wrote would better have remained unwritten. At St. Gall, the monks, the successors of Notker, towards the end of the thirteenth century were unable to sign their names. The abbot was a nobleman who composed love-songs,—a branch of poetry at all events out of place in the monastery founded by St. Gall. It is only among the lower clergy that we find the traces of genuine Christian piety and intellectual activity, though frequently branded by obese prelates and obtuse magistrates with the names of mysticism and heresy. The orders of the Franciscans and Dominicans, founded in 1208 and 1215, and intended to act as clerical spies and confessors, soon began to fraternize in many parts of Germany with the people against the higher clergy. The people were hungry and thirsty after religious teaching. They had been systematically starved, or fed with stones. Part of the Bible had been translated for the people, but what Ulfilas was free to do in the fourth century, was condemned by the prelates assembled at the Synod of Trier in 1231. Nor were the sermons of the itinerant friars in towns and villages always to the taste of bishops and abbots. We possess collections of these discourses, preached by Franciscans and Dominicans under the trees of cemeteries, and from the church-towers of the villages. Brother Berthold, who died in 1272, was a Franciscan. He travelled about the country, and was revered by the poor like a saint and prophet. The doctrine he preached, though it was the old teaching of the Apostles, was as new to the peasants who came to hear him, as it had been to the citizens of Athens who came to hear St. Paul. Men who called themselves Chris-

tians had been taught, and had brought themselves to believe, that to read the writings of the Apostles was a deadly sin. Yet in secret they were yearning after that forbidden Bible. They knew that there were translations, and though these translations had been condemned by popes and synods, the people could not resist the temptation of reading them. In 1373, we find the first complete version of the Bible into German, by Matthias of Beheim. Several are mentioned after this. The new religious fervor that had been kindled among the inferior clergy, and among the lower and middle classes of the laity, became stronger; and, though it sometimes degenerated into wild fanaticism, the sacred spark was kept in safe hands by such men as Eckhart (died 1329), Tauler (died 1361), and the author of the German Theology. Men like these are sure to conquer; and, although their names are but little known at present, it should not be forgotten that, without the labors of these Reformers of the Faith, the Reformers of the Church would never have found a whole nation waiting to receive, and ready to support them.

There are two other events which prepared the way of the German Reformers of the sixteenth century, the foundation of universities, and the invention of printing. Their importance is the same in the literary and in the political history of Germany. The intellectual and moral character of a nation is formed in schools and universities; and those who educate a people have always been its real masters, though they may go by a more modest name. Under the Roman empire public schools had been supported by the government, both at Rome and in the chief towns of the Provinces. We know of their existence in Gaul and parts of Germany. With the decline of the central authority, the salaries of the grammarians and rhetors in the Provinces ceased to be paid, and the pagan gymnasia were succeeded by Christian schools, attached to episcopal sees and monasteries. While the clergy retained their vigor and efficiency, their schools were powerful engines for spreading a half-clerical and half-classical culture in Germany. During the Crusades, when ecclesiastical activity and

learning declined very rapidly, we hear of French tutors at the castles of the nobility, and classical learning gave way to the superficial polish of a chivalrous age. And when the nobility likewise relapsed into a state of savage barbarism, new schools were wanted, and they were founded by the towns, the only places where, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, we see any evidence of a healthy political life. The first town-schools are mentioned in the beginning of the fourteenth century, and they were soon followed by the high schools and universities. The University of Prague was founded in 1348; Vienna, 1366; Heidelberg, 1386; Erfurt, 1392; Leipsig, 1408; Basil, 1460; Tübingen, 1477; Mainz, 1482. These universities are a novel feature in the history of German and of European civilization. They are not ecclesiastical seminaries, not restricted to any particular class of society: they are national institutions, open to the rich and the poor, to the knight, the clerk, the citizen. They are real universities of learning: they profess to teach all branches of knowledge,—theology and law, medicine and philosophy. They contain the first practical acknowledgment of the right of every subject to the highest education, and through it to the highest offices in Church and State. Neither Greece nor Rome had known such institutions: neither the Church nor the nobility, during the days of their political supremacy, were sufficiently impressed with the duty which they owed to the nation at large to provide such places of liberal education. It was the nation itself, when forsaken by its clergy and harassed by its nobility, which called these schools into life, and it is in those schools and universities that the great men who inaugurate the next period of literature—the champions of political liberty and religious freedom—were fostered and formed.

The invention of printing was in itself a reformation, and its benefits were chiefly felt by the great masses of the people. The clergy possessed their libraries, where they might read and study if they chose: the castles contained collections of MSS., sacred and profane, illuminated with the most exquisite taste; while the citizen, the poor layman, though he might be

able to read and to write, was debarred from the use of books, and had to satisfy his literary tastes with the sermons of travelling Franciscans, or the songs of blind men and pedlers. The art of printing admitted that large class to the same privileges which had hitherto been enjoyed almost exclusively by clergy and nobility; it placed in the hands of the third estate arms more powerful than the swords of the knights, and the thunderbolts of the priests: it was a revolution in the history of literature, more eventful than any in the history of mankind. Poets and philosophers addressed themselves no longer to emperors and noblemen, to knights and ladies, but to the people at large, and chiefly to the middle classes, in which, henceforth, the chief strength of the nation resides.

The years from 1450 to 1500 form a period of preparation for the great struggle that was to inaugurate the beginning of the sixteenth century. It was an age "rich in scholars, copious in pedants, but poor in genius, and barren of strong thinkers." One of the few interesting men, in whose life and writings the history of that preliminary age may be studied, is Sebastian Brant, the famous author of the famous "Ship of Fools."

With the sixteenth century we enter upon the modern history and the modern literature of Germany. With Luther, the literary language of Germany became New High-German. A change of language invariably betokens a change in the social constitution of a country. In Germany, at the time of the Reformation, the change of language marks the rise of a new aristocracy, which is henceforth to reside in the universities. Literature leaves its former homes. It speaks no longer the language of the towns. It addresses itself no longer to a few citizens, nor to imperial patrons, such as Maximilian I. It indulges no longer in moral saws, didactic verses, and prose novels, nor is it content with mystic philosophy, and the secret outpourings of religious fervor. For a time, though but for a short time, German literature becomes national. Poets and writers wish to be heard beyond the walls of their monasteries and cities. They speak to the whole nation; nay, they desire to be heard beyond the frontiers of their country. Luther and

the Reformers belonged to no class,—they belonged to the people. The voice of the people, which, during the preceding periods of literature, could only be heard like the rollings of distant thunder, had now become articulate and distinct, and for a time one thought seemed to unite all classes,—emperors, kings, nobles and citizens, clergy and laity, high and low, old and young. This is a novel sight in the history of Germany. We have seen in the first period the gradual growth of the clergy, from the time when the first missionaries were massacred in the forests of Friesland, to the time when the Emperor stood penitent before the gates of Canossa. We have seen the rise of the nobility, from the time when the barbarian chiefs preferred living outside the walls of cities, to the time when they rivalled the French cavaliers in courtly bearing and chivalrous bravery. Nor were the representatives of these two orders, the Pope and the Emperor, less powerful at the beginning of the sixteenth century, than they had been before. Charles V was the most powerful sovereign whom Europe had seen since the days of Charlemagne, and the Papal see had recovered by diplomatic intrigue much of the influence which it had lost by moral depravity. Let us think, then, of these two ancient powers: the Emperor with his armies, recruited in Austria, Spain, Naples, Sicily, and Burgundy, and with his treasures brought from Mexico and Peru; and the Pope with his armies of priests and monks, recruited from all parts of the Christian world, and armed with the weapons of the Inquisition, and the thunderbolts of Excommunication;—let us think of their former victories, their confidence in their own strength, their belief in their divine rights; and let us then turn our eyes to the small University of Wittenberg, and look into the bleak study of a poor Augustine monk, and see that monk step out of his study with no weapon in his hand but the Bible,—with no armies and no treasures,—and yet defying, with his clear and manly voice, both Pope and Emperor, both clergy and nobility; there is no grander sight in history; and the longer we allow our eyes to dwell on it, the more we feel that history is not without God, and that, at

every decisive battle, the divine right of truth asserts its supremacy over the divine right of popes and emperors, and overthrows with one breath both empires and hierarchies. We call the Reformation the work of Luther; but Luther stood not alone, and no really great man ever stood alone. The secret of their greatness lies in their understanding the spirit of the age in which they live, and in giving expression, with the full power of faith and conviction, to the secret thoughts of millions. Luther was but lending words to the silent soul of Protestant Germany, and no one should call himself a Protestant who is not a Lutheran with Luther at the Diet of Worms, and able to say with him, in the face of princes and prelates, "Here I stand, I can no otherwise, God help me, Amen." As the Emperor was the representative of the nobility, as the Pope was the representative of the clergy, Luther was the head and leader of the people, which, through him and through his fellow-workers, claimed now, for the first time, an equality with the two old estates of the realm. If this national struggle took at first an aspect chiefly religious, it was because the German nation had freedom of thought and of belief more at heart than political freedom. But political rights also were soon demanded, and demanded with such violence, that during his own lifetime Luther had to repress the excesses of enthusiastic theorists, and of a violent peasantry. Luther's great influence on the literature of Germany, and the gradual adoption of his dialect as the literary language, were owing in a great measure to this, that whatever there was of literature during the sixteenth century, was chiefly in the hands of one class of men. After the Reformation, nearly all eminent men in Germany, poets, philosophers, and historians, belonged to the Protestant party, and resided chiefly in the universities. The universities were what the monasteries had been under Charlemagne, the castles under Frederick Barbarossa: the centres of gravitation for the intellectual and political life of the country. The true nobility of Germany was no longer to be found among the priests,—Alcuin, Hrabanus Maurus, Notker Teutonicus; nor among the knights,—Wal-

ther von der Vogelweide, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and their patrons, Frederick II, Hermann von Thüringen, and Leopold of Austria. The intellectual sceptre of Germany was wielded by a new nobility, a nobility that had risen from the ranks, like the priests and the knights, but which, for a time at least, kept itself from becoming a caste, and from cutting away those roots through which it imbibed its vigor, and sustained its strength. It had its castles in the universities, its tournaments in the diets of Worms and Augsburg, and it counted among its members dukes and peasants, divines and soldiers, lawyers and artists. This was not, indeed, an hereditary nobility, but on that very ground it is a nobility which can never become extinct. The danger, however, which threatens all aristocracies, whether martial, clerical, or municipal, was not averted from the intellectual aristocracy of Germany. The exclusive spirit of caste deprived the second generation of that power which men like Luther had gained at the beginning of the Reformation. The moral influence of the universities in Germany was great, and it is great at the present day. But it would have been greater and more beneficial if the conceit of caste had not separated the leaders of the nation from the ranks whence they themselves had risen, and to which alone they owed their position and their influence. It was the same with the priests, who would rather form a hierarchy than be merged in the laity. It was the same with the knights, who would rather form a select society than live among the gentry. Both cut away the ground under their feet; and the Reformers of the sixteenth century fell into the same snare before they were aware of it. We wonder at the eccentricities of the priesthood, at the conceit of the hereditary nobility, at the affectation of majestic stateliness inherent in royalty. But the pedantic display of learning, the disregard of the real wants of the people, the contempt of all knowledge which does not wear the academic garb, show the same foible, the same conceit, the same spirit of caste among those who, from the sixteenth century to the present day, have occupied the most prominent rank in the society of Germany. Professorial

knight-errantry still waits for its Cervantes. Nowhere have the objects of learning been so completely sacrificed to the means of learning, nowhere has that Dulcinea—knowledge for its own sake—with her dark veil and her barren heart, numbered so many admirers; nowhere have so many windmills been fought, and so many real enemies been left unhurt, as in Germany, particularly during the last two centuries. New universities had been founded: Marburg, in 1527; Königsberg, in 1547; Jena, in 1558; Helmstädt, in 1575; Giessen, in 1607. And the more the number and the power of the Professors increased, the more they forgot that they and their learning, their universities and their libraries, were for the benefit of the people; that a Professor might be very learned, and very accurate, and very laborious, yet worse than useless as a member of our toiling society. It was considered more learned and respectable to teach in Latin, and all lectures at the universities were given in that language. Luther was sneered at because of his little German tracts, which "any village clerk might have written." Some of the best poets in the sixteenth century were men such as Eoban Hessius (1540), who composed their poetry in Latin. National poems, for instance, Brant's "Ship of Fools," were translated into Latin, in order to induce the German professors to read them. The learned doctors were ashamed of their honest native names. Schwarzerd must needs call himself Melancthon; Meissel Celtes, Schnitter Agricola; Hausschein, Oecolampadius! All this might look very learned, and professorial, and imposing; but it separated the professors from the people at large; it retarded the progress of national education, and blighted the prospects of a national policy in Germany. Every thing promised well at the time of the Reformation; and a new Germany might have risen before a new France, if, like Luther, the leaders of the nation had remained true to their calling. But when to speak Latin was considered more learned than to speak German, when to amass vague and vast information was considered more creditable than to digest and to use it, when popularity became the same bugbear to the profes-

sors which profanity had been to the clergy, and vulgarity to the knights, Luther's work was undone; and two more centuries had to be spent in pedantic controversies, theological disputes, sectarian squabbles, and political prostration, before a new national spirit could rise again in men like Lessing, and Schiller, and Fichte, and Stein. Ambitious princes and quarrelsome divines continued the rulers of Germany, and towards the end of the sixteenth century, every thing seemed drifting back into the middle ages. Then came the Thirty Years' War, a most disastrous war for Germany, which is felt in its results to the present day. If, as a civil and religious contest, it had been fought out between the two parties—the Protestants and Roman Catholics of Germany—it would have left, as in England, one side victorious; it would have been brought to an end before both were utterly exhausted. But the Protestants, weakened by their own dissensions, had to call in foreign aid. First Denmark, then Sweden, poured their armies into Germany, and even France—Roman Catholic France—gave her support to Gustavus Adolphus, and the Protestant cause. England, the true ally of Germany, was too weak at home to make her influence felt abroad. At the close of the war, the Protestants received, indeed, the same rights as the Roman Catholics; but the nation was so completely demoralized, that it hardly cared for the liberty sanctioned by the treaty of Westphalia. The physical and moral vigor of the nation was broken. The population of Germany is said to have been reduced by one half. Thousands of villages and towns had been burnt to the ground. The schools, the churches, the universities were deserted. A whole generation had grown up during the war, particularly among the lower classes, with no education at all. The merchants of Germany, who formerly, as Æneas Sylvius said, lived more handsomely than the Kings of Scotland, were reduced to small traders. The Hansa was broken up. Holland, England, and Sweden had taken the wind out of her sails. In the Eastern provinces commerce was suspended by the inroads of the Turks, while the discovery of America, and of the new passage to the East

Indies, had reduced the importance of the mercantile navy of Germany and Italy in the Mediterranean. Where there was any national feeling left, it was a feeling of shame and despair, and the emperor and the small princes of Germany might have governed more selfishly than they did without rousing opposition among the people.

What can we expect of the literature of such times? Popular poetry preserved some of its indestructible charms. The Meistersänger went on composing according to the rules of their guilds, but we look in vain for the raciness and honest simplicity of Hans Sachs. Some of the professors wrote plays in the style of Terence, or after English models, and fables became fashionable in the style of Phædrus. But there was no trace anywhere of originality, truth, taste, or feeling, except in that branch which, like the palm-tree, thrives best in the desert—sacred poetry. Paul Gerhard is yet without an equal in his songs; and many of the best hymns which are still heard in the Protestant churches of Germany, date from the seventeenth century. Soon, however, this class of poetry also degenerated on one side into dry theological phraseology, on the other into sentimental and almost erotic affectation.

There was no hope of a regeneration in German literature, unless either great political and social events should rouse the national mind from its languor, or the classical models of pure taste and true art should be studied again in a different spirit from that of professorial pedantry. Now, after the Thirty Years' War, there was no war in Germany in which the nation took any warm interest. The policy pursued in France during the long reign of Louis XIV (1643–1708), had its chief aim in weakening the house of Hapsburg. When the Protestants would no longer fight his battles, Louis roused the Turks. Vienna was nearly taken, and Austria owed its delivery to Johann Sobiesky. By the treaty of Ryswick (1697), all the country on the left side of the Rhine was ceded to France, and German soldiers fought under the banners of the Great Monarch. The only German prince who dared to uphold the honor of the empire, and to withstand the encroachments of

Louis, was Frederick William, the great Elector of Prussia (1670–88). He checked the arrogance of the Swedish court, opened his towns to French Protestant refugees, and raised the house of Brandenburg to a European importance. In the same year in which his successor, Frederick III, assumed the royal title as Frederick I, the King of Spain, Charles I died; and Louis XIV, while trying to add the Spanish crown to his monarchy, was at last checked in his grasping policy by an alliance between England and Germany. Prince Eugene and Marlborough restored the peace and the political equilibrium of Europe. In England, the different parties in Parliament, the frequenters of the clubs and coffee-houses, were then watching every move on the political chess-board of Europe, and criticising the victories of their generals, and the treaties of their ambassadors. In Germany, the nation took but a passive part. It was excluded from all real share in the great questions of the day, and if it showed any sympathies, they were confined to the simple admiration of a great general, such as Prince Eugene.

While the policy of Louis XIV was undermining the political independence of Germany, the literature of his court exercised an influence hardly less detrimental on the literature of Germany. No doubt, the literature of France stood far higher at that time than the German. "Poet" was among us a term of abuse, while in France the Great Monarch did homage to his great poets. But the professorial poets who had failed to learn the lessons of good taste from the Greek and Roman classics, were not likely to profit by an imitation of the spurious classicality of French literature. They heard the great stars of the court of Louis XIV praised by their royal and princely patrons as they returned from their travels in France and Italy, full of admiration for every thing that was not German. They were delighted to hear that in France, in Holland, and in Italy, it was respectable to write poetry in the modern vernacular, and set to work in good earnest. After the model of the literary academies in Italy, academies were founded at the small courts of Germany. Men like Opitz would hardly

have thought it dignified to write verses in their native tongue, had it not been for the moral support which they received from these academies and their princely patrons. His first poems were written in Latin, but he afterwards devoted himself completely to German poetry. He became a member of the "Order of the Palm-tree," and the founder of what is called the *First Silesian School.* Opitz is the true representative of the classical poetry of the seventeenth century. He was a scholar and a gentleman; most correct in his language and versification; never venturing on ground that had not been trodden before by some classical poet, whether of Greece, Rome, France, Holland, or Italy. In him we also see the first traces of that baneful alliance between princes and poets which has deprived the German nation of so many of her best sons. But the charge of mean motives has been unjustly brought against Opitz by many historians. Poets require an audience, and at his time there was no class of people willing to listen to poetry, except the inmates of the small German courts. After the Thirty Years' War, the power of these princes was greater than ever. They divided the spoil, and there was neither a nobility, nor a clergy, nor a national party to control or resist them. In England, the royal power had, at that time, been brought back to its proper limits, and it has thus been able to hold ever since, with but short interruptions, its dignified position, supported by the self-respect of a free and powerful nation. In France it assumed the most enormous proportions during the long reign of Louis XIV, but its appalling rise was followed, after a century, by a fall equally appalling, and it has not yet regained its proper position in the political system of that country. In Germany the royal power was less imposing, its prerogatives being divided between the Emperor and a number of small but almost independent vassals, remnants of that feudal system of the middle ages which in France and England had been absorbed by the rise of national monarchies. These small principalities explain the weakness of Germany in her relation with foreign powers, and the instability of her political constitution. Continental wars gave

an excuse for keeping up large standing armies, and these standing armies stood between the nation and her sovereigns, and made any moral pressure of the one upon the other impossible. The third estate could never gain that share in the government which it had obtained, by its united action, in other countries; and no form of government can be stable which is deprived of the support and the active co-operation of the middle classes. Constitutions have been granted by enlightened sovereigns, such as Joseph II and Frederick William IV, and barricades have been raised at Vienna and at Berlin; but both have failed to restore healthy life to the political organization of the country. There is no longer a German nobility, in the usual sense of the word. Its vigor was exhausted when the powerful vassals of the empire became powerless sovereigns with the titles of king or duke, while what remained of the landed nobility, became more reduced with every generation, owing to the absence of the system of primogeniture. There is no longer a clergy as a powerful body in the state. This was broken up at the time of the Reformation, and it hardly had time to recover and to constitute itself on a new basis, when the Thirty Years' War deprived it of all social influence, and left it no alternative but to become a salaried class of servants of the crown. No third estate exists powerful enough to defend the interests of the commonwealth against the encroachments of the sovereign; and public opinion, though it may pronounce itself within certain limits, has no means of legal opposition, and must choose, at every critical moment, between submission to the royal will and rebellion.

Thus, during the whole modern history of Germany, the political and intellectual supremacy is divided. The former is monopolized by the sovereigns, the latter belongs to a small class of learned men. These two soon begin to attract one another. The kings seek the society, the advice, and support of literary men; while literary men court the patronage of kings, and acquire powerful influence by governing those who govern the people. From the time of Opitz there have been few men of eminence in literature or science who have

not been drawn towards one of the larger or smaller courts of Germany; and the whole of our modern literature bears the marks of this union between princes and poets. It has been said that the existence of these numerous centres of civilization has proved beneficial to the growth of literature; and it has been pointed out that some of the smallest courts, such as Weimar, have raised the greatest men in poetry and science. Goethe himself gives expression to this opinion. "What has made Germany great," he says, "but the culture which is spread through the whole country in such a marvellous manner, and pervades equally all parts of the realm? And this culture, does it not emanate from the numerous courts which grant it support and patronage? Suppose we had had in Germany for centuries but two capitals, Vienna and Berlin, or but one; I should like to know how it would have fared with German civilization, or even with that general well-being which goes hand in hand with true civilization." In these words we hear Goethe, the minister of the petty court of Weimar, not the great poet of a great nation. Has France had more than one capital? Has England had more than one court? Great men have risen to eminence in great monarchies like France, and they have risen to eminence in a great commonwealth such as England, without the patronage of courts, by the support, the sympathy, the love of a great nation. Truly national poetry exists only where there is a truly national life; and the poet who, in creating his works, thinks of a whole nation which will listen to him and be proud of him, is inspired by a nobler passion than he who looks to his royal master, or the applause even of the most refined audience of the *dames de la cour*. In a free country, the sovereign is the highest and most honored representative of the national will, and he honors himself by honoring those who have well deserved of his country. There a poet-laureate may hold an independent and dignified position, conscious of his own worth, and of the support of the nation. But in despotic countries, the favor even of the most enlightened sovereign is dangerous. Germany never had a more enlightened king than Frederick

the Great; and yet, when he speaks of the queen receiving Leibnitz at court, he says, "She believed that it was not unworthy of a queen to show honor to a philosopher; and as those who have received from heaven a privileged soul rise to the level of sovereigns, she admitted Leibnitz into her familiar society."

The seventeenth century saw the rise and fall of the first and the second Silesian schools. The first is represented by men like Opitz and Weckherlin, and it exercised an influence in the North of Germany on Simon Dach, Paul Flemming, and a number of less gifted poets, who are generally known by the name of the *Königsberg School.* Its character is pseudo-classical. All these poets endeavored to write correctly, sedately, and eloquently. Some of them aimed at a certain simplicity and sincerity, which we admire particularly in Flemming. But it would be difficult to find in all their writings one single thought, one single expression that had not been used before. The second Silesian school is more ambitious; but its poetic flights are more disappointing than the honest prose of Opitz. The "Shepherds of the Pegnitz," had tried to imitate the brilliant diction of the Italian poets; but the modern Meistersänger of the old town of Nürnberg had produced nothing but wordy jingle. Hoffmannswaldau and Lohenstein, the chief heroes of the second Silesian school, followed in their track, and did not suceed better. Their compositions are bombastic and full of metaphors. It is a poetry of adjectives, without substance, truth, or taste. Yet their poetry was admired, praised not less than Goethe and Schiller were praised by their contemporaries, and it lived beyond the seventeenth century. There were but few men during that time who kept aloof from the spirit of these two Silesian schools, and were not influenced by either Opitz or Hoffmannswaldau. Among these independent poets we have to mention Friedrich von Logau, Andreas Gryphius, and Moscherosch. Besides these, there were some prose writers whose works are not exactly works of art, but works of original thought, and of great importance to us in tracing the progress of science and literature during the

dreariest period of German history. We can only mention the *Simplicissimus*, a novel full of clever miniature drawing, and giving a lively picture of German life during the Thirty Years' War; the patriotic writings of Professor Schupp; the historical works of Professor Pufendorf (1631–1694); the pietistic sermons of Spener, and of Professor Franke (1663–1727), the founder of the Orphan School at Halle; Professor Arnold's (1666–1714) *Ecclesiastical History;* the first political pamphlets by Professor Thomasius (1655–1728); and, among philosophers, Jacob Böhme at the beginning, and Leibnitz at the end of the seventeenth century.

The second Silesian school was defeated by Gottsched, professor at Leipzig. He exercised, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the same dictatorship as a poet and a critic which Opitz had exercised at the beginning of the seventeenth. Gottsched was the advocate of French models in art and poetry, and he used his wide-spread influence in recommending the sedate, correct, and so-called classical style of the poets of the time. After having rendered good service in putting down the senseless extravagance of the school of Lohenstein, he become himself a pedantic and arrogant critic; and it was through the opposition which he roused by his Gallomania, that German poetry was delivered at last from the trammels of that foreign school. Then followed a long literary warfare; Gottsched and his followers at Leipzig defended the French, Bodmer and his friends in Switzerland the English style of literature. The former insisted on classical form and traditional rules; the latter on natural sentiment and spontaneous expression. The question was, whether poets should imitate the works of the classics, or imitate the classics who had become classics by imitating nobody. A German professor wields an immense power by means of his Journals. He is the editor; he writes in them himself, and allows others to write; he praises his friends, who are to laud him in turn; he patronizes his pupils, who are to call him master; he abuses his adversaries, and asks his allies to do the same. It was in this manner that Professor Gottsched triumphed for a long

time over Bodmer and his party, till at last public opinion became too strong, and the dictator died the laughing-stock of Germany. It was in the very thick of this literary struggle that the great heroes of German poetry grew up,—Klopstock, Lessing, Wieland, Herder, Goethe, and Schiller. Goethe, who knew both Gottsched and Bodmer, has described that period of fermentation and transition in which his own mind was formed. He does justice to Günther, and more than justice to Liscow. He shows the influence which men like Brockes, Hagedorn, and Haller exercised in making poetry respectable. He points out the new national life which, like an electric spark, flew through the whole country when Frederick the Great said, "J'ai jeté le bonnet par-dessus les moulins;" and defied, like a man, the political popery of Austria. The estimate which Goethe forms of the poets of the time, of Gleim and Uz, of Gessner and Rabener, and more especially of Klopstock, Lessing, and Wieland, should be read in the original, as likewise Herder's Rhapsody on Shakspeare. The latter contains the key to many of the secrets of that new period of literature, which was inaugurated by Goethe himself and by those who like him could dare to be classical, by being true to nature and to themselves.

The history of literature is but an applied history of civilization. As in the history of civilization, we watch the play of the three constituent classes of society,—clergy, nobility, and commoners, we can see, in the history of literature, how that class which is supreme politically, shows for the time being its supremacy in the literary productions of the age, and impresses its mark on the works of poets and philosophers. Speaking very generally, we might say that, during the first period of German history, the really moving, civilizing, and ruling class was the clergy; and in the whole of German literature, nearly to the time of the Crusades, the clerical element predominates. The second period is marked by the Crusades, and the triumph of Teutonic and Romantic chivalry, and the literature of that period is of a strictly correspondent tone. After the Crusades, and during the political anarchy that followed,

the sole principle of order and progress is found in the towns, and in the towns the poetry of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries finds its new home. At last, at the time of the Reformation, when the political life of the country assumed for a time a national character, German literature also is for a short time national. The hopes, however, which had been raised of a national policy and of a national literature, were soon blighted, and, from the Thirty Years' War to the present day, the inheritance of the nation has been divided between princes and professors. There have been moments when the princes had to appeal to the nation at large, and to forget for awhile their royal pretensions; and these times of national enthusiasm, as during the wars of Frederick the Great, and during the wars against Napoleon, have not failed to tell on the literature of Germany. They produced a national spirit, free from professorial narrowness, such as we find in the writings of Lessing and Fichte. But with the exception of these short lucid intervals, Germany has been, and is still, under the absolute despotism of a number of small sovereigns and great professors, and her literature has been throughout in the hands of court poets or acedemic critics. Klopstock, Lessing, and Schiller are most free from either influence, and most impressed with the duties which a poet owes, before all, to the nation to which he belongs. Klopstock's national enthusiasm borders sometimes on the fantastic, for, as his own times could not inspire him, he borrowed the themes of his national panegyrics from the distant past of Arminius and the German bards. Lessing looked more to his own age, but he looked in vain for national heroes. "Pity the extraordinary man," says Goethe, "who had to live in such miserable times, which offered him no better subjects than those which he takes for his works. Pity him, that in his *Minna von Barnhelm* he had to take part in the quarrel between the Saxons and the Prussians, because he found nothing better. It was owing to the rottenness of his time that he always took, and was forced to take, a polemical position. In his *Emilia Galotti* he shows his *pique* against the princes; in *Nathan*, against the priests." But, although the

subjects of these works of Lessing were small, his object in writing was always great and national. He never condescended to amuse a provincial court by masquerades and comedies, nor did he degrade his genius by pandering, like Wieland, to the taste of a profligate nobility. Schiller, again, was a poet, truly national and truly liberal; and although a man of aspirations rather than of actions, he has left a deeper impress on the kernel of the nation than either Wieland or Goethe. These considerations, however, must not interfere with our appreciation of the greatness of Goethe. On the contrary, when we see the small sphere in which he moved at Weimar, we admire the more the height to which he grew, and the freedom of his genius. And it is, perhaps, owing to this very absence of a strongly marked national feeling, that in Germany the first idea of a world-literature was conceived. "National literature," Goethe says, "is of little importance: the age of a world literature is at hand, and every one ought to work in order to accelerate this new era." Perhaps Goethe felt that the true poet belonged to the whole of mankind, and that he must be intelligible beyond the frontiers of his own country. And, from this point of view, his idea of a world literature has been realized, and his own works have gained their place side by side with the works of Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Shakspeare. But, so long as there are different languages and different nations, let each poet think, and work, and write for his own people, without caring for the applause of other countries. Science and philosophy are cosmopolitan; poetry and art are national: and those who would deprive the Muses of their homesprung character, would deprive them of much of their native charms.

APPENDIX B.

Hegel and Recent German Philosophy.[1]

Hegel.

I. George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was born at Stuttgart, the 27th of August, 1770. In his eighteenth year he entered the University of Tübingen, in order to devote himself to the study of theology. During his course of study here, he attracted no marked attention; Schelling, who was his junior in years, shone far beyond all his contemporaries. After leaving Tübingen, he took a situation as private tutor, first in Switzerland, and afterwards in Frankfort-on-the-Main till 1801, when he settled down at Jena. At first he was regarded as a disciple, and defender of Schelling's philosophy, and as such he wrote in 1801 his first minor treatise on the "*Difference between Fichte and Schelling.*" Soon afterwards he became associated with Schelling in publishing the "*Critical Journal of Philosophy,*" 1802–3, for which he furnished a number of important articles. His labors as an academical teacher met at first with but little encouragement; he gave his first lecture to only four hearers. Yet in 1806, he became professor in the university, though the political catastrophe in which the country was soon afterwards involved, deprived him again of the place. Amid the cannon's thunder of the battle of Jena, he finished "*the Phenomenology of the Mind,*" his first great and

[1] In order, in some manner, to complete Madame de Staël's survey of German Philosophy, we here add from Tenneman's Manual, an account of Hegel and his successors.—*Ed.*

independent work, the crown of his Jena labors. He was subsequently in the habit of calling this book which appeared in 1807, his "voyage of discovery." From Jena, Hegel for want of the means of subsistence went to Bamberg, where for two years he was editor of a political journal published there. In the fall of 1808, he became rector of the gymnasium at Nuremberg. In this situation he wrote his *Logic*, 1812–16. All his works were produced slowly, and he first properly began his literary activity as Schelling finished his. In 1816, he received a call to a professorship of philosophy at Heidelberg, where in 1817 he published his "*Encyclopædia of the Philosophical Sciences*," in which for the first time he showed the whole circuit of his system. But his peculiar fame, and his far-reaching activity, dates first from his call to Berlin in 1818. It was at Berlin that he surrounded himself with an extensive and very actively scientific school, and where through his connection with the Prussian government he gained a political influence and acquired a reputation for his philosophy, as *the* philosophy of the State, though this neither speaks favorably for its inner purity, nor its moral credit. Yet in his "*Philosophy of Rights*," which appeared in 1821 (a time, to be sure, when the Prussian State had not yet shown any decidedly anti-constitutional tendency), Hegel does not deny the political demands of the present age; he declares in favor of popular representation, freedom of the press, and publicity of judicial proceedings, trial by jury, and an administrative independence of corporations.

In Berlin, Hegel gave lectures upon almost every branch of philosophy, and these have been published by his disciples and friends after his death. His manner as a lecturer was stammering, clumsy, and unadorned, but was still not without a peculiar attraction as the immediate expression of profound thoughtfulness. His social intercourse was more with the uncultivated than with the learned; he was not fond of shining as a genius in social circles. In 1829, he became rector of the university, an office which he administered in a more practical manner than Fichte had done. Hegel died with the

cholera, November 14, 1831, the day also of Leibnitz's death. He rests in the same churchyard with Solger and Fichte, near by the latter, and not far from the former. His writings and lectures form seventeen volumes, which have appeared since 1832: Vol I. Minor Articles; II. Phenomenology; III–V. Logic; VI–VII. Encyclopædia; VIII. Philosophy of Rights; IX. Philosophy of History; X. Æsthetics; XI–XII. Philosophy of Religion; XIII–XV. History of Philosophy; XVI–XVII. Miscellaneous. His life has been written by Rosenkranz.[1]

Hegel rejected the Intellectual Intuition of the Philosophy of Nature, and studied to make philosophy an intelligible science and knowledge by means of dialectics. He called philosophy the Science of Reason, because it is the idea and consciousness of all *Esse* in its necessary development. It is his principle to include all particular principles in it. Now as the Idea is reason identical with itself, and as, in order to be cognizant of itself, or in other words, as, in order to be self-existing (*für sich seyn*), it places itself in opposition to itself, so as to appear something else, without, however, ceasing to be one and the same thing; in this case Philosophy becomes divided: 1st. Into Logic considered as the science of the Idea in and for itself. 2d. Into the Philosophy of Nature considered as the science of the Idea, representing itself externally (Reason thrown out in Nature). 3d. Its third division is that of the Philosophy of Mind, expressing the return of the Idea within itself, after having thrown itself without externally. All Logic, according to Hegel, presents three momentums: 1. The abstract or intelligible momentum, which seizes the object in its most distinct and determinate features, and distinguishes it with precision. 2. The dialectic or negative rational momentum, consists in the annihilation of the determinations of objects, and their transition to the opposite determinations. 3. The speculative momentum perceives the unity of the determinations in their opposition. Such is the method which philosophy ought to follow, and which is frequently styled by

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[1] This summary of Hegel's life is from Schwegler.—*Ed.*

Hegel the immanent movement, the spontaneous development of the conception. Logic is essentially Speculative Philosophy, because it considers the determinations of thought in and for itself, consequently of concrete and pure thoughts, or in other words, the conceptions, with the significations of the self-subsisting foundation of all. The primary element of Logic consists in the oneness of the subjective and objective; this oneness is the absolute science to which the mind rises as to its absolute truth, and is found in the truth, that *pure Esse is pure conception in itself; and that pure conception alone is true Esse.* The absolute idealism of Hegel has considerable affinity with Schelling's doctrine of Identity on this point, but it shows a complete departure from it in the method. With Hegel, Logic usurps the place of what had been previously styled Metaphysics and Critique of pure Reason.

The first, and perhaps the most suggestive, of Hegel's works, his Phenomenology of the Mind, contains a history of the progressive development of the Consciousness. Instinctive or common knowledge only regards the object, without considering itself. But the Consciousness contains, besides the former, also a perception of itself, and embraces, according to Hegel, three stages in its progress—Consciousness, Self-consciousness, and Reason. The first represents the Object standing in opposition to the *Ego*, the second the *Ego* itself, and the third, accidents attaching to the *Ego*, i. e., Thoughts. This phenomenology constituted at first a sort of introduction to pure science, whereas later it came to form a part of his doctrine of the mind. Pure Science or Logic is divided, 1st, into the Logic of *Esse* or being (*das Seyn*); 2d, into the Logic of qualified nature (*das Wesen*); 3d, into Logic of the conception or of the idea. The two first constitute the objective logic; and the last division the subjective logic, containing the substance of vulgar logic. Hegel treated as fully of the philosophy of right and of art, as of the metaphysical part of his system. According to his view, the *essential* in man is Thought; but thought is not a general abstraction, opposed to the particular abstraction; on the contrary, it embraces the particular within

itself (concrete generality). Thought does not remain merely internal and subjective, but it determines and renders itself objective through the medium of the will (practical mind). To will and to know are two inseparable things; and the free-will of man consists in the faculty of appropriating and of rendering the objective world his own, and also in obeying the innate laws of the universe, because he wills it. Hegel places the existence of right in the fact that every existence in general is the existence of a free-will. Right is usually confounded with morality, or with duty placed in opposition to inclination. There exists, however, a higher morality raised above this, which bids us act according to truly rational ends, and which ought to constitute the true nature of man. We find the objective development of this higher morality in the Stateand in History.

As regards the connection existing between thought and reality, Hegel has laid down this memorable proposition: *That which is rational is real, and that which is real is rational* (there is no empty abstract vacuum beyond). It is important here to distinguish, in the temporary and transitory appearance, the substance that is immanent, and the eternity which is present. Hegel proceeds to make an application of this idea to political science, by attempting to grasp and represent the state as a rational whole, instead of constructing a new one. He develops his method with great sagacity, but the form in which he dresses it is so arid and dry, that it is extremely difficult to understand. Such are the leading features of Hegel's system, which exerted for a considerable time an almost sovereign sway over the philosophical public in Germany, and which, in a modified form, may still be regarded as the orthodox metaphysics of modern Germany, notwithstanding the numerous and vigorous attempts that have been made to supersede it.[1]

The Hegelian School.

II. Soon after Hegel commenced the publication of *The Journal for Scientific Criticism* (1817), the Hegelian philoso-

[1] For a much fuller account of Hegel's Philosophy, see Schwegler.—*Ed*

phy began to show its power. This magazine was at first exclusively devoted to the external propagation of Hegelianism, and it added daily to the number of proselytes. Subsequently to Hegel's death its spirit became more tolerant, and suffered departures from the strict letter of the master, until it sank gradually to an ordinary review, and died a natural death, in 1847, from want of sympathy in the public. Immediately after the death of Hegel, his orthodox school of followers effected the publication of all his works, an undertaking which he himself had desired. Among these may be enumerated his Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, of Nature, and of History, and also his Lectures on the History of Philosophy. The editors of his various works were *Marheineke*, *Johann Schulze*, *Gans*, *Von Henning*, *Hotho*, *Förster*, and *Michelet;* to these must be added *Rosenkranz*, who appeared at a later date as the biographer of Hegel.[1]

Hegel had enounced the proposition: that a party can only maintain its supremacy by separating into two parties, for which reason the division that arises in a party, though apparently a misfortune, is in reality an advantage. This principle was exemplified in the Hegelian school, where disputes arose concerning the Person of God, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Person of Christ, which terminated in the division of the great school into two camps. *Daumer*, *Weisse*, *Göschel*, *Rosenkranz*, *Schaller*, and others, attempted to connect the theistic idea of God with the common notion of the Divinity contained in the Hegelian philosophy, and to prove the former from the latter; while *Blasche*, *Michelet*, *Strauss*, and others, maintained that the pantheistic idea of God was the only true result of the Hegelian principle, and represented God as the universal substance or the Eternal Universe, which becomes first absolutely conscious of itself in humanity. *Göschel*, *Heinrichs*, *Rosenkranz*, *Schaller*, and others, attempted moreover to justify the ecclesiastical idea of Christ, as specifically the only

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[1] G. W. F. Hegel's Werke, durch einer Verein von Freunden des verewigten, etc.; 18 vols. 8vo: Berlin, 1834–45

God-Man, on philosophical grounds; whereas *Blasche*, *Conradi*, *Michelet*, *Strauss*, and others, maintained that the unity of the Divinity and of Humanity was not realized in one individual, but in the whole of humanity, so that the latter in reality is the God-Man. Finally, *Göschel*, the younger *Fichte*, *Weisse*, and others, sought to demonstrate the idea of a personal immortality from the Hegelian philosophy, while *Blasche*, *Conradi*, *Daumer*, *Michelet*, and others, understand the idea of immortality as the eternally present quality of the spirit, and maintained that the eternity of the spirit as such, consisted in the extinction of the individual.

For the rest, the influence of the Hegelian philosophy has extended to all the sciences, since they have all been reconstructed from the basis of that philosophy, and in some degree have been completely reformed and changed by it, notwithstanding the great resistance it encountered in a one-sided Empiricism and the prejudices of custom. While the orthodox adherents of Hegel, the so-called Old Hegelians, or Hegelians *of the right*, flocked around the "Journal for Philosophy and speculative Theology," founded by the younger Fichte, in 1837, the review entitled the "Halle Journal for German Science and Art," founded in 1838, by Ruge and Eschenmayer, became the organ of the Young Hegelian school. This journal was conducted by Ruge alone, since 1840, under the title of the "German Journal for Science and Art," and became the advocate of the religious and political reforms proposed by the New Hegelian party, developing latterly so radical a tendency that it became obnoxious to the government about 1843, and was suppressed by the interference of the police. The "Journal of the Present," edited at Tübingen, by Schwegler, since 1843, as well as the "Journal of speculative Philosophy," edited by Noack, at Worms, since 1846, perished together with Fichte's periodical in the political troubles of 1848, after the two former journals had defended the cause of free science against every dogmatically stationary system of German spiritual life, with virile power and enthusiasm.

Strauss and Feuerbach.

III. The influence of the Hegelian philosophy has been especially felt in theology; and among those who particularly labored in this province we may notice *Daub*, at Heidelberg; *Marheineke*, at Berlin; *Rosenkranz*, at Königsberg; *Conradi*, at Derheim (in Rhenish Hesse); *Erdmann*, at Halle; *Vatke*, at Berlin; *Zeller*, at Tübingen; and others who more or less contributed in giving this coloring to the contemporary theology of Protestant Germany. At length there appeared, in 1837, a pupil and countryman of Hegel, *David Frederic Strauss*,[1] who sought to emancipate the genuine kernel of Hegel's religious doctrine from all foreign elements and orthodox additions. It was with this view that he published, first his "Critique of the Gospel History," and afterwards his "Dogmatik," in which he attempted to develop what he represented as the true spirit of the Hegelian philosophy, and to stand forth as a true and genuine Hegelian himself. It was *Louis Feuerbach*,[2] however, who carried the consequences of Hegel's position to their ultimate results; but in doing so, he has exceeded the very position which he himself at first assumed, when he was led to make the statement that the being of man

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[1] D. F. Strauss, Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet, 4th edit. 8vo, *Tübing.* 1840. Leichtfassliche Bearbeitung desselben, 8vo, *Winterthur*, 1843. Streitschriften zur Vertheidigung meiner Schrift, über das Leben Jesu, 8vo, *Tübingen*, 1837. Die Christliche Glaubenslehre, in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwickelung, und im Kampf mit der modernen Wissenschaft, 2 vols. 8vo, *Tübingen*, 1840. Charakteristiken und Kritiken, 8vo, 1844. Zwei friedliche Blätter. Der Romantiker auf dem Throne der Cæsars; oder, Julian der Abtrünnige, 8vo, *Mannheim*, 1848. Der politische und der theologische Liberalismus, 8vo, *Halle*, 1848. Sechs theolog. politische Volksreden, 8vo, 1848.

[2] L. Feuerbach's Sämmtliche Werke, vols. i.–vii. 8vo, 1846–49. Vol. i. Erläuterungen zum Wesen des Christenthums. Vol. ii. Philosophische Kritiken und Grundsätze. Vol. iii. Gedanken über Tod und Unsterblichkeit. Vol. iv. Geschichte der philosophie von Bacon bis Spinoza. Vol. v. Darstellung und Kritik der Leibnitzschen Philosophie. Vol. vi. Pierre Bayle. Vol. vii. Das Wesen des Christenthums. Das Wesen der Religion, 2d edit. 8vo, *Leipsic*, 1849. Das Wesen des Glaubens im Sinne Luther's, 8vo, 1844. See also, J. P. Lange's Kritische Beleuchtung von L Feuerbach's Wesen des Christenthums, 12mo, *Heidelberg*, 1850.

is the highest object of philosophy, and that all speculation is mere vanity, which attempts to transcend nature and humanity. He has introduced this view into the province of religion, in his "Nature of Christianity" (1841), and has represented religion as the relation of man to himself—to his own being. At the same time, he describes this relation to his own being as if it were to another being, inasmuch as man can reduplicate his personality, and represent himself as God. The only true and genuine province of religion, regarded from the ground of Feuerbach's theory, is the being of humanity: man has his highest being—his God in himself—in his very nature, or rather in that of his race. The Atonement, which is the general tendency of religion, is in reality a natural atonement; another man is from his very position the mediator between my own individuality and the holy idea of the race. Whosoever rises to the love of the race, he is a *Christ*,—nay, he is Christ himself; immediately that the consciousness of the race, as a race, arises in you, the ecclesiastical Christ disappears, without our losing his real being on that account. Thus, in Feuerbach's eyes, man and nature, which belongs to the complete and true being of man, are the real sum and substance of religion. We are indebted to *Rüge* for having more accurately explained and more elaborately developed this religion of humanity: this writer has ably unveiled this phase of modern religion in his treatise entitled "The Religion of our Times."

Schopenhauer, Reiff, and Planck.

IV. The present tendencies of philosophy in Germany have struck out branches in two directions. They belong either partially to the school of Herbart[1] and Krause, or have out-

[1] "John Frederic Herbart, born at Oldenburg, professor at Königsberg, and particularly excited by Fichte, has developed peculiar opinions opposed to the greater part of the existing systems, and which he has succinctly consigned to posterity in several treatises under a polemical form. He wishes philosophy to abandon the psychological direction which has been erroneously praised in modern times. According to him, to attempt to

grown the orthodox Hegelian principle, from which they have departed, either by following up this principle in all its theoretical and practical consequences and applying it as a critique to all objects presented to it, or by giving Hegelianism a leaning to Schelling's last position, and cramping Hegel's position into a union with historical Christianity, thus bringing about a Christianized Hegelianism. No really fruitful advance of philosophy to a higher platform can be traced in these groping efforts.

The entire development of philosophy in Germany, beginning with Kant and closing with Hegel, revolves and resides in the idea of the Consciousness. Kant had said, "Our cogni-

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measure the limits of the faculty of cognition, and to criticise metaphysics, is to have the strange illusion of thinking that the faculty of cognition is more easy to understand than the object itself with which metaphysics concerns itself: this illusion is so much the greater, since all the conceptions by means of which we represent to ourselves the faculty of cognition, proceed from a metaphysical source. The psychological premises on which the criticism is based are for the most part obtained surreptitiously. Philosophy is an elaboration of conceptions, called forth by the collection of observations relating to these same conceptions. Its method is the *method of relations;* that is to say, a method that consists in seeking for the ideas necessary to complete an order of thoughts: it starts from the supposition of contradictions in a given object—contradictions that push you on to a higher degree in thought. The elaboration of conceptions consists sometimes in their elucidation and explication; hence logic freed from all psychological mixture: at other times, it consists in cutting off, in connecting, and completing—hence metaphysics; when the author sometimes returns to the doctrine of the Eleatæ. Psychology, Natural Philosophy, and Religious Philosophy, are in his eyes parts of applied metaphysics. The science of ideas, united to a judgment competent to approve or condemn, is Æsthetics, which, applied to a given object, is distributed in a series of doctrines, among which that which bears the character of necessity, has received the name of the doctrine of duties and of virtue (Practical Philosophy). In these different parties, the author develops views that are peculiar to him, and which evidence a great sagacity, but which often become obscure on account of their brevity, and require meditation; as for instance, his theory of the destruction and preservation of Natures, in his speculative psychology founded on mathematics, and his theory of representations considered as forces. It is proper to notice his criticism of the principles at present dominant in psychology, his critique of Kant's doctrine of free-will, and his own determinative or necessarian doctrine (in the sense of Leibnitz) on the same subject."—(Tennemann, *Manual of Philosophy*, pp. 462 463.)—*Ed.*

tion is on the one hand limited by Sensuousness, *i. e.*, by the perception of something objective and real without us, which presents us with the raw material for cognition to work upon. On the other hand, it is limited by the forms of Consciousness originally indwelling in our mind; while the very material of thought, presented to us through the Senses, is not a thing in itself, or reality as such, but only the same reflected in the mirror of our Consciousness." Fichte likewise pronounced this thing in itself as a subjective, though at the same time a necessary stage of our thinking; or, in his language, as the *Not-I* thrown out by the *I* (*Ego*) or thinking process, previous to all Consciousness.

Schelling led back the problem to the question, how the Objective without us could become a Subjective within us; or how the Real could become the Ideal, that is, the thing known? He grasped the Absolute as the original union of Thought and Being (*Denken und Seyn*), of Consciousness and Existence, which absolute Identity he endeavored to place in a process of Self-development and Self-realization. Hegel completed this attempt of a real system of the Self-development of the Absolute in the dialectics of thinking, which should at the same time contain all Being (*Seyn*) in itself. The principle of the Hegelian philosophy is Thought (*das Denken*), which thinks in the form of the Conception, or according to dialectics, and which thus, as a rational Thinking (*Denken*), generates the whole contents of knowledge from itself, and develops it in a systematic form as Science. This thinking of the philosopher is at the same time absolute Thinking, in so far as it has become raised in man, by the process of its phenomenological development, to its truth, *i. e.*, to the consciousness of the identity of its Being with that of the Absolute. The philosopher's thought is moreover proved to be absolute Thought by reproducing this process in the Individual, and by rising to the Self-Consciousness of the Absolute.

It was undoubtedly a merit in Hegel to have modelled perspicuously and distinctly, into a perfectly fashioned system, this idea of philosophy, as a development of thought in the form

of a necessity in thinking, and of systematic dependence. Yet we find in Hegel the want of a real demonstration that Being and Thinking, Existence and Consciousness, are really identical. Their identity was only maintained, but never proved, by Hegel. The Hegelian system, instead of really reconciling Being and Thinking, the real and the ideal, and developing this reconciliation as a system, is nothing more than the repetition of a one-sided idealism. According to it the real itself must be thought, and the development of the world must be represented as that of thought; that is to say, all *Esse* or Being, all Reality, is resolved into Consciousness. Thus the Consciousness is grasped as the principle of philosophy, and the movement of the world is attached to the development of Consciousness from the shadowy dream of instinctive life up to the noon-day height of self-conscious Thought.

Notwithstanding the sublime and imposing character of this spiritual Idealism, it shows itself to be one-sided, and incapable of completely and solidly penetrating the reality of the universe; and there are still shadowy and obscure remains and relics in the development of the Consciousness which do not appear in Hegel's idealism. An attempt has been lately made in opposition to it, of elevating the Will instead of Consciousness to be the principle of philosophy, and of regarding the development of Will instead of that of the Consciousness, as the Nature (*Wesen*) and Soul of the Universe. The adherents of the latter view have endeavored to introduce this principle into all the sciences, representing the Will as the fundamental substratum (*Grund-wesen*) of the Universe, which develops itself on the different platforms of Nature, Spirit, and History. The thinker who first struck out into this new path, thereby pioneering the future road for philosophy, was *Arthur Schopenhauer*. He was born at Dantzic about 1790, and is the son of the banker named Schopenhauer, and of the celebrated authoress, Johanna Schopenhauer, whose maiden name was Trosina. This lady resided, after the death of her husband, in 1806, first at Weimar, and afterwards at Frankfort and Jena, where she died in 1838. The son, who was a countryman of Kant, and

had attended Fichte's lectures, has published several works at Berlin, since 1813, among which a book entitled "The World regarded as Will and Conception" (1818) displayed the genius of an original thinker. Founding his system on the thought that the act of Will from which the world has arisen, is our own, Schopenhauer sought to build up his philosophy, without having actually completed it as a system of real Idealism, which should fulfil the object that he proposed, namely, that of concentrating the reality of all Existence and the root of universal Nature in the Will, and of showing the latter to be the heart and focus of the world.

Starting from the critique of the Hegelian system, *Reiff* of Tübingen has based upon Schopenhauer's foundation a new system, which converts the Nature (*Wesen*) of the *Ego*, or the pure *Ego*, into the principle of philosophy; and elevates the System of the Will's tendencies or phases (*Willensbestimmungen*) to the rank of the fundamental Science of Philosophy.

The System of the Will's phases, according to Reiff, contains the development of the world: those elements which are intimately associated with every one's Consciousness, and which constitute his inmost being, his strength and his weakness, his weal and his woe, are world-creating and world-moving forces. These are not to be sought for above; we have only to look within in order to find them. A young countryman of Reiff's, named *Planck*, has become associated with him and his views, at Tübingen, and has endeavored, in his work entitled "The Age"[1] (2 vols. 1850-51), to erect the reconciliation of Idealism and Realism, begun by Reiff, into a complete system of Real-Idealism. However, these new efforts of philosophy belong to the present, and have not yet passed into history. It is sufficient for us to have discovered from the preceding sketch that the present position of philosophy in Germany is that which converts the Will, instead of the Consciousness, into the abso-

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[1] K. Ch. Planck, Die Weltalter. Vol. i. System des reinen Idealismus, 1850. Vol. ii. Das Reich des Idealismus, 1851. Die Genesis des Judenthums, 8vo, 1843.

lute productive principle of the world, and which regards all reality in nature, spirit, and history, as a manifestation of Will. It is the present object of the philosophical mind to pave the way to a new era by the introduction of this principle (whose first proposition is the following: *I will; therefore I am*): *The oneness of thinking and being is the Will.* The adherents of this new school anticipate that the future philosophy of Germany, by becoming the Metaphysics of the Will, will attain the crown and summit of human wisdom.

Other Recent Systems.

V. Besides the authors specified in the last section, we must briefly signalize among the recent German systematic essays contemporary and subsequent to Hegel, the "Architectonic" of *Fred. Christoph. Weise*, professor at Heidelberg; the essays of *William Kern*, of *John, Baron Sinclair*, of *Charles Louis Vorpahl*, who maintains that Being is derived from Birth. We have also to notice the doctrine of Identity modified by *Adalbert Kayssler*, professor at Breslau, deceased in 1822; considerations on man, resembling in some degree the ideas of Jacobi and of Schelling, by *David Theod. Aug. Suabedissen*, professor at Marburg; the popular observations of *C. F. G. Grävel* and *F. Linkmaier*; the interesting sketches of *Berger*, which approach in some measure the ideas of Hegel; and the principles of a philosophy of nature, by *Tieftrunck*. One of the most remarkable of the later German metaphysicians is *Fred. Edward Beneke*, who approximates the Scotch school in many of his views, being a decided realist, and endeavoring to arrive at ontological results through the medium of psychological analysis. To the above writers we must add *Herm. Wil. Ern. de Keyserlingk*, privat-docent at Berlin, who published a system of perceptive (*Anschauung's*) philosophy; besides numerous other authors, who have contributed to the advancement of special branches of philosophy by different publications. Among these must be classed *Gottlob Will. Gerlach*, professor at Halle; *H. C. W. Sigwart*, professor at Tübingen; *Joseph Hilldebrand*, professor at Giessen, and previously at

Heidelberg. The theological discussions which have lately occurred, on the connection between Reason and Revelation, and between the Free-will of man and Divine Grace, have not been devoid of interest in a philosophical point of view; and some have imagined that they could solve these problems by means of mysticism. A tendency has quite recently appeared among the German philosophers towards a psychological and anthropological direction, in preference to pure speculation. Several writers of eminence have combined this psychological tendency with works on the history of philosophy, such as *Brandis*, *Ritter*, *Reinhold*, *jun.*, etc.; while the diversity and conflict of speculative opinions naturally and necessarily led the mind to a more searching examination of the different positions taken up during various epochs in the development of the science. Before closing our sketch of the modern German school of philosophy, we have still to notice another of its phases, which has been quite recently developed, chiefly through the influence of *Will. von Humboldt.*[1] We allude to the attempt to bring philology to bear upon philosophy, and to explain many of its problems from the structure of language. This view has met with considerable success and able advocates, and has combated with some advantage the Hegelian doctrine, which is naturally regarded by the adherents of the science of Languages as a play of words (*Wortenspiel*). The last best work on the dispute between Hegelianism and this new school of philological philosophy, is a book of *H. Steinthal*, entitled "Die Sprachwissenchaft W. von Humboldt's und die Hegel'sche Philosophie," 8vo, Berlin, 1848.

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[1] Born at Berlin in 1767, died 1835.

APPENDIX C.

Recent German Theology.[1]

Although the keen interest which followed the course of German speculation down to Hegel in metaphysics, and Strauss and Baur in criticism, has partly abated, Germany is still the land most rich in erudition, and most fertile in speculation,—still the mother of all things new and strange in the domain of Theology. It is true that the creative period seems to have passed by; that—if we except the constructive criticism of the later Tübingen school—self-confident energy, and the audacious hope of intellectual youth, are replaced by a microscopic criticism, an erudition painfully minute, a groping and searching in the plane of religious speculation, that turns in the same circle, and perpetually recoils upon itself. As political problems are given to England to work out painfully, and social ones to France, so to Germany it seems committed to exhaust every vein of abstract thinking and erudition, to run the round of every possible hypothesis, to test and eliminate the errors of all half-way systems, and by a *reductio ad absurdum* leave the right way to be taken at last by those not wearied with following the truth through all its doublings and windings. If a feeling like sadness comes upon us at seeing the weariness and chaos that appear to occupy the field of that earnest and high debate,—if we are amazed to behold a new-school metaphysics plunging rampant into Atheism, and a hyper-Lutheranism toppling over into a mongrel Romanism,—if a host of obscure

[1] We are indebted for this fine summary, to the *Christian Examiner*, No. cciv, November 7th, 1857, p. 431, *et sequens.*—*Ed.*

names and petty controversies occupy the ground where Lessing and Herder, Fichte and Schleiermacher, De Wette and Neander, have waged their high controversy with error or unbelief,—still a little attention will show that good service is rendered us by the present generation also. And we are indebted to any one who will help to clear up the confusion, and arrange the new party men and names in their true bearings.

The general results of the last thirty or forty years we cannot better describe than in the following paragraph, taken from a recent number of the Westminster Review:

"The critical theology has become conscious of its own mission. From a blind instinct of aimless inquiry, from the eager ebullition of youthful curiosity which would question every thing, it has matured into a habit of careful research, governed by a conscientious spirit, and armed with all the resources of knowledge, direct and collateral. If, indeed, its early enthusiasm has abated, this is inevitable. All fertile periods of speculative agitation, such as that which Germany has just gone through, are only possible because they are stimulated by hopes too sanguine to be realized. After a time the human mind is brought to, in its most adventurous flights, by the bounds which it cannot pass. It recognizes, when 'roused by the shock which drives it back, the wall of adamant which bounds inquiry.' It lowers its pretensions, but at the same time consolidates its efforts. In this stage is German theological endeavor. Never was speculation less wild or capricious. Its every movement has to be made under the surveillance of the most vigilant criticism. Its own intense consciousness of the laws of logical method checks it at every turn. The enormous wealth of applicable learning which it has accumulated hampers its operations. It can no longer be ingenious or inventive, but is under the imperious necessity of being just. It may smile at the crude conjectures of its young rationalist days, but it must be with a mixture of regret for the freedom and elasticity with which it then sallied forth for the conquest of the world."

In our survey we shall follow the method, and wherever we

can, the language of Schwarz, whose volume[1] is the most recent on the subject, and for our purpose the best.

It is a work generous and liberal in spirit, apparently free from party bias. Sympathizing most nearly with the middle, or "reconciliation" school of theologians, of whom Bunsen is the noblest representative, rather than with either extreme section, yet with a clear exposition, and frank acknowledgement of the service rendered by the most unsparing critics. It covers, professedly, the period of twenty years,—from 1835, when the work of Strauss brought to a head the critical ferment of German erudition,—in fact, a little more. The "Leben Jesu" was a true "epoch-making" book. The epoch which it led was "not creative, but revolutionary,"—an anticipation, by some dozen years, of the political storm of 1848. Up to 1835, we find the two old-fashioned parties, Rationalist and Supernaturalist, about equally one-sided and superficial: now they are brushed aside by a current of deeper speculation, and a breeze of sharper historic criticism. Hitherto, all manner of hybrid and transitional theologies. Rationalism has grown sterile and effete, resting on barren erudition, blind to the mystic or poetic side of the Scripture it professes to expound,—"lacking in religious sense, speculative sense, and historical sense." The Idealism in vogue fifty years ago becomes abstract and fantastic—drifting vaguely through romantic dreams of the Middle Age, through mysticism and fable, towards a spurious Catholicity, a high-church "positivity." The real religion of the time sprang from the inspirations of patriotism, and was born in the war of German independence. A self-sacrificing conviction, a faith unto death, whatever its source, is religion. The regeneration of Germany came with the shock that struck from the popular heart the spark of liberty.

Hegel and Schleiermacher—two men whose influence on the development of thought has been, perhaps, exceeded by none

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[1] Zur Geschichte der neuesten Theologie. (An Essay towards the History of the Newest Theology.) Von Karl Schwarz. Leipzig: 1856. 12mo, pp. 437.

in the present century—are the two eminent leaders in the period that now ensued. All the more recent German schools either date immediately from them, or at least have been most powerfully affected, whether as disciples or opponents, by the movement in which they bore the leading share.

It was when the government was trying to extinguish all embers of the revolutionary spirit, that *Hegel* appeared at Berlin, in 1818. His system of abstract necessity set itself against all abstract ideality. His maxim of "the self-development from substance to subject," practically came to this: "Whatever is, is right." His disciples of one wing interpreted his speculative theory into old-fashioned orthodoxy. His "logical category they made an historic category;" his philosophical Absolute was realized to them in Jesus of Nazareth,—a translation which only hid the real drift of the original. A more dangerous tendency set in the direction towards mere nihilism and unbelief. The phrases of the master are taken out of their place in a comprehensive and fertile system, and made mere handles to an opponent, or catchwords of a sect. In Hegelism, so read, "events are brought to pass by ghastly Universals; it is a philosophy of history, in which history stains the purity of philosophy, and philosophy drains away the blood from history." The Christian ethics of freedom disappear. There is no germ of personality. "Persons are only masks; humanity is a mosaic, not an organism." "The absolute is not that which *creates*, but that which *comes to pass*." Idealism in this shape is but one step removed from French Positivism,—a step which the later disciples of Hegel were not slow to take. Feuerbach marks the easy transition from Pantheism to Anthropology,—from All-God to No-God. Metaphysics takes the sudden plunge from Conservative Orthodoxy to Atheistic Nihilism.

The great name of *Schleiermacher* represents, thirty years ago, the nobler phase of a sincere intellectual piety. The waste waters of "Romanticism" he led to irrigate the dry soil of an abstract theology. Starting in his youth with a sort of pantheistic mysticism, his nature ripened into an intellectual

breadth and richness, and a "Moravian" fervor of piety, that make him the finest type of that "religion for the cultivated classes" which it was eminently his task to expound. His chief service was to define the "essence of Religion" in the life, and turn over, without fear, to history, cosmology, and metaphysics, whatever belongs not essentially to that. But his followers struck presently into opposite directions; on the one hand, seeking reconciliation with the existing beliefs and tendencies, and so bridging the way to the present "Confessionalism,"—little as they like it or are thanked for it; and on the other diverging as far as to Baur and Strauss, "whom the schools of Hegel and Schleiermacher beat to and fro between them, like a shuttlecock," each anxious to shun the questionable fame of the arch-heresy.

Following the orthodox tendency a little way, we meet some of the more familiar and honored names of the later theolgy. *Neander* was "last of the Fathers, a Protestant monk and saint." His mild, indeterminate method did much to call out the sharp and positive "Confessionalism." His Church History is rather a history of piety than of the church. His followers are fitly enough termed "pectoralists," or heart-Christians. His generous and tender spirit was the most formidable antagonist to the new Prussian orthodoxy.

Passing over names less important in this direction, we come presently to *Hengstenberg*. He seeks something more definite and clear than Schleiermacher, something after the elder type of Lutheranism. In him, pietism and orthodoxy "came not in penitential rags, but in fashionable apparel." Like the Jesuits, he teaches unpalatable doctrine in modern phrases. He deifies the Canon; proscribes all historical criticism; offers the sharp alternative, "Give up all or nothing." Hengstenberg is at the head of the state theology,—the "Union" party in religion, which rested on the secular arm as the defence against a too rationalistic clergy till 1848, since when it has equal dread of the laity. Till then a terror, it has since become a bore. It was an inquisition to put down heresy and neology, resting after all on a superficial knowledge of the two great

masters, Schleiermacher and Hegel. Weakly dilettante in *Stahl* ("the foremost sophist of them all"), loosely eclectic in *Göschel* (who defines his position from the data of Goethe, Hegel, and the Bible), resisted by the more liberal temper of *Neander* and *Steudel*, this new papacy subsisted on the confutation of heresy; its golden time was when such names as Strauss and Feuerbach made the object of its assault.

Looking now at the genuine movement which dates from 1835, we find that it has two sides,—Historical Criticism and Speculative Dogma,—which it will be convenient to consider separately.

In *Strauss* we find summed up the net results of a century of criticism. His "perfection of form," his "placid objectivity," were the source of his imposing and terrifying effect. He "hates the affectation of a pious and doleful tone in criticism. For science, there is no *holy*, but only the *true*." His task was mostly negative,—to expose the fallacy of the old-style rationalism (which attempted in good faith to interpret the Gospel as a narrative of mere natural events), and to carry to its length the mythical theory, already popular in explaining many portions of the Bible. Strauss was the "alarm-drum," which roused the forces to the great theological battle,—"a brave building without foundations;" he criticises the history as a whole without a previous investigation of its parts, and draws no clear boundary between what is mythic and historical.

The real strength of Strauss is shown both in the multitude and in the weakness and vacillation of his opponents. *Tholuck* belongs to all schools; he is pietistic, but not poor in spirit; anti-rationalist, but, like the English apologists, imbibes the poison of the heresy he confutes; annihilates the idea of miracle in defining it; and criticises Strauss to good purpose only on the weakest side, the question of genuineness. *Neander's* criticism is compromising and capricious,—a dissolving process, timidly and half-way followed, upon the miraculous narrative. *Ullmann*, the mildest and clearest opponent, admits the mythical and legendary along with the historical; plants himself on St. Paul's faith in the resurrection; puts the

question, Did Christ make the Church, or the Church make Christ? (to which Strauss answers, "Both,") and asserts that as in art, so in the divine life, there must must be a living human realization of the type. Among the right-wing Hegelians, *Göschel* asserts that Christ was the ideal of humanity, actualized,—a "whimsical realism, as of the theorist who would taste only ideal fruit;" *Dorner*, backed by cabalistic studies and theories of the Adam-Kadmon, claims for him a "*universal* personality;" *Schaller* and *Rosenkranz* maintain that the historic Christ was the "complete" or all-sided man. Of those who have replied in detail to the critical theories of Strauss, *Weisse* maintains that Mark was the original Gospel; holds that the narrative portion of John is not genuine; lays stress on the works of healing (which he refers to something akin to a magnetic force, growing sensibly feebler towards the close), while admitting myth or allegory in other parts of the miraculous narrative. *Schweizer* excepts to various portions of the fourth Gospel,—whether as of Galilean origin, or "magical" in style. *Ebrard* frames a capricious "apology,"—admitting no difference of great or small in the miraculous, and conceding that the Gospels are no way "protocols, or consecutive narrations." *Bruno Bauer* is the most extraordinary of these champions. By one leap he passed from the extreme right to the extreme left of the school of Hegel. His fanaticism for "truth" amounts to bluster; the leaven of the time ferments in him until it fairly explodes. "A kind of Faust," through philosophic abstraction he loses all capacity of truth. His great service, in his own eyes, is to refute the apology of Strauss for the Gospel narrative!—which he holds to be mere extravagance and contradiction. The fourth Gospel, he considers, was written in Edessa, about A. D. 130, by some disciple of the school of Andrew.

Such is a sample of the German replies to Strauss. For any results of positive scientific value, we must look in another quarter, to the "New Tübingen School." Of the life and services of *Ferdinand Christian Baur*,—by some called "unquestionably the first of living theologians,"—we cannot speak as

we would in our present narrow space, reserving it for full treatment in a future number. His characteristic method is to treat the history of dogma as a process of logical development, while he makes it the gauge and test of literary criticism. "His doctrine of universals is a sort of logical etiquette." His weakness is, that he treats *doctrine* apart from *life*, though in a masterly way. The New Testament writings he investigates purely as an integral portion of the early Christian literature,—his original starting-place being the Epistles of Paul, as the earliest genuine documents of the faith. A school of remarkable ability has gathered about the master,—*Schwegler*, whose "Post-Apostolic Time" has the merits and faults of youthful arrogance; *Zeller*, whose "Acts" is the most finished work of the entire school; *Hilgenfeld*, "more analytic and less dogmatic than Baur," whose works cover both the synoptical Gospels and the apocryphal Clementines; *Ritschl*, whose "Old Catholic Church" is a "useful criticism on the extreme tendencies of the school;" and *Volkmar*, who calls in question the preference too often shown for the apocryphal over the canonical Gospels. The fundamental principle of this school is, that Christianity was a growth from the soil of Judaism; that early Christianity was equivalent to Jewish Christianity; that the opposition to Paul did not cease with the fall of Jerusalem, and not until the Catholic reconciliation became necessary, to resist the persecutions of paganism and the assaults of Gnosticism. Its critical analysis has been called "a compound microscope applied to the history of the first two centuries." It may have the exaggerations and defects, as well as the excellencies, of an instrument of such high power; but this cannot be gainsayed, that it has brought the facts of that period into a totally new light, and compelled a revolution in the method of their handling.

Opposition to this school has been shown chiefly in the form of juvenile essays, prize writings, etc. Of more important works are those of *Thiersch*, who by "psychological insight" attempts to distinguish a constructive period in the Church, the first century, from a conservative in the second; *Dorner*,

who avoids the discussion of the fourth Gospel, and the late appearance of the Logos doctrine; *Ewald*, who is excessively violent and arbitrary, "mechanically and anatomically," dissects the narrative into eight fantastically assorted parts, dissolves miracles into mist, which he asks you to accept, then condenses it back to fact which is neither good history nor fable, and tempts one constantly to ask whether it is mysticism or sophistry that misleads him; *Bleek*, who argues the genuineness of John's Gospel from its use among the Gnostics and all parties in the Church; *Reuss*, who holds to the genuineness of the lesser Epistles, and makes John less the expression of a doctrinal than of a mystic tendency; and *Hase*, who rather incoherently makes the Gospel an exposition of what is said in the Apocalypse from another point of view.

So far the historico-critical process. Looking next at the speculative-dogmatic, we find its impulse also given by Strauss, who in his "Dogmatik" speaks the "inexorable consciousness of the time." He attacks the fallacy with which some have solaced themselves, that the form of doctrine only is changed, while its substance remains the same,—the self-deception of metaphysical theologists. In this new work (published in 1841) we find the same calm and cold "objectivity," tracing the secular process of destruction which history makes known, to which all individual criticism or heresy is but "as a little rill to a mighty torrent." The fatal flaw in Strauss's mind is painfully evident,—his nihilistic tendency, his "hopeless-blasé" temper, so contrasted with the courageous energy of Lessing. His leading idea is the irreconcilable opposition between the ancient and modern view of the universe. Faith and science must tolerate each other,—but here he "recks not his own rede." Yet even Strauss is not thoroughly consistent. Theoretically a pantheist, an honest moral instinct keeps him oscillating between fatalism and free-will. The divine personality, he asserts, is not individual, but universal. In philosophic parlance, the "Absolute" is "substance becoming subject,"—not the primal principle, but the result.

Whatever vacillation may be in Strauss, we find none of it

in his followers. Feuerbach shows the passionate reaction against all metaphysics. He admits only the two spheres of concrete existence,—physical phenomena, and acts or states of the human mind. The Absolute has to him no objective reality at all. Whatever any being aspires to, is contained within itself. The divine attributes are but emotions of the mind, or attributes of humanity. The conception of race—humanity—takes the place of all religious or ideal contemplation. Yet even here is an approach to some sort of higher than mere materialistic belief, which draws on him the scorn of a hooting mob,—"*gamins* of philosophy,"—who pelt him with epithets, and call him theologist and hypocrite! A just retribution on him who "thought to fight a good fight with supernaturalism," and assailed Christianity with the ribaldry of old-school infidelity. One point of truth we find in him,—that human nature must have its rights fully recognized in religion; a "religion of humanity" only, but still in some sort a religion.

Then we find the new radical school of metaphysics, "Young Hegelism," which parades in the *Hallische Jahrbücher* its assault on all institutions and beliefs, and its empty phrases of "truth, freedom, equality, humanity, popular sovereignty," to the general terror of all parties. In *Ruge*, we observe the transition from quietism to rationalism, from old to young Hegelism. He is not a leader of the movement, but is drawn on by it. Always an idealist, he still clings to his "religion of freedom and humanity," though mixed with "slurs at nonsense and pedantry, and *blasé* sneers at all fine sentiment." This movement burlesques the Hegelian idealism; makes each step of progress "both necessary, and necessarily obliterated by the next;" and so sets itself in defiance to all that is before and after. *Bruno Bauer* displays the new and violent dogmatics of materialism; *Herwegh* its poetic, *Marr* and *Grün* its socialistic, and *Vogt* its scientific phase—"its dissatisfaction with all that is, its hollow phrases, and chaos of contradictions."

We should do injustice to the soberer thought of Germany, did we omit all notice of the "Reconciliation-theology," which seeks to heal this deep disorder. The name of *Ullmann* stands

first,—"centre of the centre," more essentially a reconciler even than Neander. In his very weakness, his pet phrases, it is touching to see how sincere is his reliance on his own prescription. In his smooth periods, his finished style, Schleiermacher's phrases come to us dissolved in mist: "Christianity not a doctrine, but a life;" "Christ developed in humanity;" "Christianity the religion of humanity, independent and original, yet strictly historical." "The person of Christ is alone a miracle," yet "not *schlechthin* supernatural." "Christianity is divine in essence, human in form; divine in origin, human in realization." But why Christianity in especial? is it not equally true of all life? or, if the divine and human are essentially opposed, why is the growth different from the germ? We are sensible here of a repugnance at bottom to the miraculous, which shrinks from denying it in terms. *Liebner* (Dogmatik, 1849) is of a nature at once mystic and sensuous, inconsistent and weak, and void of originality,—combining a strange patchwork doctrine of the Trinity with Schleiermacher's doctrine of Christ's human perfection. So in *Dorner's* doctrine of the "all-personality" of Christ as the primal man, of the Absolute as manifest in the totality of individuals, the "self-limitation" of the second person of the Trinity, and the "pan-Christism" which identifies the Logos with the divine principle in all men, we have expositions of the Church doctrine, which are only its destruction. Far richer is *Lange*,—his restless vigor playing with theories and half-thoughts, like a virtuoso who improvises on an instrument. Religion may be seen on the divine or human side, as revelation or native sense. Creation is the Divine necessity, the self-manifestation of God,—the God-man, the centre of all dogmatic systems. He opposes all arbitrary and formal theology. Miracle is the manifestation of the life-principle; it comes of a higher law of being; it is "the natural law of all natural laws." Revelation is a continued creation, etc. But this is but putting new wine in the old bottles of theology,—a toying with metaphysical sophistry, a reasoning from spiritual to physical miracle, where there is no connecting term. *Martensen* is a master of form, but has

no inward unity or independence; is more dependent on church dogma, which he seeks only to temper by philosophy. His doctrine is, that Will is manifest in the form of Law; miracle is the higher world-order; the universal Logos has but a higher potency in Christ. "Abstract Satanology" is one feature of his creed; and according to him the bread of the Eucharist feeds the resurrection-body. A more fearless and logical consistency marks *Rothe*, whose "Ethik," in depth, originality, and decision, is the finest since Schleiermacher. He believes in a Christian realism, a spirit-world, or objective realm of higher being; and looks for a new philosophy of nature, which shall subdue the grossness of materialism. He accepts the tendency of Protestantism, to merge the Church in the State; in the future the State and Church shall be one, —the "kingdom of God;" the true meaning of the State is, "the totality of moral ends;" but association shall be voluntary and free within it. His fundamental thought is the identity of religion and morality. He holds to a philosophic trinity; the necessity of creation; the correlation of God and the world, such that, without the one, the other could not be.

Such are some of the more marked phases of German speculation in these latter years. We have next to note the three parties which seek church-union: 1. (*Hengstenberg*, etc.) That which would establish an external rule of discipline, by state authority, after the Cabinet order of March, 1852,—a confederacy of Lutheran and Reformed; 2. (*Nitzsch*, *Müller*, *Lücke*, etc.) A doctrinal union, grounded on the acceptance of fundamental articles; 3. Anti-dogmatic, protesting against the authority of all dogmatic articles, represented by men of various schools (as *Ewald*, *Knobel*, *Bunsen*), who put to the religious sense and conscience of the time the broad question: "Shall Christianity go over to Barbarism, and Science to Infidelity?" We can only indicate the position of this admirable body of men, with whom the best hope of Continental Europe seems at present to repose. We speak not of their special opinions, for it is not on these they rest their appeal to the mind of Christendom; but on the more comprehensive aim,

expressed characteristically by Bunsen, as the translation of religion from Semitic to Japhetic forms—from mysticism and dogma into the conscience and life.

One other party remains to be named,—the Reactionists, the school of New-Lutheranism, the extreme opposite pole to Bruno Bauer and the radicals. With them, belief is the essential, piety the incidental. Hengstenberg is entirely outdone in his own domain, and regarded by these new apostles of orthodoxy as only a prophet of the past, one crying in the wilderness to a crooked and perverse generation. These New-Lutherans—*Kahnis*, *Kliefoth*, *Vilmar*, *Petri*, *Münchmeyer*, *Euen*—lead the way to a party of extremists, a high-church sect of Hyper-Lutherans (*Löhe*, *Delitsch*, *Leo*), who reproduce all the sacramentarian theories familiar to us through the "Oxford Tracts." It is a spurious and mongrel Romanism,—a caricature of mediæval Catholicity, to which it shows a constant disposition to assimilate. Why Leo, the historian of the Middle Age, does not openly join the communion whose part he takes in all questions,—even in the Albigensian crusade, and the ferocities of Alba,—is not quite clear. Probably he knows that, once within its pale, he should lose that Teutonic privilege of freedom, which he clings to in his wayward fashion. At heart he is more materialist than sacerdotalist; and is, after all, of nearer kin to Feuerbach than to the ultramontane Romanism he coquets withal.

THE END.