

German life, and already beginning to stir with the movement of modern trade and industry, no less than with the new ideas from France, he has given us some delightful pictures, while tracing the effect upon his boyhood, of the many sided aspects in which he beheld it. His precocity was something wonderful,—before he was ten years of age, we find him writing German, French, Italian, Latin and Greek.

In 1765, Goethe in his seventeenth year was sent to the university of Leipsic, to commence the study of jurisprudence. His history up to this period is one of the most delightful parts of the autobiography. It includes the first of his many love episodes, which, like all the others, terminated unhappily. Throughout his life, Goethe seems to have been very readily moved to love, but was never an intense lover. The objects of his admiration had more reason to boast of the delicacy of his susceptibility, than of the perseverance of his devotion; and the moralist will find it difficult to forgive the man who was so light to lend his heart, and so fearful to give his hand; who shrank from the golden clasp of legitimate marriage, as from a conventional shackle, which a great mind ought to avoid.

His student life at Leipsic is easily gotten over in the autobiography, but we have reason to believe that it was one of wild and reckless adventure. His youth and beauty, his high animal vigor, frank and candid manners, and above all, his budding and irrepressible genius, made him the delight of every circle. Jurisprudence had no charm for him; love and art drew him away from a study, which he never could bring himself to love.

Accordingly we find that at Leipsic, he produced the earliest specimen of his tendency to turn experience into song. This was an entire pastoral poem, or drama called the "Lovers Quarrels," followed by another of a more ambitious aim, to which he gave the name of the "Fellow Sinners."

All Goethe's works, as he himself has told us, are but fragments of the grand confession of his life. He does not cheat himself with pouring feigned sorrows into

feigning verse. His own life was uniformly the text from which he preached.

Goethe's stay in Leipsic extended to September, 1768, a period of nearly three years, when it was cut short by sickness, brought on by dissipation, mental unrest, and absurd endeavours to carry out Rousseau's preaching about returning to a state of nature. He returned to his father's home in Frankfort, a boy in years, but in experience a man. He was very unhappy in mind, uncertain of himself, and of his aims. His father, who had expected that he had been treading the beaten path, was greatly disappointed at the slender prospect of seeing him a distinguished jurist.

His tedious illness, which kept him at home nearly two years, in a kind of half invalid state, did not altogether prevent him from study. He devoted himself to researches in alchemy, which in those days still lingered among the sciences. Religion also arose into serious importance in his mind, chiefly through intercourse with a certain Fraulin Von Klettenburg, a very worthy lady, who was one of the Moravians or Hernaltters, and whose religious experience, under the name of "*Confessions of a fair Saint*," the poet long after engrafted rather unsymmetrically into one of his most characteristic works—*Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre*."

At length his health being effectually restored, it was thought that he might now renew his acquaintance with jurisprudence, and the university of Strasburg was selected for this purpose. He was now turned twenty, and his biographer Lewis, says, that a more magnificent youth never entered the Strasburg gates. "When he entered a restaurant, the people laid down their knives and forks to look at him. His features were large and liberally cut, as in the fine sweeping lines of Greek art. The brow, lofty and massive, from beneath which, shone large lustrous brown eyes, of marvellous beauty, their pupils being of almost unexampled size. In station, he was rather above the middle size, but, although not really tall, he had the aspect of a tall man, and is usually so described, because his presence was very imposing." But we cannot dwell upon the Strasburg period, which