

INTRODUCTION

THEODOR STORM — HIS LIFE AND WORK

Theodor Storm was born on the 14th of September, 1817, in Husum on the North Sea, one of the largest commercial towns of Schleswig. His father was a respected lawyer in easy circumstances; his mother was a woman of cheerful disposition, a lover of art as well as of nature. The boy was brought up under pious influences. While at school in his native town he became familiar with the great German authors, Lessing, Herder, Goethe, and Schiller. At the same time he had leisure and opportunity to listen to and imbibe the tales of servants and aged women; for in the Storm home were an elderly servant, a grandmother, and also a great-grandmother, who all entertained him with their stories of former times. Moreover, when not occupied with his school tasks he was wont to ramble through fields and neglected gardens or along the sea-shore, and to play in empty rooms and buildings. All of these things contributed not a little to the development of his imaginative powers, and provided motives for most of his later works, his mind being thereby well stored with romantic ideas and folklore and impressed with local climatic conditions and topography.

In the year 1835, while attending the Gymnasium or High School in Lübeck, he made the acquaintance of Emanuel Geibel and Ferdinand Röse. With Röse young Storm studied Goethe's *Faust* and the technic of poetry. In 1837 he pursued the study of law at the University of Kiel, as