

threatened to separate still further; to bring about a compromise between nature and spirit, necessity and freedom, mechanism and inner sense, scientific explanation of the phenomena of life and estimation of the values of life when considered in relation to feeling, between external possessions and inner needs: the task was to restore that unity which life itself had split up into contrasts. None was qualified to the same degree as Schiller to solve this problem because it was, at the same time, the problem of his own intellectual self-realization, of his own nature as man and artist, because the answer came to him from his own personal experience. "As born dramatist in whom the feeling for opposition is naturally more intense than in other men," he felt, even in youth, with especial keenness, all the contrasts which force themselves on thought, all the contradictions of life which can torment a passionate heart. His critical intellect, prone to analysis, made essay of its strength on the most difficult and most universal problems of philosophy. As a young student of medicine he sees the world cleft into two great provinces, mind and matter; powerful forces—he feels this deeply—strive for the possession of the human soul. But his vigorous affirmation of life will not allow any wavering between such contrasts; the great longing of the artist-soul, the longing for harmony, compels him to blend what is divided, to reconcile what is hostile. Therefore, absolutely convinced of the unity of his own nature, he reveals, right at the outset of his journey in his dissertation, where he investigates the connection between the two natures in man—the idea of the unity of mind and matter as a first requirement of the will striving after perfection." But the contrasts whose reconciliation is, theoretically, already anticipated by the young thinker, have yet to fight long and violent struggles in his actual life. From the blissful harmony which hovers before his vision and his longing, his soul is as yet far removed. The powerful will, which is innate in him, is as yet dominated by the unbridled passion of sensation; and this it is which urges him into the battles of his youth. Thus he vacillates between stoic praise of virtue and epicurean desire of pleasure, between idealistic joy of living and materialistic despondency, between infatuation with the world and horror at it. The lyrics of his youth, with their exaggerated sentimentalism, and many of his earlier dramatic characters testify to painful doubtings and fierce revoltings within him. When he has to tear himself away from his home and abandon what was dearest to him, he enters a chequered and productive life; and here, too, the schism in his soul remains unhealed. But the best that is in him may be lost unless inner equilibrium is restored. Unless he ceases his infuriated attacks on the existing order of things and abandons his attitude of pure negation, foiled though his youthful revellings in idealism may have been. Fate puts the homeless wanderer under a harsh schoolmaster. A transformation sets in, through which he nevertheless remains true to himself and his own nature. In all the deceptions of life he retains confidence in his real calling, belief in the worth and dignity of his art.

This enthusiasm never fails to buoy him up, and united with inexorable self-criticism, reveals to him a sublime goal for his strivings after self-perfection. From a dreamy view of the world and life, from the vague longing for freedom and happiness he turns to ideals which assume more and more decidedly positive