



HOUSE IN WHICH GOETHE WAS BORN, FRANKFORT.

to Friederike Brion, an Alsatian village pastor's daughter; but the selfish young egotist soon flung her off, and she died at length of a broken heart.

The first-fruits of his genius was his stirring drama *Gotz von Berlichingen*. It depicts the conflict of feudalism and civilization with extraordinary power. It produced a great sensation in the literary world. Together with Schiller's play of *The Robbers*, written not long after, it set the fashion of the romantic dramas of the *Sturm und Drang* period of German thought and literature.

It is difficult to account for the sensation produced by Goethe's

novel, known in English as *"The Sorrows of Werther."* It is founded upon the unhappy passion of a student acquaintance of the poet for the wife of one of his friends. It is characterized by Dr. Augustus H. Strong as "a piece of sickly sentimentality, so feverish and maudlin as utterly to disgust the healthy-minded reader." Yet it was praised by the most distinguished literary men as a profoundly philosophical romance. "Perhaps there never was a fiction," says Lewes, "which so startled and enraptured the world." It was translated into many foreign languages. It was the companion in Egypt of Na-