

former its most decided opponent, and whose great work, the *Regne Animal*, is to this day the stronghold of those who cling to the dualistic conception of nature, and the immutability of species.

So much then of Goethe, the scientist, as we have seen, places him in even line with the Darwins and Haeckels of the present day, and strengthens our footing with those on that new philosophical road, which, be it a valley of Baca, or veritable kings highway, is now our only road.

To be the author of a new dispensation, however, requires universality of genius or endowment, and it may well be asked, in what other respects Goethe has a claim to be regarded as the "Redeemer of His time," to use another of our old Hero Worshipper's types. What message of salvation has this man for us? He comes not in sorrow, nor labor, nor tears. He wears no martyr's crown, or garments rolled in blood, no root out of a dry ground is he, but a laughter-loving Rhinelander, with Hyperion's curls, and the front of jove himself, the scandal of modern Young Men's Christian Associations, Sunday school teachers and strait-laced old women of both sexes. To know Goethe we must know something of his life and times.

The literature of Germany is unique in this respect, that it was the first that had its birth in an enlightened age. It is a remarkable fact that the country to which we are indebted for the art of printing, the invention of gunpowder, and the protestant religion, the country of Copernicus and Kepler, of Luther and Leibniz, had to a comparatively recent period no writer in her own language known to the neighboring nations. In the fabulous past, it is true, a national epoch grew up, the *Nibelungen Lied*, which fervent patriotism has named the German Iliad; but it did not become the bible of the nation, or the fruitful mother of a national literature like the Iliad. It was not until the new era dawned upon France that the German mind began to ferment. Then commenced a second German reformation, protestant as before, and quite as stirring as in the days of brother Martin, but the Germans had no need to go so far as the French, content with the wit of Voltaire, and vagaries of Rousseau, they turned with disgust from the cold and superficial atheism of Holbach. The first fifty years of the German *renaissance* is eminently characteristic. A metaphysical passion arose stronger than had ever been known in Europe. System succeeded system with the rapidity of fashions and dress; the philosophical publications which flowed from the press were as numerous as the political tracts of all the Paris Clubs. Chaos came again, a weltering wreck of ancient faiths and institutions rushing to maddest ruin and delirium. These are the times that make great men, the French required a Napoleon, the Germans a Goethe.

Goethe was born on the 28th of August, 1749. His father, Johann Caspar Goethe, was the son of a Frankfort tailor, but had raised himself to the dignity of an Imperial Counsellor of his native city, and in 1748 married the daughter of its chief magistrate.

The father was a cold, pedantic man; the mother a simple-hearted, affectionate woman, excessively fond of her wonderful boy, for "we have been young together," as she was wont to say. "From my father," he tells us, "I derive my frame and the steady guidance of my life, and from my mother, my happy disposition and love of story-telling." His early education was wholly domestic and acquired in the company of his only sister, Cornelia, of whom he was passionately fond.

In his seventeenth year he was sent to the University of Leipsic

to study law, where he remained nearly three years, but had to give up his studies on account of sickness brought on by dissipation and mental unrest. There is no doubt at all but it was a will time, his Leipsic career. His youth, beauty, animal vigor, and wonderful precocity made him the delight of every circle. Small hope lay for him in law it is to be feared. His illness kept him at home for two years, during which he tried to be a good boy, as well as orthodox, being greatly influenced by a certain Fraulein von Klettenberg, one of the sect of the pious Moravians, long afterwards introduced to us as *une belle ame in meiste*r. His health fully restored, it was decided he should finish his curriculum of jurisprudence, but this time at Strasbourg, whither he went, and remained about a year and a half, ending by taking a doctor's degree in law. But the Strasbourg period is ever memorable for the love episode with Frederica. In his autobiography, written in his old age, he lingers long over this pretty story of his first real love. He was a man that loved much, not always wisely, and never too long, his mind ever on the stretch after culture and towards new ideals outgrew his emotions, or transplanted them to new objects, which for the time being were the glorified creatures of his own imagination, rather than themselves.

Goethe returned to Frankfort a very young doctor, with little of the doctor's gravity about him, still less of his ambition. There was no strain of the attorney in his composition, none of the species known to us has ever produced a *Gotz Von Berlichingen* which was the first occupation of our young doctor. Gotz, a kind of German Robin Hood of the sixteenth century, was made interesting by the mere lawlessness of his life, at a time when to be lawless and rude, or anything but humdrum, was the only reputable thing to be. It took amazingly. But now occurs, during a brief sojourn in Wetzlar that singular episode in his history, out of which grew the most famous of his early literary productions. He is once more smitten, as to his too susceptible heart by one who cannot return his love, probably the only one who did not; Charlotte Buff by name. She is the affianced of his friend Hestner, who knows of his passion, and, strange to say, remains friendly. But what a position! possible only with the Germans, but with us hardly comprehensible.

This is what Hestner himself says of the affair, as recorded by Lewes: after describing his engagement to Charlotte, he says, "She is not strictly a brilliant beauty, according to the common opinion—to me she is one; she is, notwithstanding, the fascinating maiden who might have hosts of admirers, old and young, grave and gay, clever and stupid. But she knows how to convince them quickly, that their only safety must be sought in flight or friendship. One of these, as the most remarkable I will mention, because he retains an interest over us. A youth in years, but in knowledge and in the development of his mental powers and character, already a man—an extraordinary genius and a man of character was here—as his parents believed, for the sake of studying the law, but in fact to track the footsteps of nature and truth and to study Homer and Pindar.

He had no need to study for the sake of a maintenance. Quite by chance, after he had been here some time, he became acquainted with Lottechen, and saw in her his ideal. His ~~recess~~ of mind suffered; there were many remarkable scenes in which ~~her~~ her behaviour heightened my regard for her, and he also became more precious to me as a friend; but I was often inwardly astonished that love can make such strange creatures even of the strongest