

was kindly treated by Lessing, whose clear style he appears to have taken as his model. Johannes von Müller (1752-1809), the historian of Switzerland, used to be considered by the Germans an eloquent writer, almost a prose poet, but he is now generally regarded as an affected rhetorician. Raumer, in his chief work, *History of the Hohenstaufen*, gave forth the results of deep research in an animated and vigorous narrative. Schlosser, author of a *History of the Eighteenth Century*, was also an historian who combined purity and strength of style with learning. Niebuhr, in his *Roman History*, pushed his scepticism too far, but he profoundly modified opinion in regard to the tests of historic credibility.

VIII. *The Latest Period.*—With the death of Goethe in 1832 began a new era in German literature, an era not yet closed. The period has been one of intense political excitement. In 1848 the national aspiration for freedom and unity found decisive expression in action; since that time Germany has achieved unity by the sword, while she still slowly feels her way towards freedom. It was inevitable that in such an epoch much of the best energy of the nation should be devoted to politics, but there has also been great literary activity—activity deeply influenced by the practical struggles, hopes, and fears of the time.

Philosophical speculation has been continued without interruption, and in many respects it has been, and still is, the deepest current in the intellectual life of Germany. From 1818 till his death in 1831, when he was a professor in Berlin, Hegel dominated the highest thought. His vast system, in which he attempted to explain the ultimate facts of the world and to bind by a chain of deductive reasoning the elements of all knowledge, found enthusiastic adherents among the more ambitious of the younger literary men, and for many years after his death it determined the character of their work. Gradually, however, the school broke up into three distinct divisions, the right, the centre, and the left. Of these the most active were the members of the latter party, who interpreted Hegel's doctrine in a revolutionary sense. Arnold Ruge, one of the most brilliant writers of the school, applied Hegelianism to politics, in which he associated himself with the extreme radicals. David Friedrich Strauss, who also started as a follower of Hegel, in his memorable *Leben Jesu* resolved the narratives of the Gospels into a series of myths, and found the vital element of Christianity in its spiritual teaching. Feuerbach, going still further, warred against all religion, urging that it should be replaced by a sentiment of humanity. While the different sections of Hegelians opposed each other, Schelling developed the later phases of his system; and thought was turned into a new channel by Herbart, whose psychological work has been carried on at a later time by Lotze. Krause also attracted attention by philosophical ideas through which he aimed at solving the practical difficulties of modern life. Ulrici and the younger Fichte have exercised considerable influence as the advocates of a pantheistic doctrine by which they endeavour to reconcile religion and science. None of these names, however, have the importance which attaches to that of Arthur Schopenhauer, who, although his chief book was written in the lifetime of Goethe, did not secure a hearing until long afterwards. At the present time he stirs deeper interest than any other thinker. German philosophers have, as a rule, been utterly indifferent to style, but Schopenhauer's prose is clear, firm, and graceful, and to this fact he owes much of his popularity. He expressed bitter contempt for his philosophical contemporaries, and, going back to Kant, claimed to have corrected and completed his system. His main doctrine is that will is the fundamental principle of existence; but his importance arises less from his abstract teaching than from his descriptions of the

misery of human life. History seemed to him but a record of turmoil and wretchedness; and there is high literary genius as well as moral earnestness in his graphic and scornful pictures of the darker aspects of the world. Eduard von Hartmann, the latest original philosopher of Germany, works on essentially the same lines, but seeks to reconcile Schopenhauer not only with Hegel and Schelling but with Leibnitz.

The growth of science has been one of the most powerful factors in the recent intellectual development of Germany, and some of the best books of the period have been works presenting in a popular form the results of scientific labour. Among these the first place still belongs to the *Cosmos* of Alexander von Humboldt. Its fundamental conceptions are no longer in full accordance with the best thought; but it is made enduringly impressive by the writer's power of handling vast masses of facts, by his poetic feeling for the beauty and the order of nature, and by the purity and nobility of his style. Some of the greatest men of science, such as Liebig, Virchow, and Helmholtz, have also made admirable attempts to render their subjects intelligible and interesting to ordinary readers. Büchner and Vogt have considerable merit as popular scientific authors, but their writings are marred by a polemical tendency, which induces them to dogmatize on metaphysical questions beyond their proper range.

In historical literature Germany has recently produced many eminent writers. The historian who enjoys the widest popularity is Leopold Ranke, who has instructed two generations by communicating in an agreeable style the results of extensive research in many different fields of inquiry. Gervinus acquired a permanent place as an historian by his excellent *History of the Nineteenth Century*. Works of high value have also proceeded from Giesebrecht, who has written on the Holy Roman Empire with enthusiastic appreciation of the great emperors; from Droysen, the diligent historian of Prussia; from Dahlmann, whose labours included German, English, French, and Danish history; from Häusser, whose masterpiece is an elaborate history of Germany since the death of Frederick the Great; from Waitz, the chief authority on the growth of the German constitution; from Sybel, by whose researches much new light has been thrown on the French Revolution; from Mommsen, the vigorous historian of ancient Rome; and from Curtius, whose history of Greece is not more remarkable for its learning than for the clear and attractive arrangement of its materials. Of late years much attention has been devoted to "Culturgeschichte," which describes the life of a people in all its phases, either through the whole past or during a particular epoch. A favourable example of works of this class is Karl Biedermann's *Germany in the Eighteenth Century*.

Recent German literature is extraordinarily rich in histories of the individual elements of intellectual development. In its histories of philosophy it is absolutely supreme. Hegel still ranks as one of the greatest historians of philosophy, although the value of his expositions is lowered by a tendency to find his own doctrine in preceding thinkers. Erdmann, Schwegler, and Ueberweg were among the most important workers in the same department; and with them may be named Kuno Fischer, who writes the history of philosophy with a striking power of sympathetic appreciation and in a fascinating literary style. Less attractive in manner than Fischer, Lange, in his *History of Materialism*, did full justice for the first time to the different phases of materialistic philosophy, and is especially happy in the skill with which he traces the growth of a recognition of law in the phenomena of nature. Since Lessing, æsthetics have always formed a prominent branch of philosophy among the Germans; and they have hardly

been less successful as historians of art than as historians of metaphysics. High distinction has been achieved, among other art historians, by Kugler, Vischer, Carrière, and Lübke. Of historians of literature, especially German literature, there is almost a small army. One of the earliest of these was Gervinus, who, although his critical canons are not now in favour, had an unusual faculty for grouping his materials and sharply defining what seemed to him the essential qualities of particular writers and movements. The history of German literature by Vilmar, although written in an eloquent style, is too partial in its judgments to have permanent value. Koberstein is remarkable rather for industry than for insight; but the literary histories of Julian Schmidt and Gottschall are both marked by decisive, often penetrating, critical judgment. One of the best works of this kind for style, thought, and research is Hettner's elaborate *History of Literature in the Eighteenth Century*.

The Germans possess a vast mass of biographical literature, a large proportion of which is rendered almost worthless by inartistic treatment. Luther alone forms the subject of more than one hundred and fifty biographies; yet a satisfactory study of the Reformer has still to be written. In recent times, however, there has been a marked improvement, several biographers having conscientiously striven not only to be thorough in research but to write simply, clearly, and vividly. The first to set a good example was Varnhagen von Ense, whose numerous biographies are masterpieces of well ordered and dignified prose. Germany owes an admirable biography of Ulrich von Hutten to Strauss, who also wrote interesting sketches of several prominent modern authors. Other biographies which deserve mention are Karl Grün's philosophical study of Feuerbach, Rosenkranz's scholar-like life of Diderot, and Justi's life of Winckelmann. The popularity of Mr Lewes's life of Goethe for a long time deterred German writers from touching a subject he had handled with so much talent; but of late there has been a remarkable revival of interest in Goethe, and Hermann Grimm has ventured to present a fresh study of his intellectual and moral character.

In imaginative literature the greatest writer of the latest period is Heinrich Heine. No German writer since Goethe and Schiller has excited so much interest throughout Europe, and among the Germans themselves his fame is steadily rising. He professed to care little for what men said of his poetry, yet it is mainly as a lyrical poet that his name lives. His *Buch der Lieder* is one of the most fascinating collections of lyrics in European literature. Although a deadly enemy of the Romantic school, he had moods, especially in youth, in which he shared its dreaminess and mysticism; and these qualities he expressed in some of his best songs, but with perfect grace of style and melody. He struck with equally finished art chords of passion and aspiration beyond the range of even the chief Romanticists, for Heine was in every respect a modern man, penetrated by a love of freedom, and by a high enthusiasm for beauty. Except Goethe, no other German poet achieves his effects by such simple means; with the language of a village maiden he gives shape to feelings and ideas of exquisite refinement and subtlety. His satirical poems are sometimes gross and cynical; but none of them are without touches of humour. In his prose, which deals with a wide range of subjects, he is rather French than German in his love of sparkling epigram and biting wit. Almost every theme, however sacred, gives Heine occasion for mockery, but in the midst of cruel laughter he is often restrained by a pathetic memory, which he expresses with unsurpassed delicacy. This combination of pathos, wit, and humour gives him a unique place in the literature of his country.

Platen, who belongs rather to the previous period, was one of the many writers whom Heine bitterly attacked, but he was a poet of considerable power. Like Heine himself, he failed in the drama; and even in his successful writings he is not remarkable for wealth of thought or depth of feeling. His odes and sonnets, however, are in language and metre so artistically finished as to rank among the best classical poems of modern times. Börne was another writer whose fame, although the two men were at one time warm friends, suffered from Heine's satire. He was a manly literary critic, and as a political writer dealt at the despotic Governments of Germany blows which they keenly felt.

A school of writers known as Young Germany was deeply influenced by Heine, and had the good fortune to be singled out for persecution by the confederate diet. Their object was to effect a complete revolution in the political and social institutions of Germany, and at the same time they became the propagandists of ideas intended to undermine the church. The most important member of the school was Karl Gutzkow, who wrote a number of dramas which maintain their hold of the stage. He was also the author of many romances, of which the chief were *Die Ritter vom Geiste* ("The Knights of the Mind") and *Der Zauberer von Rom* ("The Magician of Rome"). These works are of enormous length, and their polemical tendency has already begun to weaken their interest. But the leading characters are genuine creations, and the incidents are interwoven with great artistic skill. Heinrich Laube, another member of the group, is the author of an historical romance, *The German War*, which represents, in a clear, fresh, and vivid style, the condition of Germany during the Thirty Years' War. He has also enriched the stage with several excellent plays. Less important authors associated with these writers were Gustav Kühne, Theodor Mundt, and Ludolf Wienberg—the latter universally recognized as a keen and vigorous critic.

The novel has acquired the same important place in Novel Germany as in France and England, and it need scarcely be said that the vast majority of works of this class are forgotten almost as soon as they are issued. One of the most distinguished of recent novelists is Gustav Freytag, whose chief work, *Soll und Haben* ("Debit and Credit"), is a study of commercial life intensely realistic in tendency. Lately he has undertaken a series of romances, *Die Ahnen* ("The Forefathers"), intended to represent in a highly poetic form the different epochs of German history. Important historical romances have been written by Levin Schücking, who is remarkable for his power of vividly conceiving character. The Countess Ida Hahn-Hahn is the writer of a number of novels in an artificial style, affecting to represent good society. Her manner has been cleverly satirized by Fanny Lewald, who is one of the best German novelists, keen and true in observation of life, and artistic in method. Paul Heyse's short tales have firmness of outline, and are at the same time full of delicate grace; as a writer of elaborate romance, he has also achieved success. The humour of Haekländer is generally considered to surpass that of any other recent writer; and among the novelists of simple village life Auerbach easily takes the first place. Frederick Spielhagen has penetrated deeply into the spirit of the age, and in *Problematische Naturen* ("Problematic Natures") and other works reveals its tendencies with cultivated imaginative force. The novels of Fritz Reuter, although written in Platt Deutsch, take high rank; they are fresh in style, and combine keen observation of life with a fine appreciation of comic effect. Contemporary literature has not, as in England, been divorced from the stage; the best imaginative writers find scope for their energies in work for the theatre. Besides Gutzkow and Laube, Gottschall has been a fertile writer

