

it produced a national courage founded on the recollection of an illustrious past, which overthrew the might of the conqueror at the moment when he seemed about to dominate the world. *Werther* is the echo of Rousseau; the lamentation of a suffering world; *Götz* is the prototype of Stein, the corner stone of a renovated empire. *Götz*, in its short, sharp dialogue, recalls the pregnant terseness of mediæval German before it was spoilt by the imitators of Ciceronian Latinity. *Werther*, as soft and melodious as Plato, was the first revelation to the world of that marvellous style which, in the hands of a master, compels a language which is as rich as Greek to be also as musical.

These two great works were not the only occupations of Goethe at this time. In Wetzlar he had translated Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, and had written a number of small poems addressed to Lotte. The spring of 1773, which witnessed the publication of *Götz*, saw him actively employed as an advocate. His relations with his father became easier. His literary success brought him a number of friends,—the young Counts Stollberg, and Von Schönborn, a friend of Klopstock's. He also began to correspond with Lavater the physiognomist and with Klopstock himself. To the latter half of this year are to be referred a number of satirical poems, aimed at prevailing follies of the time, clever and amusing, but of little permanent value. In *Peter Brey* he satirized the meddler Leuchsenring, who, with soft tread and lamblike manners, interfered with the family relations of Herder. *Satyrs* is directed against the prophets of the school of nature, who bid us return to nature without remembering how coarse and repellent some aspects of nature are. Bahrdt had translated the Bible into modern cultivated German; Goethe wrote a prologue to this newest of divine revelations, in which the four evangelists appear each with his attendant animal. Of yet another kind is the *Fair of Plundersweilern*, in which the hucksters and booth-keepers represent the motley variety of human life and the characteristics of modern littérateurs. It is a foretaste of the second part of *Faust*. *Harlequin's Marriage* is only preserved in fragments; it was perhaps too coarse and personal to be published. The most important of these writings is *Gods, Heroes, and Wieland*, a dialogue in the style of Lucian written at a sitting over a bottle of Burgundy, in which Alcæstis, Mercury, Hercules, Euripides, and other ancient worthies appear to Wieland in all their original greatness, and upbraid him with the mean and paltry representation of them which he had given to the world. Wieland was the apostle of an emasculated antiquity. Goethe would make the gods speak in their own large utterance if they spoke at all. Wieland revenged himself by recommending the satire in his paper, the *Deutsche Merkur*, as a delicate piece of persiflage worthy of the study of his readers. In November Goethe's sister Cornelia was married to Schlosser and left Strasburg. Goethe felt the loss deeply. She lived but a short time. Her married life was tortured with perpetual suffering, and she died in 1777.

The beginning of 1774 is marked by a new passion and a new work. Crespel had invented a plan for enlivening their social meetings; each man was to draw lots for a partner, and for the time to consider her as his wife. Three times Goethe drew the name of Anna Sibylla Münch, a pleasant girl of sixteen, daughter of a merchant. One of the favourite topics of the day was the trial of Beaumarchais, which ended on February 16, 1774. Immediately afterwards his *Mémoires* or pleadings were published, and from the fourth of these the play of *Clavigo* was arranged. It represents a young writer of ambition deserting the woman to whom he is engaged and breaking her heart. The fifth act, in which Clavigo kills himself, is Goethe's own. The real Clavigo died, a distinguished man of letters, in 1806. The piece was written in eight days, and published

on June 1. It had a great success, and still keeps the stage. But Goethe's best friends were disappointed with it. Merck told him not to write such trash, as others could do that as well. In reality there is no period of Goethe's life in which his literary activity was so prodigious, or when he was more fully occupied with literary plans which had reference to the deepest problems of human nature. To this time belong the conceptions of *Cæsar*, *Faust*, *Mahomet*, the *Wandering Jew*, and *Prometheus*. The first was soon given up; of the second the first monologue, the dialogue between Faust and Mephistopheles, and part of the scenes with Gretchen, were now written. He has told us in his *Autobiography* what he intended to make of *Mahomet*. In five acts he was to show us how the purity of prophetic zeal is recognized by love, rejected by envy, sullied by human weakness, spiritualized by death. To write this drama he had studied the Koran through and through; only a few fragments were completed. Of the *Wandering Jew* very little remains to us. The design, conceived in Italy, of making a great work on the subject was never carried out. The *Prometheus* was completed in two acts. The monologue of *Prometheus* included in the *Lyrical Poems*, was written at the same time; but it is doubtful whether it was intended to form part of the drama. These works are to be referred to the study of the ethics of Spinoza, for whom he now began to feel a deep reverence, which continued throughout his life. The calm repose of Spinoza's mind spread over his own like a breath of peace; his systematic and well-ordered reasoning was the best antidote to Goethe's passionate waywardness. Goethe now acquired a wider view of all the relations of the moral and natural world; he felt that he had never seen the world so clearly. His time at Frankfort was also largely occupied with art. His room was covered with the works of his pencil, and a number of poems on the subject of the artist's life arose from the same influence.

The summer of 1774 was spent in a journey to the Rhine. On July 12 Basedow, the educational reformer, came to Frankfort; three days afterwards Goethe went with him to Ems, where he found Lavater, who had been with him in the previous month. The three went down the Lahn together, and reached Coblenz on July 18. Here the famous dinner took place at which Lavater explained the secrets of the Apocalypse to a clergyman, Basedow demonstrated the uselessness of baptism to a dancing master, while Goethe, the worldling between the two prophets, made the best of his time with the fish and the chicken. They then went down the Rhine to Elberfeld, where Goethe found his old Strasburg friend Jung-Stilling, and back to Pempelfort, near Disseldorf, the house of Fritz Jacobi, where Goethe also met Jacobi's wife Betty, his sister Charlotte, his aunt Johanna Fahlmer, and his friend W. Heinse. Their letters are full of the effect which he produced upon them. Heinse says—"I know of no man in the whole history of learning who, at such an age, was so completely full of original genius." Jacobi writes—"Goethe is the man whom my heart required; my character will now gain its proper stability; the man is complete from head to foot." Again he says that you could not be an hour with him, without seeing that it would be ridiculous to suppose that he could think or act otherwise than he really thinks and acts. No change could make him fairer or better; his nature has followed its own development, as the growth of a seed, or of a flower on a tree. Nor were these impressions evanescent. Forty years afterwards he writes of these times—"What hours! what days! I seemed to have a new soul. From that moment forth I would never leave you."

Goethe returned to Frankfort at the beginning of August. The autumn brought new friends, drawn to him by the fame of the newly published *Werther*. Among these was Klopstock, twenty-five years older than Goethe,

and author of the *Messiah*, the acknowledged head of German poets. On December 11 Goethe was surprised by the visit of a stranger, whom he at first took for Fr. Jacobi. It was Karl Ludwig von Knebel, who was travelling with the two young princes of Saxe-Weimar, the reigning duke Karl August, then just seventeen, and his younger brother Constantine. They were on their way to France with their tutor, Count Görz, and they could not pass through Frankfort without making the acquaintance of the new genius who had risen upon their country. Goethe went to see them, was warmly received, and talked with them about the condition and prospects of Germany. This meeting decided the future course of Goethe's life. Knebel thought Goethe "the best of men, the most lovable of mankind." The princes invited him to visit them at Mainz, where they would stay longer than at Frankfort. The visit lasted from December 13 to 15, when they went on to Carlsruhe, where the duke was to meet his intended bride. Goethe took the opportunity of reconciling himself with Wieland, who lived in Weimar. On his return he found Fräulein von Klettenberg dead. "My Klettenberg is dead," he writes, "before I had an idea that she was dangerously ill. Dead and buried in my absence! She who was so dear, so much to me." Frederike was lost to him, Charlotte, Maximiliane, and his sister married. Some attachment was a necessity of his nature. He now came under the influence of Lili Schönemann, the daughter of a rich banker, whose father was dead, but whose mother conducted the business, and held one of the most brilliant salons in Frankfort. This passion seemed to be of a more lasting nature than the others. Goethe was drawn into the whirl of society. He is described as moving in brilliantly-lighted rooms, in a gold-laced coat, passing from party to concert, from concert to ball, held captive by a fair-haired girl with a pair of bright eyes. Such was Goethe in the carnival time. To Lili's influence we owe several of his smaller poems, *Neue Liebe neues Leben*, *Herz mein Herz was soll das geben*, *Heidenröslein*, and two little vaudevilles, *Erwin und Elmire* and *Claudine von Villa Bella*. The first contains some pretty songs, notably "Das Veilchen," set to music by Mozart. It is founded on the ballad of "Edwin and Angelina" in the *Vicar of Wakefield*. The latter half belongs to an earlier period, and is complete in itself. *Claudine von Villa Bella* has one good character, the prodigal son Crugantino; and the ballad which is sung at the crisis of the plot was written during the Rhine journey with Jacobi. To this period also belongs *Stella*, a comedy for lovers, a strange, wild play, full of extravagant passion. The weak-minded hero Fernando marries two wives one after the other. They meet together in an inn, and he is reduced to extremity of misery. He loves them both, and they both love him. Finally, the first wife Stella surrenders her rights, and they agree all to live together. The play in this form suggested to Canning the parody of the *Rovers, or the Double Arrangement*. In 1806 Goethe altered the close by making Fernando shoot himself and Stella take poison. It is seldom performed, but Stella is a fine character for a great actress. It is said to be founded on an occurrence in the Jacobi family.

Neither family approved of the engagement between the youthful couple. Goethe's parents thought Lili too much of a fine lady; they had a suspicion, which was well founded, that her wealth had no very sure foundation. Frau Schönemann did not think that Goethe, with all his genius, would make a good husband for her child. Cornelia Schlosser was strongly opposed to the match. Goethe tore himself away, and went for a tour in Switzerland. His companions were the brothers Stolberg, noisy, wild young noblemen, who in May had stayed at Goethe's house. They gave Goethe's mother the name of

Frau Aya, which she ever afterwards retained. On his journey Goethe visited the duke of Saxe-Weimar and his betrothed at Carlsruhe, his sister at Emmendingen, Lavater at Zurich. He bore with him the constant memory of Lili; he wore a golden heart which she had given him round his neck. He climbed the St Gotthard on her birthday, and looked with longing eyes to the promised land of Italy. But a stronger power drew him home again, and he returned. At Strasburg he met his old friends, and saw Zimmermann, the writer on solitude. He showed him a profile of Frau von Stein who lived at Weimar, with which Goethe was enchanted.

He returned to Frankfort on July 20. August was spent delightfully with Lili at Offenbach; his letters speak of nothing but her. September and the fair-time at Frankfort brought back his troubles. His position is described in the poem *Lili's Park*. He is the half-tamed bear who is held by magic bands amongst the birds and the fish, and yet sees a door left a little open for escape, and swears that he has the power to pass it. During this last period of his passion he translated part of the Song of Solomon. He wrote some scenes in *Faust*—the walk in the garden, the first conversation with Mephistopheles, the interview with the scholar, the scene in Auerbach's cellar. *Egmont* was also begun under the stimulus of the American Rebellion. A way of escaping from his embarrassments was unexpectedly opened to him. The duke of Weimar passed through Frankfort both before and after his marriage, which took place on October 3. He invited Goethe to stay at Weimar, and it was arranged that one of the duke's household, who was expected every day with a new carriage, should bring him with him. He took leave of everyone, including Lili. But the carriage did not come; a second leave-taking was impossible. He remained all day in the house working at *Egmont*, going out only at night. Once he stood by Lili's window, heard her sing his songs, and saw her shadow on the curtain. He could not linger longer in the town. He started for Heidelberg hoping to meet the carriage, determined if it did not come to go on to Italy. He was summoned hastily back by a messenger, found the carriage at Frankfort, and entered Weimar in the early morning of November 7, 1775. It was not for his happiness or for Lili's that they should have married. She afterwards thanked him deeply for the firmness with which he overcame a temptation to which she would have yielded.

At this time the smaller German courts were beginning to take an interest in German literature. Before the Seven Years' War the whole of German culture had been French. Even now German writers found but scant acceptance at Berlin or Vienna. The princes of the smaller states, shut out from the great world of politics, surrounded themselves with literature and art, and with men who would be likely to give an interest to their lives. The duke of Brunswick had made Lessing his librarian at Wolfenbüttel, and had not objected to the publication of *Emilia Galotti*. Emmerich Joseph, the worldly elector and archbishop of Mainz, was devoted to Munich and the theatre, and made his stage one of the best in Europe. The margrave of Baden had invited Klopstock to his court, and delighted to associate with himself the author of the *Messiah*, the "poet of religion and of his country." The duke of Württemberg paid special attention to education; he promoted the views of Schubart, and founded the school in which Schiller was educated. Hanover offered a home to Zimmermann, and encouraged the development of Schlegel. Darmstadt was specially fortunate. Caroline, the wife of the landgrave, had surrounded herself with a literary circle, of which Merck was the moving spirit. She had collected and privately printed the odes of Klopstock, and her death in 1734 seemed to leave Darmstadt a desert. Her daughter

Louise, the youngest of eight children, seemed to have inherited something of her mother's qualities, veiled by a serious and retiring temper. She married on October 3, 1775, the young duke of Weimar, who was just of age. She reigned over that illustrious court respected and admired, but repelled rather than attracted by its brilliancy and eccentricity. The place which she would naturally have occupied was taken by the duchess Amalia, mother of the grand-duke. She was of the house of Brunswick, and after two years of marriage had been left a widow at nineteen with two sons. She committed their education to Count Görz, a prominent character in the history of the time. She afterwards summoned Wieland to instruct the elder, and Knebel to instruct the younger. The *Deutsche Merkur*, founded in 1773 to diminish the influence of the school of Klopstock, gave Weimar importance in the literary world. The duchess was a great lover of the stage, and the best play writers of Germany worked for Weimar. The palace and the theatre were burnt down in 1774, and the duchess had to content herself with amateurs. After her son's marriage she lived in the simple country houses which surround the capital, the lofty Ettersburg, the low-lying Tiefurt, the far-seeing height of Belvedere. Each of these was awakened to new life by the genius of Goethe. The duke, eighteen years of age, was simple in his tastes, a hater of etiquette and constraint, true, honest, and steadfast, fond of novelty and excitement, of great courage and activity; his impulses, rarely checked, led him rather to chivalrous enterprise than to undesirable excess. His brother, Prince Constantine, had perhaps more talent but less character than the grand-duke. He took but little part in the Weimar life, and died in 1793.

Upon this society Goethe, in the strength and beauty of youth, rose like a star. From the moment of his arrival he became the inseparable and indispensable companion of the grand-duke. He subdued the affections of all he met with. Wieland said that his soul was as full of him as a dewdrop of the morning sun. He was, take him all in all, the greatest, best, most noble human being that God had ever created. The first months at Weimar were spent in a wild round of pleasure. Goethe was treated as a guest. In the autumn, journeys, rides, shooting parties, in the winter, balls, masquerades, skating parties by torch-light, dancing at peasants' feasts, filled up their time. Evil reports flew about Germany; the court of Weimar had a bad name; Klopstock wrote letters of solemn advice, and forbade his young friend Stolberg to accept an appointment which the duke had offered to him. We do not know, and we need not examine, how much of these reports was true. Goethe wrote to Klopstock that if Stolberg came he would find them no worse, and perhaps even better, than he had known them before. We may believe that no decencies were disregarded except the artificial restrictions of courtly etiquette. Goethe and the duke dined together and bathed together; the duke addressed his friend by the familiar *thou*. Goethe slept in his chamber, and tended him when he was ill. In the spring he had to decide whether he would go or stay. In April the duke gave him the little garden by the side of the Ilm, with its lofty roof, in which he lived for the next eight years. In June he invested him with the title, so important to Germans, of *geheim-legationsrath*, with a seat and voice in the privy council, and an income of £180 a year. By accepting this he was bound to Weimar for ever. We may here mention the different grades of service through which Goethe passed. In January 1779 he undertook the commission of war; on September 5, 1779, he became *geheim-rath*; in September 1781 he received an addition to his salary of £30. This was afterwards raised by £60 more, and in 1816 he received £450, with an additional allowance for the expense of a carriage. In April 1782 he

was ennobled by the emperor, and took for his arms a silver star in an azure field; in June of the same year he became president of the chamber *ad interim*. We know that Goethe devoted himself with industry and enthusiasm to the public business; he made himself acquainted with every part of his master's territory; he did his best to develop its resources; he opened mines and disseminated education; he threw himself with vigour into the reconstruction of the tiny army. A complete account of his labours in this field cannot be known until the secrets of the Goethe house at Weimar, now hermetically closed, are opened to the curious. We shall then probably find that Goethe cannot be fairly charged with want of patriotism, or coldness to the national interest, and that his apparent indifference to the rising of 1813 must be considered in connexion with his resistance to the encroachments of Austria at an earlier time.

Goethe's life was at no time complete without the influence of a noble-hearted woman. This he found in Charlotte von Stein, a lady of the court, wife of the master of the horse. She was thirty-three years of age, mother of seven children. His letters to her extend over a period of fifty years. Until his journey to Italy he made her acquainted with every action, every thought of his mind, all the working of his brain. He calls her by every endearing epithet—the sweet entertainment of his inmost heart, the dear unconquerable source of his happiness, the sweet dream of his life, the anodyne of his sorrows, his happiness, his gold, his magnet, whom he loves in presence and absence, sleeping and waking, from whom he can never bear to be parted. Many of Goethe's writings were from this time inspired by the necessities of the court. One group of them is formed by the succession of masks or ballets which were performed to celebrate the birthday of the grand-duchess Louise. *The Four Seasons, The Procession of Laplanders, the Nine Female Virtues, The Dance of the Planets*, are sufficiently explained by their names. Others were called for by the amateur theatre, which now was forced to supply the place of the regular drama. The stage was often set in the open air, the seats cut out of turf; the side scenes, of trimmed box, still exist at Belvedere and Ettersburg. The actors were the duchess-mother and her sons, the civil servants and the officers, the ladies in waiting and the pages. Goethe was very good in comic parts; in solemn tragedy, as in his own *Orestes*, he could best interpret the dignity of the ancient stage. *Museus*, head-master of the public school, was set to play low comedy; Knebel represented the dignified hero. The chief professional support of the stage was Corona Schröter, whom the duke and Goethe personally carried off from Leipsic. On this visit he saw, after a long absence, Catherine Schönkopf, Oeser, and other friends of his youth. Goethe represented most of his earlier pieces on the Weimar stage. He wrote nothing of great importance for it till the first sketch of his *Iphigenie*. But several smaller pieces owe their origin to this cause. *Proserpina* and *Die Geschwister* are melodramas; *Jery und Bätely* and *Die Fischerin* are little operas composed to suit the Weimar taste. *Scherz, List, und Rache* is an imitation of the Italian style.

Besides numerous visits to the court of the Thuringian princes, sojournings at Dornberg and at Ilmenau, that retired nook of the Weimar fatherland which still attracts many a pilgrim lover of Goethe, the first ten years at Weimar were interrupted by longer journeys. One of these was the winter Harz journey in December 1777, undertaken suddenly to make the acquaintance of Plessing, a self-torturing hypochondriac, who had written to the poet for advice. With Goethe's help Plessing recovered from his melancholy, visited him at Weimar, and entertained him as professor at

Duisburg on his return from the campaign in France. A visit to Dessau inspired the improvements of the park and grounds at Weimar, which now make it so attractive. The close of 1779 was occupied by a winter journey to Switzerland, undertaken with the duke and a small retinue. Two days were spent at Frankfort with Goethe's parents. Sesenheim was visited, and left with satisfaction and contentment. At Strasburg they found Lili happily married, with a new-born child. At Emmendingen Goethe stood by his sister's grave, and saw her successor Johanna Fahlmer, Jacobi's aunt. The Swiss journey began at Basel. The chief object of it was to forward the health and education of the young duke. It was a bold plan to execute in October and November. From Bern they made the tour of the Bernese Oberland. From Geneva, by the advice of De Saussure, they visited Mont Blanc and the valley of Chamouni; they crossed the Furka, not without danger, in the middle of November, descended the St Gotthard to Lucerne, and visited Lavater at Zurich, the seal and summit of their tour. From this time Lavater lost his influence over Goethe, and in 1786 he would gladly have run away from Weimar to avoid him. In December they went by the Lake of Constance and the falls of the Rhine to Stuttgart, where, on December 14, Goethe saw Schiller for the first time. He was a student at the Academy, and in Goethe's presence received the prize.

The return to Weimar, on January 13, was the beginning of a new era. The period of genius and eccentricity was at an end; that of order and regularity succeeded. As an outward sign of the change, the duke cut off his pigtail, an example which was long without imitators. Wieland said that the Swiss winter journey was the greatest of Goethe's dramas. In the same serious mood Goethe began to write history. He chose for his subject Duke Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar, the knight-errant of the Reformation. He spent much time and trouble in collecting materials, but at length reasonably concluded that his strength lay elsewhere. At this time also he began to write *Tasso*, and adapted the *Birds* of Aristophanes to modern circumstances. His deeper thoughts were concentrated in *Wilhelm Meister*. Countess Werther, the sister of the great minister Baron von Stein, whom he visited at Neunheiligen, was transferred in living portraiture to its pages. His efforts for the development of the duke's dominion naturally led him to the study of science. The opening and direction of mines induced him to study geology; the classification of ancient forms of life led him to osteology and anatomy. Goethe was always fond of children. The young Herders and Wielands spent much time in his garden, sometimes digging for Easter eggs which had been carefully concealed. In the spring of 1783 Fritz, the son of Charlotte von Stein, then ten years old, came to live with him in his garden house. In the autumn they took a journey together in the Harz. At Ilmenau was written the touching poem of that name on the duke's birthday. Goethe reviews in it their common friendship and activity as far as it has yet gone, and a few days afterwards, as he slept in the hut on the Gickelhahn, he wrote in pencil the world-known lines in which he anticipates for himself that rest and silence which then held enchained the summits of the hills and the birds of the wood. In the following year another journey was undertaken in the Harz for the study of mineralogy. But this was only a relaxation from more serious affairs. In 1785 the Fürstenbund or league of princes was formed, under the supremacy of Frederick the Great, to resist the ambition of Austria under Joseph II. The duke of Saxe-Weimar took an important part in forming this league, and in the negotiations which preceded it. Goethe was his indispensable adviser, and must on this occasion, if not on others, have taken a keen interest in politics and in the independence of Germany.

The year 1786 marks an epoch in Goethe's life. He had now been ten years in Weimar, and he must have felt that his own inward development, and the work which he was most fitted to do in the world, were not advancing as favourably as they should. He had written little of first-rate importance. His *Lyrics* were of intense beauty and of deep meaning, but they were short and fugitive. He had brought with him from Frankfort the sketches of *Faust* and *Egmont*, but little had been done to them since. His occasional writings for the amateur theatre, or for court festivities, were not such as to add to his solid reputation in Germany. *Iphigenie* was the one great work of poetry which belongs entirely to this period, but that had not received its final form. *Tasso* was conceived, but only two acts were written, and these in prose. *Wilhelm Meister* is the most exact expression of this portion of Goethe's life; but loftily as it now towers above the level of his dramas, it did not then satisfy the author, nor was it in a state to be published. For the completion of these works Goethe required leisure and repose, impossible to obtain in the distraction and pleasures of the court. This became more apparent to him as he set himself to collect his scattered writings. Four volumes were soon completed, but the preparation of the other four convinced him how much labour many of his poems still required for perfection. Another cause of discontent was his relation to Frau von Stein. It could not have been more intimate. She was all to Goethe and more than Gretchen, Frederike, Lili, or his sister Cornelia had been. He communicated to her every thought and every action of his life. The relation was blameless, to a character like Goethe's it was natural; but it became every year more difficult and more full of danger. The ardent devotion which sat well on the impetuosity of youth was less becoming and less possible to the man of middle age. Yet the tie could not be severed without a struggle, and the wrench could not be effected without an enforced absence. To these necessities, the need of quiet for composition, and for deliberately rearranging the circumstances of his life, was added the stress of other impulses. Goethe had all his life been fascinated by the practice of art. Indeed it was not until he had discovered at Rome the limitation of his powers that he definitely renounced the hope of becoming an artist. He tried almost every branch in turn. He drew in pencil and in sepia, sketched, painted in oil, engraved on copper and wood, and etched. For these occupations he had but little leisure; at this time he attributed his slow improvement rather to want of labour than to want of power. He saw infinite possibilities of advance in a life of freedom spent under the inspiration of sunny skies, and amidst the environment of the highest art.

Of still deeper interest and importance were his scientific researches. In these he aspired to detect the secrets of nature; he succeeded in seeing, as in a vision, the great scheme of evolution applied to all phenomena of the natural and moral world, which the labours of many workers have revealed to us in our own day. He longed for time and leisure to perfect these ideas, to base them on solid fact. Goethe has not added much of positive value to the treasury of scientific truth, but he deserves the credit of having discerned the right method of inquiry when it was obscure to many, and of having thrown that glow of imagination over dry and technical inquiry, without which no great discoveries can be made. His inquiries into the nature of light belong to a later time. He began with physiognomy under the auspices of Lavater. From this he was led to the study of anatomy, and especially to the comparison of the skeletons of men and animals. In this department he made a real discovery, that the intermaxillary bone which exists in the lower animals is found in the human subject in a rudimen-

tary state,—that it is seen distinctly in youth, but as years advance is united with the body of the skull. The discovery that the skull itself is only a development of the vertebrae of the spine was made a little later. He was led to this further step by picking up the head of a sheep on the shore of the Lido at Venice. The care of his garden cottage naturally led him to the study of plants. He soon found himself attracted to wide and comprehensive generalizations. The *Metamorphoses of Plants* was not published till 1790, but the idea which had possession of his mind was a solid contribution to the science of botany. Goethe sought to discover an original or standard flower, from which, as from a Platonic ideal type, all existing flowers were deflexions and aberrations. In this he followed an unscientific method, but he clearly saw that all the different parts of the plant, except the stem and the root, might be regarded as modifications of the leaf; that leaf, calyx, corolla, bud, pistil, and stamen were all referable to the same type; and that whether a plant produced leaves, or flowers, or fruit, depended on the differentiation of the nutrition which it received. Less fortunate were his speculations in geology, to which he devoted a very large portion of his time and thoughts. It is something that he recognized the importance and reality of that science, then in its infancy, which has had to undergo more than its due share of obloquy and distrust. But he was of necessity a follower of Werner, who based his classification of rocks rather on the minerals which they contained than upon an examination of the fossil remains of organic life. All these causes contributed together to one end. His desire to complete the great poetical works which he had begun, to disentangle his life from the complexities which had entwined themselves round it, to give a fair trial to his impulses towards art, to afford opportunity for the careful and systematic interrogation of nature, and, above all, a longing to possess his soul in peace, and solemnly to probe in silence the depths of his own being, conspired together to drive him from Weimar to the land which he had yearned after from boyhood. The resolution, slowly formed, was boldly executed. In the summer of 1785 he had visited Carlsbad for the first time, passed a pleasant month in the company of the duchess Louise, Herder, and Frau von Stein. In July 1786 he paid it a second visit. After five weeks of brilliant society, very favourable to his health, spent in revising his works for the press, he stole secretly away. The duke alone knew that he designed an absence of some duration. In the strictest incognito, in the guise of a German merchant, he drove alone to the land of the citron and the orange.

Goethe's Italian journey, the most momentous epoch in the development of his intellectual life, lasted from September 3, 1786, to June 18, 1788. Assuming the common German name of Müller; in the strictest incognito he journeyed by way of Munich, where he studied the picture gallery and the collection of antiquities; by the Lake of Garda, where he began his metrical version of the *Iphigenie*; by Verona, where he saw the first specimen of Roman building in Italy in the stupendous amphitheatre; by Vicenza, where he was attracted by the grace and harmony of the classical Palladio; by Padua, where he neglected the frescos of Giotto, but rose to a clear conception of the form of the *original plant* by the marks on the leaves of a palm in the botanical garden; to Venice, where for the first time he was able to taste the charm and richness of southern life. As he proceeded farther, Ferrara spoke to him of Tasso; Bologna showed him the great masters of the academic school who have now grown pale and dim before the predecessors of Raphael; Florence interested him a little; Assisi drew his attention, not to the triple church of Saint Francis, the unrivalled museum of religious art, but to the little ruined temple which no modern traveller would notice but for the

name of Goethe; Spoleto again delighted him with the remains of ancient architecture. He reached Rome on October 28. His first stay was till February. The constant companion of his studies was the painter Tischbein, who helped him to disentangle the many difficulties of the old Rome and the new. He lived chiefly among the German artists and men of letters who frequented the Caffé Greco. Among these were Angelica Kaufmann and Moritz, who deepened his knowledge of German versification, and prepared him for the composition of *Iphigenia*. Although Goethe occupied himself chiefly with drawing, he was able to announce on June 6 that this work was finished. The second *Iphigenie*, written in verse, was the first important fruit of the Italian journey. It is in very strong contrast with *Götz von Berlichingen*. It is written in the strictest classical form. Although based on the *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Euripides, it has little in common with it. In Euripides Thoas is represented as a cruel barbarian, against whom it is justifiable to employ every artifice of fraud or violence. In Goethe the characters are ennobled by a higher principle, and the struggle between truth and falsehood is made a prominent motive of the piece. When Thoas discovers that, according to the oracle of Apollo, the return of Orestes's sister to Greece will satisfy the anger of the gods, he gives his consent, and his last words are a friendly farewell. Towards the end of February Goethe left Rome for Naples. Here he was attracted less by the remains of antiquity, even the new revelations of Herculaneum and Pompeii, than by the prospects of nature, the bay, the islands, the volcano, the thousand beauties which make the gulf unrivalled in the world, and by the multitudinous and teeming life which throngs the endless quays that line the shore. Sorrento stimulated him to the revival of *Torquato Tasso*, but he did not complete the drama till his return from Italy. It did not appear in print till the spring of 1790. The play had a special fascination for him as a picture of his own distracted life. He could depict with feeling the struggle between the actual and the ideal, the ill-assortment of a passionate poet with the jealous and artificial environment of a court. At the end of March Goethe sailed to Sicily; rolled up in his cloak he meditated the composition of his *Tasso*. Sicily struck him, as it must strike all travellers who have studied the ancient world, as a revelation of Greece. It is, if one may say so, more Greek than Greece itself. Its mountains, streams, trees, flowers, the form of its boats and pottery, the habits of the people, the quivering smile of the bright blue sea fringed with golden sand, represent completely the Greece of the *Odyssey* and of the choruses of Euripides. Goethe was overmastered by this powerful influence. He sketched and began *Nausicaa*, the story of the *Odyssey* in dramatic form, which always remained a fragment. He returned to Rome in June. The rest of the year was spent in the city and its neighbourhood, in the serious study of drawing, for which unfortunately he had but little talent, and in the composition of *Egmont*, a work begun with the approval of his father in the early Frankfort days. It was finished in September 1787, and appeared in the Easter of the following year. Although *Egmont* still keeps the stage, it has very grave faults. It is an unfortunate mixture of the natural and ideal treatment. The licence with which the scenes are transposed in modern performance shows how much the work lacks symmetry and cohesion. Schiller criticized it severely as being untrue to history. He described the close, where all difficulties are solved by the appearance of Clärchen, as *adeus ex machina* or *salto mortale* into the world of opera. The music of Beethoven has contributed to it a charm of art which was necessary to its completeness. Besides this, Goethe rewrote for publication his early vaudevilles of *Erwin und Elmire* and *Claudine von Villa Bella*. The carnival of 1788 was of importance to his

experience. He wrote some scenes of *Faust*: especially the scene in the witches' kitchen was composed in the Borghese gardens. At the end of April he took a sad farewell of Italy, and arrived at Weimar in the middle of June.

From this time his life takes a new colour. He had learned in Italy not only new principles of art,—not only that a work of art, whatever of Gothic ornament it may possess, must be solid, firm, and simple in its construction as a Grecian temple,—but he had also learned that life itself should be a work of art. He was determined henceforth to be himself, to break the bonds which had confined him and the distractions which had confused him, to possess his soul sacred and inviolable for the purposes of his life. He was relieved of the presidency of the chamber and of the war commission, but in a manner which did him the greatest honour. His relations with Frau von Stein, which had been one reason of his leaving Weimar, began to cool. One of their last friendly meetings was in a journey to Rudolstadt, where Goethe met Schiller. Neither knew the influence which the other would have upon his life. Their relations were those of shyness, and partly even of dislike. Goethe's friendship with Frau von Stein was to receive a final blow. In the autumn of 1788, walking aimlessly through the park, he met Christiane Vulpius, a young girl who presented him with a petition in favour of her brother. She had golden curling locks, round cheeks, laughing eyes, a neatly rounded figure; she looked, as has been said, "like a young Dionysus." Goethe took her into his house, and she became his wife in conscience, and the mother of his children. He did not marry her till 1806, when the terrors of the French occupation made him anxious for the position of his eldest son. She had but little education, and he could not take her into society; but she made him a good and loving wife, and her quick mother-wit made her available as an intellectual companion. To these days of early married life belong the Roman elegies, which, although Italian and pagan in form, and in colour, and in sensuality, were written in Germany from home experiences.

We must pass rapidly over the next six years, until Goethe's genius received a new impulse and direction by his friendship with Schiller. In the spring of 1790 he travelled to Venice to meet the duchess Amalia. The Venetian epigrams, still more outspoken in sensuality than the Roman, were the fruit of this journey. In the autumn of the same year he accompanied the duke to Silesia, the first of those military journeys which strike so discordant a note in the harmonious tenor of his existence. The year 1791 offered a quiet contrast to the movement of the year before. He began to take a more special interest in the university at Jena, in which his young friend Fritz von Stein had now entered as a student, and his time was more and more occupied with the study of colours, the least happy and successful of his scientific labours. In the autumn of 1791 Goethe was able to devote himself regularly to a task which had informally occupied his first years in Weimar. The new theatre was completed, and Goethe was made director of it. It was in this capacity that he was best known to the citizens of Weimar. He had the final decision on every detail of piece, scenery, and acting; in later years his seat was in a large arm-chair in the middle of the pit, and applause was scarcely permitted until he gave the signal for it. The German stage owes perhaps as much to Goethe as to Lessing. The *répertoire* of the Weimar theatre was stocked with pieces of solid merit which long held their place. Shakespeare was seriously performed, and the actors were instructed in the delivery of blank verse. Stress was laid on the excellence of the *ensemble* as against the predominance of particular stars. The theatre was considered as a school not only of elevating

amusement but of national culture. Goethe wrote the *Gross Cophta* for the Weimar stage, a piece founded on the history of Cagliostro and the diamond necklace. He was fascinated by the story as a foreboding of the coming horrors of the Revolution. In these events he was destined to take a more active part than he expected. In August 1792 he accompanied the duke to the campaign in the Ardennes. Passing by Frankfort, where he visited his mother, he joined the allied armies at Longwy. He beguiled the tedious siege of Verdun by writing an account of his theory of colours in a leaky tent; and on the disastrous day of Valmy, which he recognized as the birth of a new era, he sought the thickest of the fight that he might experience the dangerous rapture of the cannon-fever. He retreated with the Prussian army, spent five weeks with his friend Jacobi at Pempelfort, and on his return to Weimar at the end of the year found that the duke had built him a spacious house in the square where the joint statues of Goethe and Schiller now stand, in eternal memory of their friendship. In 1793 he went with his master to the siege of Mainz. He continued his optical studies during the bombardment, witnessed the marching out of the garrison, and was one of the first to enter the conquered town. He received leave to withdraw, and went to his mother at Frankfort, and persuaded her to sell the old house and its contents, and to provide a more convenient home for her old age. There was some talk of her coming to Weimar. In the autumn of this year the duke left the Prussian service, and Goethe could look forward to a period of peace. He was chiefly occupied with the management of the theatre, and for this he wrote two pieces, both of which had reference to the politics of the time. The *Bürgergeneral* is a satire on the Revolution, and was long a stone of offence to Goethe's friends, who thought that he should have hailed with delight the birth of a new era. The *Aufgeregten*, left unfinished, sketched the outbreak of the Revolution in a country town, and would have declared the author's views with greater distinctness. But the feelings of scorn and contempt which he felt for the cowardice, cunning, and perfidy of mankind were expressed in a work of greater magnitude. He had good reason to deplore the misery of the time. His mother's home in Frankfort was broken up; Schlosser, his brother-in-law, had retired to Auerbach; Jacobi was flying to Holstein. Goethe took the old German epic of *Reynard the Fox*, with which he had long been familiar, and which, under the guise of animals, represents the conflicting passions of men, and rewrote it in flowing German hexameters.

Thus far he had produced but little since his return from Italy. He was now to undergo the most powerful influence which had as yet affected his life. His friendship with Schiller was now to begin, an alliance which, in the closeness of its intimacy and its deep effect on the character of both friends, has scarcely a parallel in literary history. If Schiller was not at this time at the height of his reputation, he had written many of the works which have made his name famous. He was ten years younger than Goethe. The *Räuber* plays the same part in his literary history as *Götz* plays in that of Goethe. This had been followed by *Fiesco* and *Kabale und Liebe*. The second period of Schiller's life had begun with his friendship with Körner, and his residence in Saxony. Here he wrote the *Hymn of Joy*, and completed *Don Carlos*. In 1787 he settled at Weimar. He found the place deserted, the duke in the Prussian camp, Goethe in Italy. He applied himself to history, wrote the *Revolt of the Netherlands*, and studied the literature and art of Greece. In 1789, mainly upon Goethe's recommendation, he was made professor of history at the university of Jena, although he was afraid lest the scholars should discover that they knew more history than the teacher.