

ing to Grimm. This intercourse turned upon literature and philosophy exclusively, and Goethe kept to himself his studies in art, science, and human nature. At best, Schiller only half possessed him. So far from "developing" Goethe, Schiller was the recipient, Goethe the giver; and it remains an open question whether the copartnership was not for Goethe a disturbance rather than a gain—in other words, whether Goethe would not have moved on in his appointed career had Schiller never existed.

Grimm's essay is not more noteworthy in what it contains than in what it does not contain. We have been discouraged so often by so-called "defences" of Goethe from paltry accusations, that we are positively gladdened by the sight of any work that turns its back upon the chatter of scandal-mongers and leaves "the great heathen and sinner" to defend himself. Such accusations are of two widely different kinds. One is concerned with his relations to women, the other with his alleged want of patriotism. The former is touched upon by Grimm very lightly yet firmly, with what might be called a gentlemanly hand. Goethe's relations with Friederike Brion, Charlotte Buff, Frau v. Stein, and Christine Vulpius are placed in a light that is not only pleasing but informing, and that leaves the reader to draw his own inferences. There is also a respectfulness in Grimm's manner and tone that imparts itself to the reader, and renders it impossible to judge even the weaknesses of the great poet in a harsh, censorious spirit. As for the alleged want of patriotism, Grimm skilfully turns the attack by showing that it was begun, not by the men who suffered most from the catastrophes of 1806–1810, but by a much later generation, who misunderstood Goethe, and were led more by blind zeal than by discretion.

The general impression that Grimm's essay makes is one of power and insight, but not that of a perfectly finished work. The latter half of the second volume is too condensed and meagre. 'Faust' and the 'Meister' are sufficiently praised, but they are not analyzed as searchingly as 'Götz,' 'Werther,' and 'Tasso.' We are forced to doubt once more the possibility of doing justice to such a subject within such restricted limits, or the possibility in any case of securing the proper perspective. We are still too near the object. It is less than half a century since Goethe's death; Germany is in a transition state; the dust of temporary political disturbance and the mists of traditional prejudice are still too dense. By the turning of the century we may look forward to clearer skies and that sobriety of judgment that comes only from great political experience.