

I remember distinctly (he writes) one evening when we had been walking together in the flower garden talking of Goethe; the clouds were gathering in the west, foretelling bad weather, and a sighing wind was passing over the fields. I know not how it was that Goethe's words from the "Westöstlichen Divan," "Ach, um deine feuchten Schwingen, West, wie sehr ich dich beneide," came into my mind, and as we walked along I repeated them half to myself. Marianne stood still, looked at me for a while with her bright and moving grey-blue eyes, and said, "Stop; what makes you repeat that poem?" "Oh, it just came to me so vividly," I answered: "it is one of Goethe's most beautiful ones." Marianne still continued to look at me, as if she wanted to say something, but could not make up her mind to do so. "I will tell you something," I called out suddenly, without knowing how I came to do it: "This poem is *yours*—you made it!" This supposition was, after all, not so very much out of the way. That part of the "Divan" is almost entirely kept up like a duet, and I knew besides what a large share Marianne had had, *generally speaking*, in the production of these poems. [Is not this delicious?] "You must not tell it to anybody," she began again after a time, holding out her hand to me. "Yes, I did make those verses." And yet it was a *surprise* (!) to me. She then ended the conversation, and the next morning was the day of her departure. She was expected at Neuburg, near Heidelberg. From that place I had a letter, in which, for the first time, she expressed herself more openly upon her relations with Goethe. "Frau von Stein," she wrote, "I never knew; I was never in Weimar, and saw Goethe first at Frankfort in the year '14. During a visit he paid us in the country, from the 12th of August till the 6th of October, 1815, I got to know him, and to love him, and till four weeks before his death I was in constant correspondence with him. But his letters were quite different to those he wrote to Frau von Stein, and it seems to me a fatal piece of indiscretion that they should have been printed. About six or eight weeks before Goethe's death he sent me a neatly tied-up packet, and wrote to me at the same time most affectionately, saying that he sent me herewith my letters, and begged me to keep the packet unopened until the *uncertain hour* which, alas, must but too soon strike. In the

very hour that I was told of his death I broke the seal, and found at once some lines in his own handwriting. They are in the new edition, and I wish to impose upon you the task of finding them." There was no difficulty about this. The poem is to be found among the posthumous ones (vii., 219): "Vor die Augen meiner Lieben," &c., Weimar, March 3, 1831.

Remarkably enough (Marianne pointed this out to me) these lines were written after the death of Frau von Stein. "You will be surprised," she writes to me later (Feb. 18, 1852) that I do not possess Eckermann, and have not read him for a long time, but am just in the third volume of Goethe's letters to the 'Stein.' You will find at the end, on the last leaf, the last page but one, the beginning of those lines which Goethe sent me with my letters, and which were certainly written on the 3rd of March, 1831—therefore after the death of the 'Stein.' But this must remain, as always, between ourselves." Marianne would, I am sure, have approved its not remaining between ourselves (!). She had intended to leave to me her correspondence with Goethe, though from the beginning I had begged her not to do so. I had apprehended the responsibility which would grow out of such a possession. Finally, she changed her mind about it, and the letters are to remain deposited at the Frankfort town library till the twentieth year after her death.

In another letter she returned again to the subject of our conversation in the garden. "In the 'Divan' (she writes, April 5, 1856) you must not sift anything; I have nothing on my conscience but the 'Ost und Westwinde,' 'Hochbeglückt in deiner Liebe,' and 'Sag du hast wohl viel gedichtet.' But much of it I have inspired, suggested, and *experienced*. I think I promised you the original of the 'Westwind;' it differs very little from the printed version, but still significantly. May this leaf be a leaf of spring to you, and greet you stormily, for such a storm blows here as we have not had for long."

On the 21st of January, 1857, she writes still more to the point:—

"I send you with this letter the lines that you asked for; after all there is only one which G. altered, and I really do not know why, for I think my own are really more beautiful; and so as not to disappoint your expectations too greatly, I also send you a few small bits which then formed the greatest charm of our correspondence, in which the *secret* could not but be an essential ingredient. Those which I have marked out are from the 'Divan' of Hafis. . . . Now when you read in the 'Divan' the beautiful poem 'Geheimschrift,' 'Lasst euch, o Diplomaten,' it will no longer be a 'secret writing' to you, and I again have told you something more about the happiest time of my life. But why I should do so just this evening, when I have already been struggling for an hour with a bad pen and worse ink, is just because — &c. This has excited me so much that I resolved to write to you at once, and send you this enclosure, which I looked for a few days ago. I am possessed with the feeling that I shall soon be no longer able to write to you, so I want to make up for lost time, and begin by sending you this sheet. Keep true to me, and be discreet, and remember the little grandmother, "M. W.

"P. S.—As your having the Hafis is uncertain, I send you this little sheet, which contains the said passages by myself, and also some of Goethe's. It is a trifle, I well know, and you must forgive me for troubling you with it. Good morning."

It seems to me (writes Grimm) no breach of faith to publish these innocent things now, almost ten years after Marianne's death. She herself wishes that her letters to Goethe, which she showed to no one, should appear after twice that time. I do not know whether I should be able to write down these things later (?). Her wish for secrecy referred chiefly to judgments on living persons, which were contained in her letters, and which, if they had gone further, might have made mischief, and could now have been of no interest. Enclosed in this letter was a small sheet, on one side of which was written:—"Ostwind, Wiedersehn d. 6. October 15." 'Was bedeutet die Bewegung?' &c., the poem to be found in the original edition of the "Westöstlichen Divan," p. 161. Goethe has *changed* the fourth stanza, making it more passionate [did it never strike Herr Grimm that the process might have been reversed, and that Frau von Willemer made it into Goethe-and-water in her copy?], and not to its advantage either, to my thinking.