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wakening to the beauty of nature man almost be said to have been sudden." There are two facts which Prof. Grimm calls fundamental in Goethe's life: "The first was that, so far as we know, he never experienced anything which wholly took him out of himself, and that, even when he appears most passionately excited, he still retains the power to criticise himself. With him, therefore, events, and his subsequent reflections upon them, must be carefully distinguished. * * *

The second was that Goethe does not mention any living man, or any contemporary book, that fully meets the wants of his nature; no man who could excite in him the feeling, 'Such I would like to have been!' and no book over which he might have thought: 'This is what I would have written, but it is better than I could have written it.'

HE WAS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT HERDER

only as a learner, and after his first intoxication was over returned to a consciousness of his own position. And so he soon recovered from his infatuation about Lavater and Jacobi, and no one came after them by whom he allowed himself to be deluded as he had been by these three men. As soon as he had gained some measure of experience in life, he always knew beforehand that in time all these brilliant meteors would cease to dazzle him, and that he should once more be sustained by his own independent judgment. In contemplating all the influences which tended to develop Goethe, we find that there are only four men who had a lasting effect upon him, who, as it were, lived in his soul never to be displaced—Homer, Shakespeare, Raphael, and Spinoza. These men were to him representatives of the four mighty elements from whose workings our European culture, or the mental conditions in which we live and labor, arose and is still rising."

The following passage in regard to the religious education of one who has been described as our "chief modern pagan," has deep interest: "Goethe had grown up in a religious family and in full knowledge of what the Christian faith rests upon. He who today can repeat the Lord's prayer, the Ten Commandments, the creed and some hymns without hesitation, and who knows something about the books of the Old and New Testaments and the history of the church, believes himself well instructed in religious matters. But in the last century it was quite different. The comprehension of the Christianity of the former century, as an historical fact, becomes again of importance now that our whole spiritual development seems colored by its religious tendency. Whatever our own personal belief may be, we must at any rate make ourselves familiar with the whole course of

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT IN GERMANY.

Everybody in the last century was well versed in the Bible, and thoroughly schooled in the differences of the creeds and sects even to the subtleties, which are nowadays familiar to the professional theologian alone. As at present every one is acquainted with what concerns the army, and every family knows all the necessary facts about its organization, its duties, promotions, etc., as well as where the different regiments are stationed, and who the commanders are in the prominent places, because every family is in some way or other connected with the army—so at that time men were at home in all matters appertaining to the church, and knew the names and relative importance of the leading ministers. In science, poetry and theology alone was free discussion or agitation allowed, as has been already said. Who would really catch the flavor of this state of things should read the romance of the (during his life) renowned Berlin bookseller Nicolai,—"Sebaldis Nothanker." The four volumes contain nothing but a series of rows between the hero—who is a philosophic, liberal, open-hearted country preacher—and Fate, in the shape of some bigoted old theological wretches. Without an acquaintance with these circumstances it is impossible to have an idea of the fights into which Lessing was constantly drawn, or to comprehend the power of Herder, who as a free-thinking theologian had made himself master of all the subjects that were in fermentation about him. Goethe had been, even as a child, initiated in these matters, through his connection with the Moravian Fräulein von Klettenberg. And again in Strassburg he made use of an introduction he had taken with him to

A FAMILY INCLINED TO THIS FAITH.

Goethe was therefore perfectly familiar with the Bible. The active part he took in the religious discussions of the day, as shown by a number of his essays on the leading topics and his intimate friendship with the prophet Lavater, was natural. Goethe's earliest poem is a bombastic song on the 'Descent of Christ Into Hell,' which is in the ranting style of the preachers of the last century; but nevertheless we observe that, while he was perfectly at home on religious subjects, they never completely absorbed him, nor turned him aside from ideas which came from other sources. Herder and Lavater were to him the two great streams whose unsteady current bore onward the ecclesiastical life of the time."

Goethe's manly appearance is one of the current traditions of Germany. Prof. Grimm thus describes him: "Goethe was a strong, broad-shouldered man, to whom heat and cold made little difference, who could ride the day long in the saddle and spend all night in the woods or at a 'kneip,' without its having any particular effect upon him. At sleighing parties, balls, the chase, or at fires, he was one of those who held out longest. He took the foremost place whenever he thought it was his right. In masked processions he was seen on horseback in magnificent old German costume, and after he was more than 60 years old he appeared as a Knight Templar at a fancy ball, and astonished everybody by his commanding beauty.

HE RODE OUT BRAVELY TO THE FRAY

at Valmy, where the balls of the renowned cannonade fell thick about him, watched the symptoms of the 'white feather' steal over him, and afterward described all minutely. Such a physique was necessary in order to master the iron will of the duke, and to hold his place close beside him. Goethe had the inexhaustible vitality necessary for his office."

Here is a passage which discloses the inner existence of Goethe. Prof. Grimm says: Goethe's 'Faust' speaks of the *heiden seelen* which dwelt within his breast. This twofold spiritual existence Goethe had been able best to observe in himself. There was in his nature a mixture of blindness with the keenest perspicacity, which, apart from each other, worked out their various results side by side within him. He says of himself that he first wrote, rushing unconsciously on, and only knew what he had done when he saw it on paper. Added to this was the necessity of expressing himself in parables. He was once phrenologically examined by Dr. Gall, who introduced phrenology, and, by his personal experiments, spread it far and wide in Germany; and Gall declared that Goethe's most conspicuous trait was to express himself in

tropes. He could not convey his thoughts into exact words, and availed himself of poetic imagery to suggest what he wished to say. To state it emphatically, Goethe gave up trying to understand himself. In his old age, speaking of himself to Chancellor Müller, he said: 'What one actually is he must find out from others.' Goethe shows himself on one side a poet; a somnambulist who is not conscious while he writes what flows from his pen; a dreamer who does not understand himself, and is in his own eyes

A HALF-FICTITIOUS CREATURE;

is vacillating, confused and passionate; will enjoy the goods of this world, will surrender himself to the vague instincts of his nature, and remove from his path all obstacles which threaten to hinder it. But on the other side, in opposition to this, stands his unmerciful objectivity and clearness of apprehension. A demon whispers to him instantly where the weak side is in men and things. He practices the subtlest criticism, anatomizes men—others as well as himself—and will not allow the least embellishment of his results. So we see him as naturalist, statesman, historian. He is decided, keen, cold. Now he will not be tempted by the pleasures of this world, but insists that renunciation is commanded. This is his great word. With an unrelenting severity, toward himself first of all, he seeks to fulfil his duty. The result of all this is that we see Goethe always either one or the other; never both together, never the two orbits running into one another. Either he writes poetry, or he views almost indifferently what he has written, not quite knowing what to do with it; either like a deluded child he gives himself wholly and confidently to men, or he advances to meet them sternly like a man hardened by experience. These alterations in him never ended. He always meets men with fresh curiosity, and loves them while new, but repulses them unmercifully.

WHEN THE HOUR FOR CRITICISM ARRIVES,

for the consciousness of the folly outgrown irritates him, and, in general, when he begins to criticise nothing satisfies him. Goethe's double nature found in Spinoza's philosophy its only adequate interpretation."

Goethe had a predilection for Napoleon, who, 'on coming to Erfurt, sent for Goethe, and held the famous conversation with him, at the close of which the exclamation burst from his lips, 'Voilà un homme!' which bears this translation: 'At last a man who stands face to face with me in Germany!' Napoleon had fathomed Goethe; but Goethe also knew how to value Napoleon. In the midst of a confusion which appeared inextricable, Goethe had seen this youthful general rise like some ancient hero, who, one against a host, conquered whole nations with the stroke of a club."

Nothing in the whole biography is more beautiful than the closing passage: "If we desire a true picture of this Weimar life as it day by day glided by, through his last 10 years, we shall specially enjoy reading 'Eckermann's Reminiscences,' together with those of Chancellor von Müller. We realize, as if we had been eye-witnesses, how Goethe strove above all things to the very last to keep himself in contact with the young. He often said that this was the only means of

KEEPING THE HEART YOUNG.

His vitality was inexhaustible. Even in his 70th year a young and beautiful maiden kindled in him a passion which it cost him a monstrous effort to subdue; and from this struggle arose some of his most ardent poems. Goethe, while enjoying all the privileges of age, seemed merely hiding the powers of his youth and not to have lost them. Finally all his friends were dead—the duke, Frau von Stem, even his son, had gone before him. But it did not crush him; to live was to him pure enjoyment. Until his very last days spring and sunshine always brought a fresh rapture to his soul, and tempted him to explore in all directions the fields and woods so dear to him; while the recollections of old friends springing up in his path refreshed him instead of making him sad. He looked forward to each new day with serene expectation and genuine human curiosity as to what it might bring forth. On the 22d of March, 1832, he died. He might have lived on, like the patriarchs of the Old Testament, for decades. Therefore his loss came at last like something so unexpected, and was so deeply felt. It seemed impossible that a man in the midst of the enjoyment of his best powers could be torn away."

Prof. Grimm's work is so full and complete in its representation of the most many-sided man whom Europe ever produced, that nothing short of the whole biography can satisfy the intelligent reader. The volume is sure to be widely read and will do more to bring Germany to America than any work which has appeared since Carlyle and Emerson first made Goethe known to American readers. The translation is smooth and spirited, and the publishers have spared no pains to make the book in outward appearance worthy of its contents.