

GOETHE'S PERSONALITY.

CHARACTERIZED BY INCIDENTS FROM HIS LIFE.

BY THE EDITOR.

GOETHE was of a fine stature and a prepossessing noble face. He had large bright eyes and generally wore a serene and kindly expression. We know from many reports of his contemporaries that his appearance was striking, although we may fairly well take for granted that most of the portraits made of Goethe are idealized, and this is especially the case of the bust made by Alexander Trippel (born 1744 at Schaffhausen, died September 24, 1793 at Rome). He met Goethe in Rome, and the bust he made of the poet is commonly called Goethe's Apollo bust, because it bears an unmistakable resemblance to the Belvidere statue of the god of music and poetry. Goethe wrote of this piece of art under September 14, 1787: "My bust is very well executed. Everybody is satisfied with it. Certainly it is wrought in a beautiful and noble style, and I have no objection that posterity should think I looked like this."

As a rule Goethe enjoyed good health, but when a child he not only passed through all the usual children's diseases but also the dangerous black pox. In his eighteenth year at Leipsic he suffered from a hemorrhage of the lungs and remained for some time in a critical condition. In later years he observed the rules of hygienic living and only once afterwards underwent a dangerous disease. Slight disturbances of his health he would not allow to interfere with his work, for he exercised his will power and was firmly convinced that a man could overcome the danger of infection by courage, while fear of a disease rendered the system liable to succumb to it. He said to Eckermann (April 7, 1829):

"It is remarkable what the moral will can accomplish. It pervades the body, so to speak, and puts it in an active condition that throws off all injurious influences. Fear, on the other hand, is a



THE APOLLO BUST OF GOETHE.
By A. Trippel.

condition of cowardly weakness and susceptibility which makes it easy for every foe to gain possession of us."

He repeated this opinion in the last year of his life (March 21, 1831):



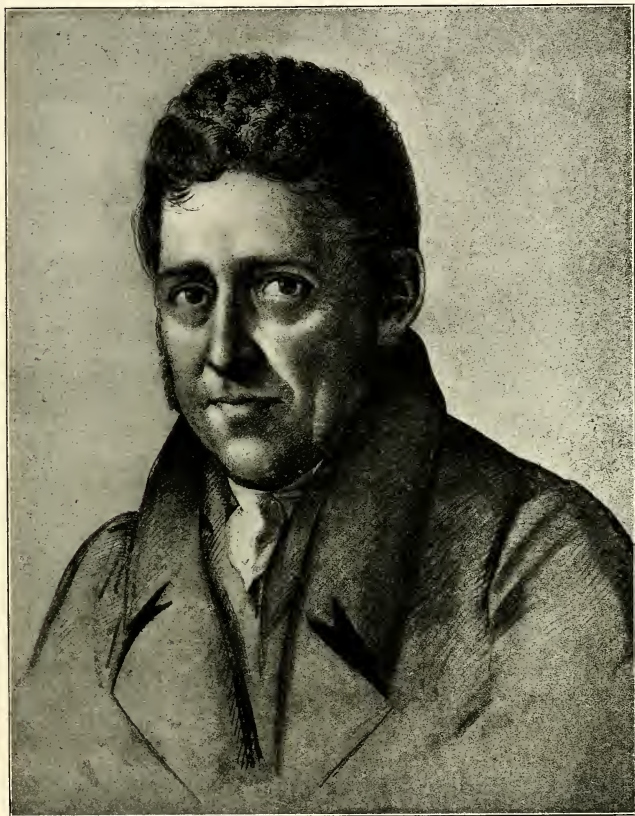
GOETHE IN HIS 83D YEAR.

After an engraving by Schwerdgeburt.

"I often suffer from abdominal trouble, but a determined will and the powers of my superior parts keep me going. The spirit must not yield to the body. I work more easily when the barometer is high than when it is low. Since I have discovered this I try by

greater exertion to overcome the evil effects of the low barometer, and I succeed very well."

Goethe's genius consisted mainly in what may be called "ob-



FRIEDERICH VON MÜLLER, 1797-1849.

Drawing by Schmeller.

jectivity." A significant trait of his character consisted in the ability to view the world and the persons with whom he came in contact, with a minimum degree of personal equation. His soul was like a

perfect mirror which reproduced his surroundings with great correctness and impartiality. He was conscious of this himself. Whenever his genius was praised in his presence he used to explain it in some such words as these, recorded to have been spoken to Chancellor von Müller: "I permit objects to make their impression upon me quietly. I observe the effect and endeavor to reproduce it faithfully and without vitiation. That is the whole secret of what men are pleased to call genius."

In the same way he spoke to M. Soret, the tutor of the young princes: "By no means do I owe my works to my own wisdom, but to thousands of people and things around me that have furnished the material. There came to me fools and sages, bright minds and narrow, childhood and youth as well as mature age. All told me their opinions, how they lived and worked and what experiences they had gathered, and I had nothing else to do but get to work and reap what others had sown for me."

The objectivity of Goethe's character enabled him to work out the *dramatis personae* of his great dramas with great perfection. It is true that the main characters always reflected one or another trait of himself, and mostly in an exaggerated degree. Goethe was Werther himself, and he experienced the pathological condition so marvelously described in his book; but Goethe possessed sufficient strength to diagnose his own case and as soon as he had worked it out in good literary form he had rid himself of the disease.

It is for this reason that Goethe's novels are by no means characteristic of Goethe's genius, and we deem it regrettable that in certain circles they are read more than his other works. Goethe has incorporated in all his works the pathology of his own development, but his novels, "Werther," "Elective Affinities," and "Wilhelm Meister," contain much that would better have been relegated to oblivion. It is true that problems are treated in them which will always command the interest of the student of psychology, but this being the case we must remember that the book should not be taken by the broad public as ideal literature, but should bear a warning sub-title, such as "Studies for the Pathologist." It takes a deeper knowledge of the human mind to appreciate the genius here displayed, which as in all of Goethe's works reflects the objectivity of his mind.

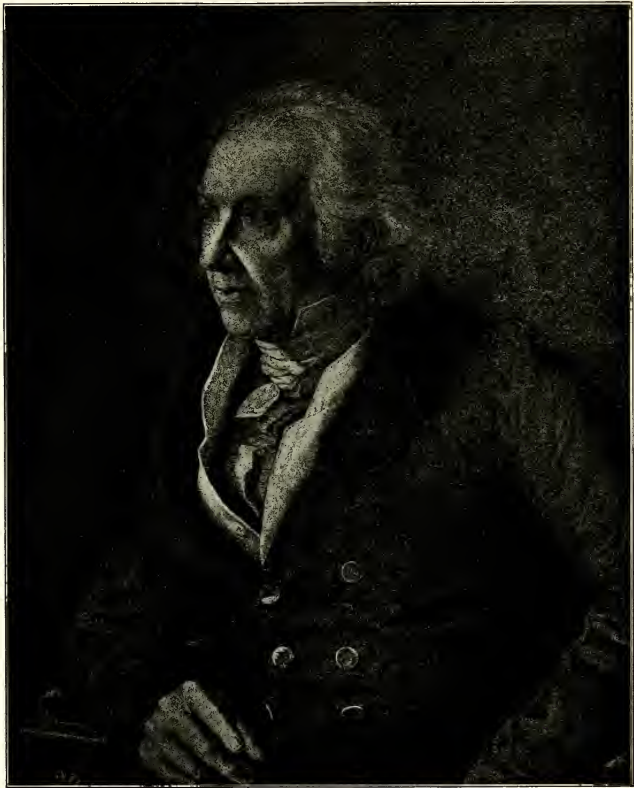
This same objectivity in Goethe's character enabled him to understand persons who were different from himself, and to be just to every one. Part of his success in life is due to his marvelous faculty of treating persons in the proper way, avoiding unnecessary

conflicts and making friends of enemies. This is illustrated in an incident which occurred to him in 1774 when he was still a young man in the period of Storm and Stress.



MIGNON POSING AS AN ANGEL. (WILHELM MEISTER).

While traveling with Lavater he sat at the dinner table at Duisburg together with several guests of the hotel, one of whom was Rector Hasenkampf, a pious but tactless man. While Goethe and the rest were carrying on a jovial conversation, Herr Hasenkampf



KARL FRIEDRICH ZELTER.

interrupted them by asking, "Are you Mr. Goethe?" Goethe nodded assent. "And did you write that notorious book, 'The Sorrows of Young Werther'?" "I did." Then I feel in duty bound to express my horror at that infamous book. May God change your perverted

heart! For woe to that man by whom offense cometh." A painful silence followed, for all present expected the young poet's temper to be aroused, but Goethe answered calmly, "I understand that from your point of view you must judge me as you do, and I respect the honesty of your reproof. Remember me in your prayers." In this way Goethe disarmed the pious rector and won over every heart. The conversation continued merrily, even the rector taking part in it.

Goethe could sympathize with others because he had experienced in his own life much of the fate common to all men. Thus we have a letter from him to Karl Friedrich Zelter, a musician of Berlin with whom he carried on a long correspondence, and to whom he looked up as his musical adviser. Zelter's son had committed suicide, and Goethe wrote to him in these words: "About the deed or misdeed itself, I know of nothing to say. When the *tadium vitæ* attacks a man it can only be regretted, not censured. That the symptoms of this wonderful disease, as natural as it is unnatural, once took possession of my inmost being also, 'Werther' leaves no one in doubt. I know right well what exertion and decisions it cost me at that time to escape the waves of death, just as I have also with great trouble rescued myself and laboriously recovered from many a later shipwreck."

* * *

Goethe's father was a patron of painters, and so the love of art was naturally instilled into the poet from his earliest childhood. We have many sketches by the young Goethe which betray considerable talent, and even though he never became a real artist he did not cease to exercise his eye in seeing beauty and his hand in reproducing on paper the impression received. He never traveled without taking paper and sketch-book with him, and we have innumerable drawings from his hand which, though by no means perfect, possess some interest even for great artists.

Goethe collected all the sketches which he made in his early youth in a portfolio which he called *Juvenilia*. The *Goethe-Gesellschaft* has published the most characteristic of these drawings, and we here reproduce some of them. Most of them are artistic in conception and drawn with a firm yet delicate hand. Take for instance the watch-tower of Sachsenhausen and the church of St. Leonhard, and consider that they were made by a boy in his 15th year who had no special artistic education.

In another drawing the young poet has sketched himself, and we notice his intention to display the characteristic interests of his life. He himself is seated at a table writing, and on the wall in the

background hang his hat and coat together with his sword, and probably a guitar. At the left upper corner of the window is his sketch of his sister, Cornelia. Behind his chair stands an easel with



THE YOUNG POET, DRAWN BY HIMSELF.
From the portfolio *Juvenilia*.

an unfinished landscape upon it. Tradition does not betray the contents of the bottle on the table behind him. In spite of some technical mistakes, the conception of the sketch is admirable and shows both thought and taste. How much Goethe trained himself in



THE WATCH TOWER OF SACHSENHAUSEN ON THE MAIN, OPPOSITE
FRANKFORT.

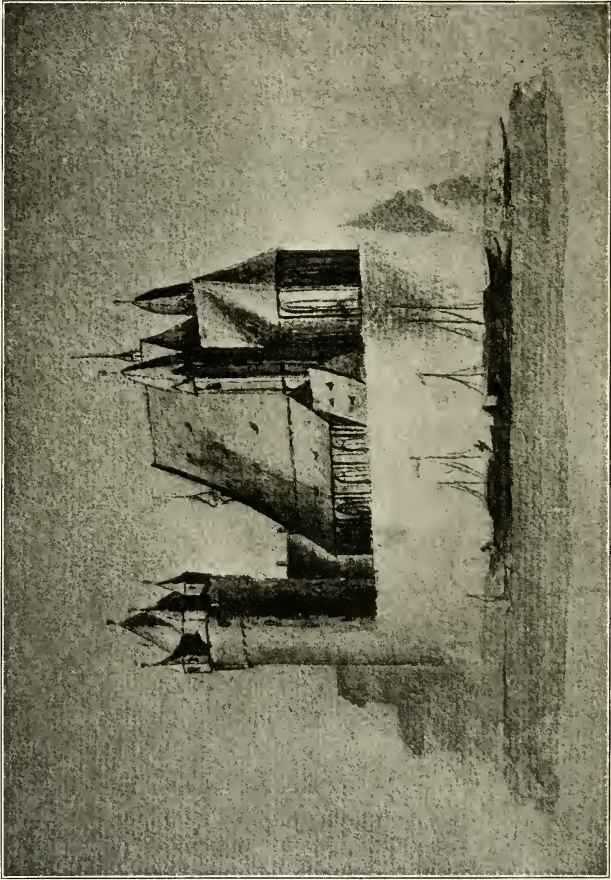
Drawing by Goethe contained in the portfolio *Juvenilia*.

artistic observation appears in the following sentence in "Truth and Fiction": "I saw no old castle, no old building, which I did not reproduce as closely as possible."

Goethe's own home at Weimar was comfortable and betrayed his love of art, but there was no show of luxury, and his study

presented the appearance of Spartan simplicity. In his talks with Eckermann (March 23, 1829) he said:

“Magnificent bulidings and rooms are for princes and kings.



THE CHURCH OF ST. LEONHARD.
Drawing by Goethe in 1764. From the portfolio *Juvenilia*.

He who lives in them feels at ease ; he is contented and wishes for nothing else. It is quite contrary to my nature. In a splendid dwelling such as I had at Karlsbad I am lazy and indolent. Narrow

quarters on the other hand like this poor room where we now are, in somewhat disorderly order, a little Bohemian, are the right thing for me. They permit my nature entire freedom to be active and to make something of myself."



AN ETCHING BY GOETHE.
 From the portfolio *Juvenilia*.

Two days later he touched on the same subject:

"You see no sofa in my room; I always sit in my old wooden chair and only in the last few months I have arranged a sort of

rest for my head. Surroundings of comfortable, tasteful furniture dull my thought and reduce me to a passive condition."

While Goethe's study was simple and serviceable his home was large and comfortable and did not lack a display of art. One of his friends, the naturalist-philosopher Karl Gustav Carus of Dresden, describes Goethe's house at Weimar thus:

"Immediately upon entrance into the modestly large house, built in a simple antique style, the inclinations of the owner were clearly indicated by the broad easy stairway as well as the decoration of the banisters with the hound of Diana and the young fawn

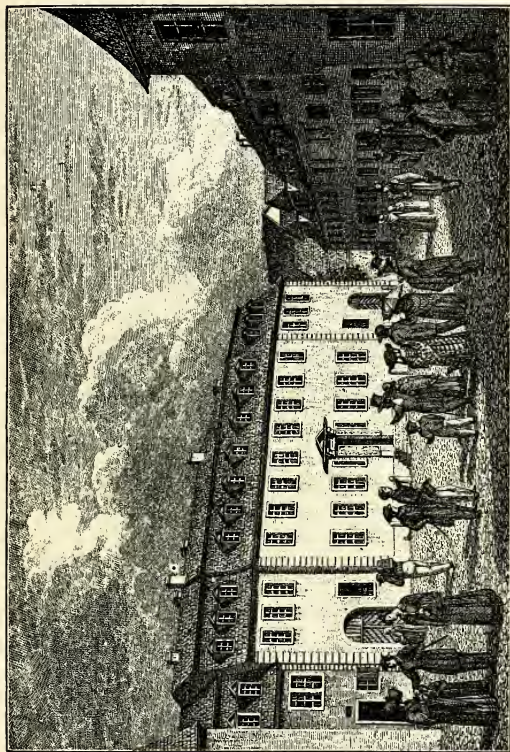


GOETHE'S STUDY.

Drawn by O. Schultz after a photograph by L. Held.

of Belvidere. Farther up a group of Castor and Pollux agreeably surprise the eyes, and on the main floor the guest was greeted by a hospitable "Salve" in the hall. This room itself was richly decorated with busts and engravings, and towards the back of the house opened through another hall of statuary upon the gaily entwined balcony and a stairway leading into the garden. Conducted into another room the guest found himself surrounded anew with works of art and antiquities. Beautifully burnished vessels of chalcedony stood around on marble tables; above the sofa green hangings half concealed a large copy of the old mural painting known by the

name of "the Aldobrand Wedding";¹ while the selection of pieces of art kept under glass and in frames, and mostly representing objects of ancient history, deserved the closest attention."



Warum stehen sie da vor?
 Ich nicht Thüre da und Thor

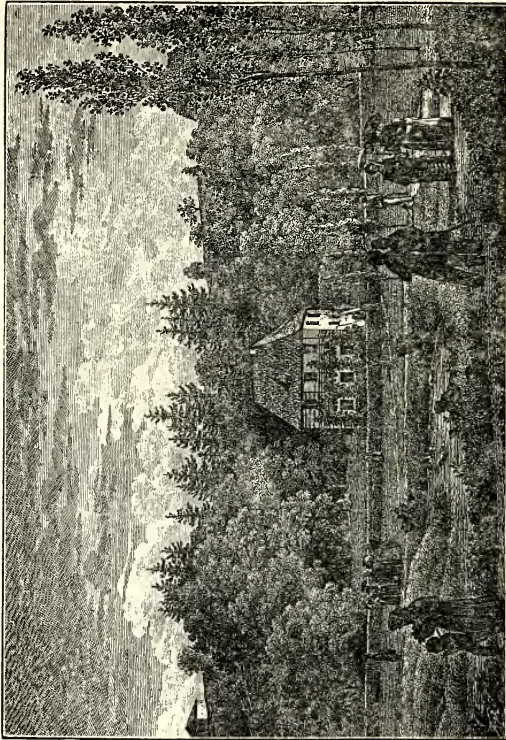
Hören sie getroffen herein
 Würden wohl empfangen seyn
 Goethe 17828

GOETHE'S HOUSE IN WEIMAR.*

¹ The Aldobrand Wedding is a picture dating presumably from the age of Augustus, which has been discovered (1606) near the Church of St. Maria Maggiore at Rome, on the grounds which formerly belonged to Mæcenas. It represents the preparation for a wedding, consisting of three groups. It was named after Cardinal Aldobrandini, its first owner, and is now kept in the Vatican library.

* A gift from Duke Karl August, 1792. Johann Walther Goethe, the poet's grandson and the last of the family, bequeathed it to the state of Saxe-Weimar at his death, April 15, 1885. Now the seat of the Goethe National Museum.

Goethe loved traveling. He journeyed along the Rhine, through Switzerland and Italy, and frequently visited Karlsbad and Teplitz; but he was always glad to return to his home in Weimar, and in one of his letters to Christiana Vulpius, his faithful consort, he wrote:



*Übermüthig sieht's nicht aus
Dieses stille Gartenhaus
Allen die darin verwehrt
Ward ein guter Muth bescher
Goethe 1828*

GOETHE'S GARDEN HOUSE.

"From east to west,
At home is best."

[Von Osten nach Westen—
Zu Hause am besten.]

He always dressed as occasion demanded. At court or when receiving guests he would appear in a somber black court dress with

his decorations on his breast, but he did not hesitate to be seen by his intimate friends on hot days in his shirt sleeves, or in his comfortable woolen gown in winter.

Goethe enjoyed gardening, and his philosophical as well as scientific interest in plant life is sufficiently proved by his poem on the "Metamorphosis of Plants." He stayed frequently in his little garden house outside the city and loved to meet his friends there.

A humorous incident is told by Goethe of Gottsched,² who was considered a kind of dictator of German literature. While Goethe was a student at Leipsic Gottsched still basked in the glory of his fame though he had long since passed the zenith of his significance. He was a pompous man of the old style belonging to the period of the full-bottomed wig, the French allonge periwig, and Goethe criticised him with impartiality as an author in the second book of his



"Truth and Fiction." When Schlosser visited Leipsic Goethe called on Gottsched in company with his future brother-in-law, and gives an account of this interview. We quote from Oxenford's translation of "Truth and Fiction":

"I cannot pass over the visit we paid Gottsched, as it exemplifies the character and manners of that man. He lived very respectably in the first story of the Golden Bear, where the elder Breitkopf, on account of the great advantage which Gottsched's writings, translations, and other aids had brought to the trade, had promised him a lodging for life.

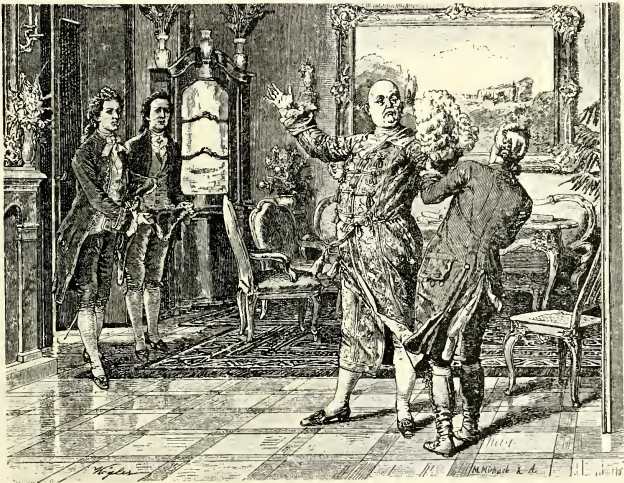
"We were announced. The servant led us into a large chamber, saying his master would come immediately. Now, whether we misunderstood a gesture he made, I cannot say; at any rate, we thought

²Gottsched was born February 2, 1700, at Juditten in Eastern Prussia, and died September 12, 1766, at Leipsic, where he had lived since 1724. In 1730 he became professor of poetry, and in 1734 professor of logic and metaphysics.

he directed us into an adjoining room. We entered, to witness a singular scene; for, on the instant, Gottsched, that tall, broad, gigantic man, came in at the opposite door in a morning-gown of green



damask lined with red taffeta ; but his monstrous head was bald and uncovered. This, however, was to be immediately provided for. The servant rushed in at a side-door with a full-bottomed wig in his hand (the curls came down to the elbows), and handed the head-ornament to his master with gestures of terror. Gottsched, without manifesting the least vexation, raised the wig from the servant's arm with his left hand, and, while he very dexterously swung it up on his head, gave the poor fellow such a box on the ear with his right paw, that the latter went spinning out at the door, as is often seen in comedies ; whereupon the respectable old grandfather invited



GOTTSCHED REBUKES HIS SERVANT.

us quite gravely to be seated, and kept up a pretty long discourse with good grace."

* * *

Goethe was a man of the world. It is true that in his youth he passed through a period of fermentation in which, Titan-like, he could rebel against authority in any form, but when he saw more of the world he followed the behests of common sense and respected rank and power even when due merely to heredity. He was a poet by nature, but in Weimar he had become a man of affairs and a courtier. In this respect he was different from Beethoven who re-

mained an outspoken democrat all his life, at least a non-respector of rank, preserving this tendency even in the presence of his imperial friend, the liberal-minded Emperor Joseph, who not only distinguished him frequently with marks of personal friendship, but also humored his often rude independence. Bettina von Arnim tells a story which illustrates this contrast between Goethe and Beethoven.

One day during their stay at Teplitz Beethoven and Goethe were walking together when they met the whole coterie of royal personages. Beethoven went so far as to show a certain disrespect



CARICATURE OF GOETHE.

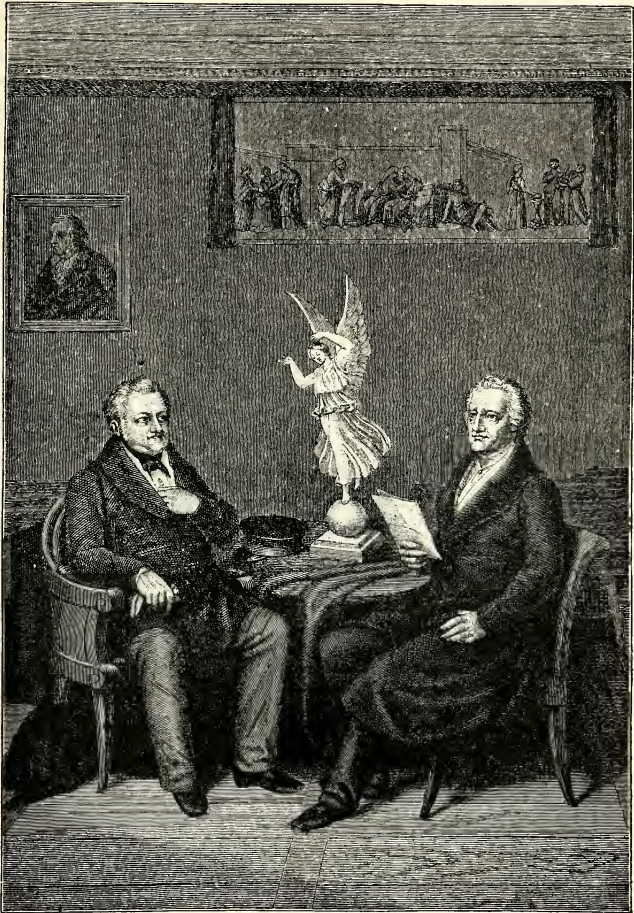
By Daniel Maclise after a similar caricature by Thackeray.



A CARICATURE OF BEETHOVEN.

by passing through their midst regardless of their rank, while Goethe modestly doffed his hat and made room for them to pass. Bettina tells us that Goethe was somewhat perplexed by the "quite untamed" personality of the great composer, while Beethoven blamed Goethe for his courtier-like behavior and on the next day following vented his indignation in these words: "Kings and princes can indeed bestow titles and orders, but they can not make great men, who therefore must be held in respect. When two come together such as Goethe and I, then these great gentlemen must observe what it is

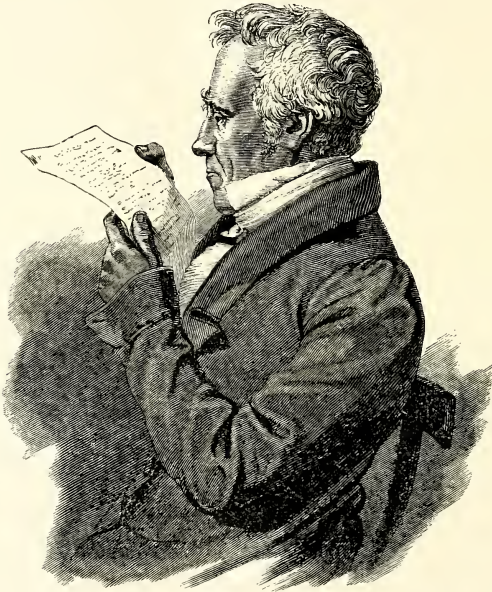
that counts for great with such as we. Yesterday we met the whole imperial family [of Austria], and Goethe disengaged himself from my arm in order to stand aside. I pressed my hat down on my head



DUKE KARL AUGUST AND GOETHE.
After an engraving by Schwerdgeburdt.

and went through the thickest of the crowd with my arms hanging at my sides. Princes and courtiers drew up in a double line, the Duke of Weimar took off his hat to me and the Empress greeted me first. Much to my amusement I saw the procession file by Goethe who stood at one side bowing with his hat in his hand. I took him roundly to task for it afterwards."

This makes Goethe appear in a rather unfavorable light, but we must consider that Beethoven also went too far in his brusque



JOHANN FRIEDRICH COTTA, BARON COTTENDORF.
Goethe's publisher and founder of *Die Horen*.

manner, and he might perhaps on second thought have granted that even royalty ought to be treated with gentlemanly behavior.

To complement this trait of Goethe's character we ought to say that while he admired his own sovereign, Karl August, and while he respected his rights even in punctilious formalities, he was by no means a pliable courtier, but in his official duties whenever he thought that his own judgment was better than his sovereign's, he insisted on his point with great tenacity so that the Duke is reported to have

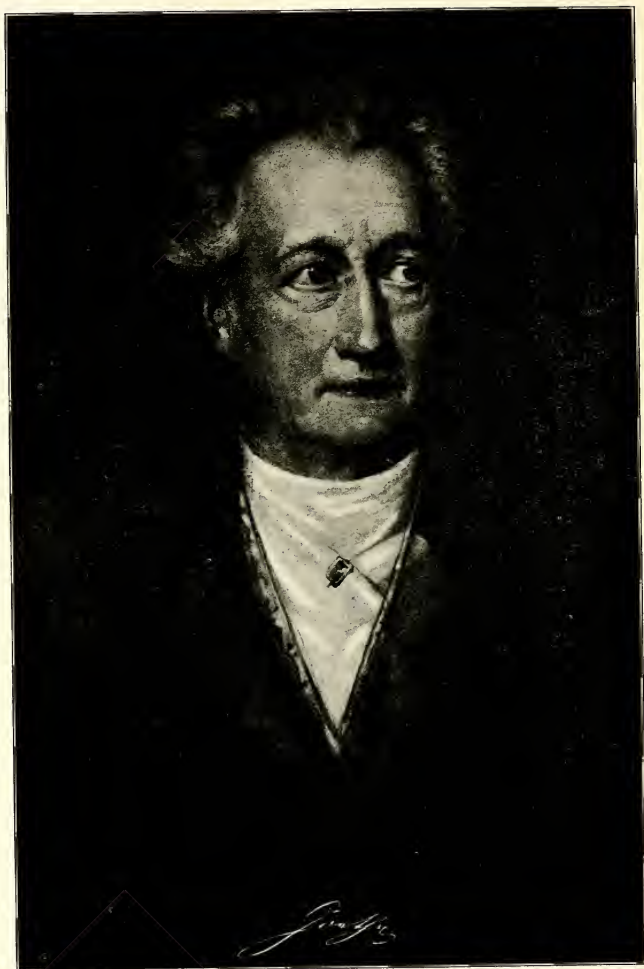
complained sometimes of his obstinacy. Once while disagreeing about filling a chair at the university of Jena, the Duke finally broke off the conversation by saying in a tone of comradeship, "Thou art an odd fellow and canst not stand contradiction."

* * *

Though Goethe was upon the whole very simple in his habits of life and in a way frugal, he spent much money, partly for his travels, partly for books and art treasures, and also for his wines. Further we have good reason to know that neither his wife Christiana nor his daughter-in-law Ottilie were good housekeepers. He drew a very good income from his books and received many gifts from home. When his mother died he inherited the fortune of his parents which was not inconsiderable. Payments made to him between 1795 and 1832 by Cotta alone, his main publisher, amounted to 401,090 thalers; and between the years 1832 and 1865, until the expiration of the copyright, his heirs drew the additional amount of 154,824 thalers. He kept a faithful account of his expenses, and yet his pecuniary affairs were never prosperous, and he frequently complained of being short of funds.

* * *

Goethe loved jovial company and wrote several jolly drinking songs. In his younger years especially he drank wine rather freely, but when he grew older he became suspicious of all stimulants. He drank no tea and very little coffee, deeming both to be poisonous, and also abstained from the use of tobacco. He took beer or strong liquors only as an exception, but being a Rhinelander it was difficult for him to give up wine even when he began to doubt its wholesomeness. Once he wrote (in 1780): "I drink almost no wine at all and gain daily in insight and ability to lead an active life." In 1786 he wrote from Italy: "I am very moderate. The red wine of this country I can not stand, and like St. Louis I drink it mixed with much water." But these moods did not make him a total abstainer. He continued to drink a glass of Madeira for his forenoon lunch and a bottle of Würzburg wine for mid-day dinner, while in the evening he enjoyed either a punch or a glass of champagne. It is remarkable that he could stand so much, but it is noteworthy that he recommends moderation to his son while a student at the university of Heidelberg. In a fatherly letter he writes in 1808: "We are living on in the same old way, quietly and busily, especially, too, as far as wine is concerned, with regard to which it pleases me to learn from your letter that you beware of drinking which has



GOETHE (BY RUMPF).

become so very much the fashion although it militates more than one thinks against a prudent, cheerful and active life."

An anecdote from the poet's sojourn in Karlsbad is told in Goethe's own words by Professor Luden of Jena as follows:

"Walking up and down as was my habit, I repeatedly came across an old man of perhaps 78 or 80 years of age, who leaning on his gold-headed cane passed along the same street coming and going. I learned that he was a very deserving retired general of a prominent old family. I noticed several times that the old man looked at me sharply, even standing still and looking back at me after I had passed. I paid no special attention to this at the time because I had had similar experiences before. Once, however, I started to take a stroll on the side path in order to look at something or other more particularly. The old man came up to me in a friendly manner, slightly lifted his hat, to which of course I suitably responded, and addressed me in the following fashion: 'Your name is Mr. Goethe, is it not?'—Quite right.—'From Weimar?'—Right again.—'You have written books, haven't you?'—Oh yes.—'And made verses?'—That too.—'They are said to be fine.'—Hm!—'Have you written much?'—Some might think so.—'Is it hard to write verses?'—So so.—'It depends a good deal on one's mood I fancy? Whether a person has eaten and drunk well, doesn't it?'—It amounts to about that.—'Now see! You ought not to waste your time in Weimar, but in my opinion you should come to Vienna.'—I've often thought of it.—'Now see! It's fine in Vienna, they have good things to eat and drink!'—Hm!—'And they make a lot of such people who can write verses.'—Hm!—'Yes indeed, such people—if you are a good fellow, you see, and know how to live—are received in the first and finest houses.'—Hm!—'Do come and try! Let me know when you come, for I have a wide acquaintance, relatives and influence. Just write: Goethe from Weimar, met at Karlsbad. The last is necessary to remind me because I have so much on my mind.'—I'll not fail to.—'But tell me though, what have you written?'—All sorts of things from Adam to Napoleon, from Ararat to Blocksberg, from the cedar to the bramble bush.—'They say it is widely known.'—Hm! Unfortunately.—'Too bad that I have never read anything of yours, and never heard of you before! Have new revised editions of your writings appeared?'—Oh yes, probably.—'And perhaps more will appear?'—Let us hope so.—'Well, but see! then I will not buy your works. I only buy final editions. Otherwise one always has the annoyance of owning a poor book or else one must buy the same book the second time. Therefore in

order to be secure I always wait until the author is dead before I buy his books. It is a principle with me, and I can not depart from this principle even in your case.'—Hm!"

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Another encounter of a humorous kind is reported of a captain of hussars, Franz von Schwanenfeld, who happened to cross Goethe's path in Teplitz in 1833. The gallant officer had reached the place at the end of June and could not get a room except in the basement of a garden house situated on the promenades. One morning the light of his room was darkened by the figure of a fine old gentleman who sat on the bench just outside his window and drank a mug of water which the servant brought him. This was repeated so frequently that our hussar was annoyed and yet he was attracted by the fine features of the stranger. He opened his window and called out, "Good morning!" but received no reply except a glance of rebuke. Undaunted the captain continued, "Are you a hypochondriac?" No answer. The question was repeated in a voice of thunder. Finally the old gentleman spoke: "Strange!" said he. "Indeed it is strange," replied the captian, "here you are sick and sit out in the cold fog drinking your water alone in solitude and silence. I would rather drink ink in company with others and would be cured the sooner. Do you know, I would be disposed to come to blows with you."

Goethe's eyes opened wide in amazement, and the captain continued: "No danger! I like your hero face too much!"

The stranger was pleased with the aggressive soldier who clothed his offensive language so adroitly in flattery. They entered into conversation and soon were walking together arm in arm. They talked about Schiller and Goethe, about the Duke of Weimar and the war, and the captain said he was very fond of "Tasso" but disliked "Werther." The stranger called the hussar his doctor because he had cured him of his attack of hypochondria, and on the following day they met again, but this time the patient was in company with another gentleman whom the doctor took to be a forester or the tenant of some large estate, and he tried to instill into both a more joyous conception of life. After a few days Herr von Schwanenfeld was informed that his acquaintance was Goethe, and the latter's companion whom he had addressed so unceremoniously, the Duke Karl August.

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A curious incident is reported by Dr. G. Parthey, of a Berlin woman who may be characterized as a German Mrs. Malaprop.

He quotes her as giving the following account of her meeting with the famous poet:

"I had made up my mind to visit the great Goethe just once, and so one day when I rode through Weimar I went to his garden and gave the gardener one dollar so that he would hide me in an arbor and give me the wink when Goethe came along. Now when he came down the path and the gardener beckoned to me, I stepped out and said: 'Worshipful sir!' Then he stood still, put his hands behind his back, looked at me and asked, 'Do you know me?' I answered, 'Great man, who is there that does not know you?' and began to recite,

"Firmly bound, the mold of clay
In its dungeon walls doth stand."³

At that he made a bow, turned around and went on. So I had my way and had seen the great Goethe."

* * *

It was characteristic of Goethe that he was opposed to all gossip, and whenever slander was reported to him he resented it strongly. Once he said to Chancellor von Müller, "Through such malevolent and indiscreet inventions one makes enemies and embitters one's own existence. I would rather hang myself than be constantly negative, constantly in the opposition, constantly ready to shoot at the faults and shortcomings of my fellows and neighbors. One must be very young and frivolous to tolerate such things." On another occasion he replied very sharply to a visitor who related some scandal, "Keep the sweepings of your dirt at home, and do not bring it into my house."

Once while passing through a park at Weimar his attention was called to a couple of lovers who thought themselves unobserved. They were known in Weimar, and when asked whether he had seen them Goethe answered, "I did, but I don't believe it."

* * *

Goethe was lenient in judging harmless joys and insisted especially upon the protection of the liberties of children. He used to complain that the police disturbed the people in some of their innocent enjoyments. Eckermann reports the following remarks under the date of March 12, 1828:

"I only need look out of the window in our dear Weimar to become aware of how things are with us. When recently the snow lay on the ground and my neighbor's children wished to try their

³ This is the beginning of Schiller's best known poem "The Bell."

little sleds in the street, a police officer was immediately on the spot, and I saw the poor little things run away as fast as they could. Now when spring sunshine entices them out of the houses and they want to play some little game with their companions in front of their doors, I see that they are always uneasy as if they were not sure and as if they feared the arrival of some police tyrant. No boy can crack a whip or sing or call out but the police is on hand at once to forbid him. In our town everything tends toward making young people tame before their time and to drive out of them all naturalness, all originality, and wildness, so that in the end there is nothing left but the Philistine."

When the ancient custom of burning up old brooms on St. John's day was prohibited by a regulation of the Weimar police, Goethe wrote down the following lines to be circulated as a propaganda against this interference with boyish merry-making:

"St. Johns-day fires shan't be forbid,
Nor hindered harmless joys;
For of old brooms we must be rid,
And boys will still be boys."

[Johannisfeuer sei unverwehrt,
Die Freude nie verloren!
Besen werden immer stumpf gekehrt,
Und Jungens immer geboren.]