Menzel's View of Goethe.

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alleled. That he has failed of the highest fulfillment of his high vocation is certain, but he was neither epicurean nor sensualist, if we consider his life as a whole.

Yet he had failed to reach his highest development, and how was it that he was so content with this incompleteness, nay, the serenity of men? His serenity alone, in such a time of skepticism and sorrowful seeking, gives him a claim to all our study. See how he rides at anchor, lordly, rich in freight, every white sail ready to be unfurled at a moment's warning. And it must be a very slight survey, which can confound this calm self-trust with selfish indifference of temperament. Indeed, he in various ways, which I shall mention in a future essay, lets us see how little he was helped in this respect by temperament. But we need not his declaration; the case speaks for itself. Of all that perpetual accomplishment, that unwearyed constructiveness, the basis must be sunk deeper than in temperament. He never halts, never repines, never is puzzled, like other men; that tranquility, full of life, that ceaseless but graceful motion, "without haste, without rest," for which we all are striving, he has attained. And is not this lore of the noblest kind,—Reverence the highest, have patience with the lowest. Let this day's performance of the meanest duty be thy religion. Are the stars too distant, pick up that pebble that lies at thy foot, and from it learn the All.

I hope, in the next number of the Dial, to give some account of that period, when a too determined action of the intellect limited and blinded him for the rest of his life. I mean only in comparison with what he should have been. Had it been otherwise, what would he not have attained, who, even thus self-enchained, rose to Ulyssen stature. Connected with this is the fact, of which he spoke with such sarcastic solemnity to Eckerman, "My works will never be popular." I wish, also, to consider the Faust, Elective Affinities, Apprenticeship and Pilgrimages of Wilhelm Meister, and Iphigenia, as affording indications of the progress of his genius here, of its wants and prospects in future spheres of activity. For the present, I bid him farewell as his friends always have done, in hope and trust of a better meeting.

Yes, yes, but still I doubt. "It is true, he says all this in a thousand beautiful forms, but he does not warm, he does not inspire me. In his certainty is no bliss, in his hope no love, in his faith no glow. How is this? A friend, of a delicate penetration, observed, "His atmosphere was so calm, so full of light, that I hoped he would teach me his secret of cheerfulness. But I found, after long search, that he had no better way, if he wished to

check emotion of clear thought, than to go to work. As his mother tells us, 'My son, if he had a grief, made it into a poem, and so got rid of it.' This mode is founded in truth, but does not involve the whole truth. I want the method which is indicated by the phrase, 'Perseverance of the Saints.'"

This touched the very point. Goethe attained only the perseverance of a man. He was true, for he knew that nothing can be false to him who is true, and that to genius nature had pledged her protection. Had he but seen a little farther, he would have given this covenant a higher expression, and been more deeply true to a diviner nature.

I, the rain has spoiled the farmer's day; Shall sorrow put my books away? Thereby are two days lost. Nature shall mind her own affairs, I will attend my proper cares, In rain, or sun, or frost.

Source: The Dial (January 1841) pp. 347