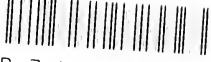


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A STUDY IN THE ETHICS OF THE
EARLY ROMANTIC SCHOOL
IN GERMANY

BY
HARRY SPENCER BLACKISTON

A THESIS
PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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Since the writers of the Early Romantic School in Germany are so often censured and even deemed as being apart from their times simply because of their behavior, the desire awoke in me to seek out the motives which caused the actions of this group to become the ~~basis~~^{butt} of merciless criticism. In this endeavor I feel greatly indebted to Dr. Daniel B. Shumway for his untiring efforts and kindly advice, and also to Dr. Emil Doernenburg for his helpful criticism.

Philadelphia, May, 1920.

A STUDY IN THE ETHICS OF THE EARLY ROMANTIC SCHOOL IN GERMANY.

INTRODUCTION.

It is very probable that any writer or group of writers will be subjected to the pen of the critic, whether they abound in deficiencies or not. But, should the ethics of the individual or group diverge somewhat from the line drawn by society, there is no limit to the untold severity of merciless criticism, no element of defense in the many comments. Still it must be remembered that no one can calculate the depth of a body of water by merely scanning the surface; nor can anyone fully realize the profundity of any situation by viewing it superficially. In other words, it is absolutely necessary that the critic resort to detailed investigation. He must go below the surface to solve the complicated problems which may be presented. Thereby he will acquaint himself with the factors that mould the pattern for the times.

Then again, the average human being does or says as he or she sees fit, and can very often furnish justifiable reasons therefor. Everyone reserves for oneself the privileged right of personal opinion and belief. But herein lies a decisive difference. Some people are lovers of the truth, and therefore speak candidly and act openly; others are prone to lose courage and try to hide behind a transparent veil of false modesty. Those, who can be included within this latter category, are only reticent and untrue to themselves, simply because they are in the majority. If the proportion be reversed, they would be more than glad to feel the relief from the pressure removed. But those poor unfortunates, who are forced by their nature and spurred on by their immediate environment to be outspoken, become down-trodden social outcasts. If we ask ourselves why this is so, the answer is: primarily because they are in the minority, as all persecuted classes are. No credit or encouragement is given them for their originality. Yet they are as determined as ever in their aim, and proceed with the innovations that are criteria for their own development. Such testimony figured in the case of the Early

Romantic School, which flourished at the close of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth. Like other human beings they were susceptible to psychic influences; they were in harmony with the prevailing tendencies of their environment, and lived in accordance with the same. Thus we see a gradual development of their surroundings as a working basis for their morals.

BACKGROUND: FACTORS ANTEDATING THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT.

Without the least doubt, the members of the group in question made a decided departure from the status quo of accepted moral law. But let us not fail to realize that there were deep-seated causes for such a metamorphosis in life; and since life's stage is equipped with a natural background, the motives for this change must be analyzed. The Italian Renaissance brought about a marked revival not only of Greek art, but also of pagan philosophy and religion. During the reign of Louis XIV this wave surged over France; but it did not break over Germany until the middle of the eighteenth century, after which time there dawned an era of restlessness in almost every field of activity. Then through Winckelmann's initiative his countrymen awoke to the significance of pagan art and culture. A distinctly new method of procedure took place in the intellectual life of Germany. Winckelmann did nothing more than emancipate himself from the traditions and sentiments prevailing in his own century. There was no denunciation of Christianity; it was simply ignored. The arrows of free thought and action were arrayed against the pronounced bigotry and hypocrisy then existing among the clergy, and not against Christianity. The result was crystallized into stereotyped doctrines, which became the watchwords of a certain clique of men, the well-known party of the *Aufklärung*.¹ The movement began with the perception that honest men are bound to think for themselves; and it ended

¹ Cf., the various histories of German literature, particularly Vogt und Koch: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, II, 130 ff; 535.

in attempts to mould all men to one pattern. At the outset it helped to sweep away bigotry and superstition, only to restore the same, when, in the course of time, it became narrow, its prescriptions rigid and suffocating. The ultimate consequence was to supply every citizen with a ready-made code of morals, by which all his actions from birth to death were to be regulated. Thus this period became characteristic of narrowness of vision, utter absence of imagination, extreme utilitarianism and a consequent hostility to everything which pointed beyond this temporal sphere of existence.

It appealed to the Philistines, whose most powerful champion and representative Nicolai,² the author, publisher and moralist, exerted all his efforts to suppress the ever-growing measures of the reformers by the narrow principles of his school. The result of his endeavors, however, was in the end to make him a target for every would-be critic. For such tendencies ignored the emotional nature of man, and proved to be too inadequate to satisfy the warm-hearted imaginative Germans. Louder and louder became the protests; a tidal wave of reaction deluged the land. In the seventh and eighth decades of the century the pressure became so great, that a violent upheaval took place in all Germany. It found expression in the so-called *Sturm und Drang* movement,³ a revolt against authority and existing social order. Never before had individualism been preached with such vehemence and aggressiveness. It tried to destroy every hindrance to individual growth, to laud primitive unadulterated nature, instinct and passion, to throw off the outworn bonds of medieval society. Young Goethe and Schiller brought this revolt to its climax in literary monuments.

Superficially this period of reform was short-lived, that is, in literature; but it was as a seed on virgin soil to the younger generation. Even though Goethe and Schiller had set the pace for this revolt, they were naturally growing older, becoming set, as it were, in their opinions. Their youthful ideas gave place

² Vogt und Koch: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, II, 151 ff; 537.

³ *Ibid.*, II, 224 ff; 543.

to the calmness of mature manhood. They then moved along classical lines exclusively, and employed the elaborately planned rules and formulæ of the ancients. As the century advanced, classicism⁴ too saw its decline. In France the crisis of the Revolution was near at hand.⁵ Germany, her nearest neighbor, must necessarily sense her immediate influence. Consequently the new movement fell into the same category with the *Aufklärung*. It too became sober. Goethe's pantheism could no longer warm the hearts of the masses. The people wanted to be enthused, to become intoxicated and enraptured, to feel a knight's enthusiasm and a monk's ecstasy, to rave poetically and to dream melodiously. The German people were in a state of extraordinary ferment. The military despotism of Friedrich Wilhelm had slackened in the feeble hands of his incapable successor. And with the relaxation of military discipline, there was a wholesale abandonment of all restraint. A state of license and freedom ensued, which to the narrow-minded critic was as glaring and as widely spread as the excesses that disgraced the English court of Charles II. The only check to the excesses of the time had been the ineffective one by the leaders of the Enlightenment. But they were now dead; and the young generation felt that the vitality of their doctrines had died with them. Thus the clouds bursted, bringing along a subsequent revolt against this dry wooden utilitarianism, namely romanticism.⁶

PROGRAM OF THE EARLY ROMANTIC SCHOOL—A SYNONYM FOR
INNOVATIONS IN MORAL LAW.

In this new school of Romanticism the revolutionary factors of the *Sturm und Drang* period gradually gave way to a spirit of longing and desire,—an impulse which ruled the intellectual world for generations, and which is still believed to be the chief hope for the future. It found more or less impassioned and

⁴ Vogt und Koch: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, II, 307 ff. 556.

⁵ Treitschke, II. von: *Deutsche Geschichte im 10. Jhlt.*, Chap. I.

⁶ Vogt und Koch: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, II, 333 ff; 560.

defiant expression in every land: but its earliest and strongest impulse is generally regarded to have sprung from Germany. Here it was fought in the realm of the intellect: in France, on the other hand, it was staged on the battlefields. This revolt against the old-established order, however, was nothing more than a revived *Sturm und Drang*.

The romanticists and their disciples on the whole yearned for color and variety, demanding something warm and musical. They desired nothing that was severe, cold and alien to their nature. Naturally they avoided anything like Goethe's *Achillëis* or Schiller's *Braut von Messina* with its solemn antique choruses, because these productions bore a too classic stamp. Democracy was the gist of their annals; liberty and individualism formed the basis for the texts of their sermons. Then again, there was no laxity in the execution of their principles. In short, they practiced what they preached. Freedom was exercised in every respect. There dawned a broader conception of moral law. The sceptical half-cynical rule of Friedrich the Great had left men's minds free and unrestrained, whereby imagination was everywhere aroused. The result was a very natural and logical coincidence. From the individualistic tendency, acquired during their youth, developed self-centred thought and action. Therefore they were obliged to formulate a new code of morals, abiding by the same with deplorable consistency,—the most obvious cause for bitter criticism. The secret of their method in doing things might be summed up in a single sentence,—a sentence which to the superficial mind would seem a mere truism: they believed and acted by being believers and actors. What they did is explained by what they were. The early romanticists, all of them, lived for themselves alone. The state was nothing: the individual was all. This was the theory, this was the practice of their life. The individualistic idea was never forgotten. They were like the legendary Curtius, willing for themselves, to take a forlorn leap into darkness in quest of their ideal. Everything was to be dared, everything endured, to make the individual greater than it was. Obstacles to morality or convention

did not exist for them. Anything was easily disregarded, if it curtailed, to any extent, their method for self-development.

But what more could be expected? Could anyone conceive of Tieck, for example, as a conservative young man, knowing that he learned to read from a book like Goethe's *Götz*? Even though crude in construction, *Götz* is a genuine warm and full-blooded picture. The reader's sympathy is involuntarily enlisted in behalf of the law breaker, whose sturdy manhood and stubbornness bring him into conflict with the state. Then, too, the revolutionary spirit of Schiller's *Räuber* was the keynote of the age. These young radicals blame society and not the Titan, who cannot help his having been made on a larger scale than his opponents. Thereby they voice the sentiments of Schiller, the youthful disciple of Rousseau, who created a production, that is expressive of the revolt of a powerful nature against conventional reality. The reformer takes this step, because convention places its narrow barriers called law and custom in his way on all sides. For according to him, a great man should be a law unto himself. Society is arranged for the convenience and comfort of fools, and not of wise men; of pygmies, not of giants. A giant would be justified in trampling upon the laws made for the guidance of pygmy lives. But the pygmies, being so much more numerous than giants, are, after all, collectively the stronger; and by their petty needle pricks they are apt to harass the solitary Titan, until he rises in wrath, breaks down their legal hedges and barriers, and wages war with them single-handed. In the eyes of the world he becomes a malefactor, a criminal, but not so the revolutionist. Yet in this category, we have nothing but the effect of the Kantian doctrines which pervaded the minds of the reformers of the time.

In this respect, the prevailing tendency of the life of these radicals is extreme individualism. Only the raw material of their cognition was found in the outer world; and it was the mind which endowed this raw material with form. All nature, as they knew it, was a product of the human mind. Each individual observer compels the objects to submit to the functions

of his mind; and therefore he is a law-giver. Within each individual resides moral law as the most complete expression of man's highest dignity; and this law is felt instinctively by him. The true freedom of man lies in the obedience to moral law, in submission to the voice of duty which speaks from within. Around this central point revolves his spiritual existence. Everything else in the world is consequently subject to doubt and misrepresentation. Thus the dictates of duty alone were to them a direct and unmistakable revelation of the divine.

With this hypothesis in the foreground the romanticists were naturally stirred to action by Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*,—a portrayal of the disintegration of feudal society. For it is a man's usefulness, which finally must secure him a place in society. Goethe was well aware that society had not yet reached this stage; but he merely wished to indicate the direction which the development of the future must inevitably take. So the quest for the ideal, which drew most of the romanticists into a life of adventure, was just the individual manifestation of restless discontent,—a factor which animates society at large, and is slowly revolutionizing it in accordance with the changed conditions of modern life. But this element of reform became more and more pronounced in the romantic writers. In spite of the revolutionary influences that colored the environment of their youth, they had been held in check by their strict religious parents, who were staunch disciples of the *Enlighteners*. And, of course, they had been between two fires, so to speak, namely: paternal love on the one hand, and duty to themselves on the other. Their heart's desire had always been to put their own plans into execution. But with conflicting views on every side, they were apparently at sea. There was no landing place in sight for their aims. In despair they gave up hope, and lost all interest in the project of self-development; and through carelessness as to their conduct, they permitted themselves to drift along aimlessly. But when they saw in the background of Berlin Schleiermacher and Rahel's salon, a safe harbor, with Friedrich Schlegel as their pilot, they lost no time in setting sail;

and they were soon headed toward this port, where they dropped anchor. With prospects of their dreams being realized, they forthwith allied themselves with Rahel Levin and her followers.⁷

RAHEL LEVIN AND HER SALON—THE HAVEN OF REFUGE FOR
THE ROMANTICISTS AND THEIR NEW MORAL CODE.

It was Friedrich Schlegel's quick perception of the common need, that led him in particular to this little society, whose main bond of union was the admiration felt by its members for the freedom and sense of emancipation characterizing young Goethe, which by no means was the common taste in Berlin. Like the romanticists, Berlin society was immersed in numerous conflicting tendencies in morals, philosophy and religion. At one extreme was the sober utilitarian life of the *Enlighteners*, with whom religion and even the human passions were regarded superficially. At the other was the higher fashionable circle around the court, consisting of snobs, hypocrites, and for the most part insincere personages, who used religion as a cloak on ecclesiastical occasions, abandoning it at other times in preference to licentiousness and coarse unrestraint. Half way between lay the Jewish salons, where black-eyed Jewesses, "radiant with the beauty of their rich Oriental womanhood, burned incense, somewhat indiscriminately, to every new candidate for literary laurels."⁸

Very remarkable it is, that such a down-trodden and persecuted race like the Jews could rise to such a position of prominence. But they were in the same category with the majority of the romanticists, in that the conditions of the times necessitated their emancipation not only from the strict conventional laws, but also from their lowly despised state. Friedrich the Great had done but little to alter the legal status of the Jews.⁹

⁷ Berdrow, O.: Rahel Varnhagen. Graf, E.: Literatur-historische Forschungen, Vol. 28. Varnhagen, K. A.: Schriften, Vol. 10, 211-314.

⁸ Boyesen, H. H.: Essays on German Literature, p. 292.

⁹ Ritter, I. H.: Geschichte der jüdischen Reformation, pt. II, 1, 2.

Moses Mendelssohn, on the other hand, had been their intellectual liberator; for it was he, who awakened them to a recognition of their own powers, which for centuries had been completely disregarded. Still they were not lying dormant. On the contrary, they were undergoing the finest sort of development; and when they did ultimately gain recognition, there was seen in them the means of a close relation between the Jews and the German people. Prussian self-esteem caused that of the Jews to increase in turn. The ultimate consequence, however, was that, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, not only the masculine half of fashionable Berlin, but even the women of the fashionable world likewise sought admission to the homes of the foremost Jewish families. Princes, nobles and diplomats were already in close contact with Jewish bankers in the business world. In the Jewish home the spirit of democracy and uncorrupted liberty reigned supreme. Here, to say the least, there existed more intelligence and far less prejudice than was to be found in other German circles. The easy social tone permitted by the women, young, handsome and cultured leaders, made the circle more and more attractive. Gradually, it became indicative of good taste and good tone to mix in Jewish society.

While Friedrich Schlegel, Tieck and Schleiermacher were practically drafting plans for the new romantic movement, an influential Jewess was becoming the leader of her like-minded sisters: namely, Rahel Levin,¹⁰ the first great and modern woman in Germany. She was a person with characteristics absolutely her own, with everything about her primordial,—a real contribution to civilization and a never-ceasing evolutionary force. Her personality exercised untold power over her associates, placing them under its indelible influence. Henriette Herz, one of her group and at the same time her most enthusiastic rival in the society life of Berlin, “declares that the soul of Jewish woman thus awakened, reached its highest development in and through Rahel.”¹¹ Rahel longed for life in sunshine and splendor,

¹⁰ Key, E.: *Rahel Varnhagen*, Chap. I.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9 ff.

fervor and passion. With her independence of thought augmented with a boundless passion for liberty, she was far in advance of the women of her time, whether Jewish or German. Her indomitable freedom of thought gave her courage to oppose even her strict parents; and finally her daring, animated, unprejudiced nature, deepened by Germanic culture, was actually responsible for her leaving home. She purposely expressed herself frankly on every point, utterly disregarding the effect of the same. But in being candid and outspoken, she was typical of a great movement which is still taking place,—a movement, which seeks to evolve the completely human personality from the feminine creature of the sex. The decisive point, however, is that her blood was that of a Jewess, and that it was not only strengthened by the best qualities of the race, but, at the same time, stimulated by its most grievous misfortunes. The oriental force of love in all her feelings gave rise to her sincere worship of great masters. It was the power of such a personality that served as a nucleus for her salon, making it magnetic, so to speak. For in her alone were combined and concentrated all the peculiarities, which made her circle so attractive to men of letters. How often were her friends ready to be guided by her! Still she did not wish to dominate them, even though she unconsciously did so through the power of her intellectuality. At any rate, besides being a prototype of the modern Jewish woman of culture, Rahel Levin was a woman, who taught not only the romanticists, but also other contemporaries to hope for the truths on which we now live. For just as in the flourishing period of Athenian history, Aspasia, who herself created nothing, was to Socrates an inspiration of wisdom, to Pericles of eloquence, to Sophocles of poetry, and to Phidias of beauty of line; so do we discern in the background of the Berlin of Schleiermacher¹² and the romantic school another woman, Rahel, who was similarly influential.

This was the first time that Jewish women ever fulfilled a civilizing mission in modern society, due for the most part

¹² Dilthey, W.: *Leben Schleiermachers*, I.

to their great and rapid receptivity for another civilization. New seed fell on an altogether virgin soil. Time-honored forms and traditions were abrogated. There was an acquisition of a great zeal for culture, of a passion and a capacity for civilization, which, however, did not always imply a corresponding individuality. Such individuality characterized certain Jewesses of Rahel's circle, who received impressions from the liberal ideas of their time and from its most refined culture. For example, they were enthusiastic readers of Voltaire, Rousseau and Tasso in the original. All were staunch admirers of Goethe above all. Naturally they extended a warm welcome to Friedrich Schlegel, whose devotion to the great pagan exceeded even their own. He soon became a privileged member of the little company, and intimately enough to perceive how entirely experimental their lives were made by the novelty of their views. Young impressionable women, married when they were mere children to men of their parents' choice, were beginning to make a personal application of these lessons in freedom that they heard on every side. Thus it was a natural coincidence for this salon to become a synonym for unbounded liberty, only in the practice of which could they see any prospects for self-advancement, for the development of their individualistic tendencies, and, at the same time, for the attainment of the ideal sought by the romanticists as well as by other zealous revolutionists.

When Friedrich Schlegel realized the existence of such principles in exact parallel with his own philosophy of life, he was not slow in putting their theory into practice. The most harmonious and most interesting example of the embodiment of such principles met him in the person of Dorothea Veit,¹³ who supplied him with that which was lacking in his existence. She, the daughter of Moses Mendelssohn, had been married to a wealthy Jewish banker, when she was only sixteen years old. When she first became acquainted with Schlegel, she had for many years been the wife of a man of her parents' choice, and was the mother of two sons. Though she had never become

¹³ Sidgwick, A.: *Caroline Schlegel and her Friends*, pp. 153 ff.

resigned to her life, she nevertheless endured it with dignity. Her mind had lain fallow, her tastes had been repressed, her development had been at a standstill. But her friendship with Schlegel soon ripened into the closest intimacy, which stirred up her smoldering energies and fanned the torpid passion of her nature into full blaze. She, however, felt that she was justified in thus transforming that terrible destiny imposed upon her by parental authority into social and intellectual emancipation. Still this episode met with complete approval within their immediate group. The plan for the development of the individual demanded such method of procedure. Then again, it was in direct accordance with their established worship of the god, "Truth."¹⁴ To them a person, who is not true and honest to himself, can fulfill no position whatever, neither in the family nor in the outside world. It is the love of truth that is wanting in us. Some people have too little understanding to find the truth within themselves; others have no courage to acknowledge it. As one grows older, life acquires greater significance; and to the soulful person, the questions of the meaning and aim of life increase in importance as the shades of the evening gather. So it was with Rahel and her society, of which she was the center. Their beliefs displayed more and more their personal characteristics. Each one of the circle naturally considered the other's behavior as the direct reaction of the mental concept.

What was the ultimate consequence? Nothing but the fostering of a childlike freedom from prejudice in the ethical sphere, where current prejudices were revalued with equal boldness and thoroughness. Subsequently everything breathed an air of pure absolute democracy,—something which we vainly try to believe that we are practicing here in America. Furthermore, the salon developed its life in the widest of circles. No one was especially invited; but all were welcome, whosoever they might be. A sister or a friend was often brought along to share in the social privileges, about which the men were so

¹⁴ Key, E.: *Rahel Varnhagen*, p. 178; pp. 40 ff. Varnhagen, K. A.: *Schriften*, Vol. 19, 275.

enthusiastic. Of course, it was necessary that new attractions be added, owing to the ever-increasing number of patrons. The drawing room was always filled with men of all vocations and with women remarkable for beauty and charm. Princes of blood and aristocrats here rubbed shoulders with literary Bohemians, statesmen, poets, actors and actresses. For social life was an expression of life itself, a part of their very existence. If we compare Rahel's gatherings with modern social evenings in an intellectual circle, we find the chief difference lies in the fact, that the highest aim of the former was pure culture, that of the latter being something more tangible. Conversation was freer than elsewhere. All questions were debatable with *esprit*; for the hostesses were filled with the frankness, mental alertness and warmth, which were lacking in the German women of the time. Everything was tolerated except dullness. The most vital problems of life and society were discussed; and no opinion, however extreme, gave offense, that is, if defended with adequate ability and knowledge. This extraordinary tolerance was not the consequence of indifference, but of an ultra-normal hospitality to new ideas, eagerness to hear all sides of the question, and a delight in the interchange of forceful and significant thought. In short, a movement was under way to suppress the insincerity of the age,—a blemish, which is still antagonistic to the present-day broad-minded individual.

EXAMPLES OF MORAL EXCESSES AND EXTRAVAGANCES.

At this juncture some glaring examples might be given to show the extent, to which the various factors in the social environment of the romanticists affected their morals. Then, too, in this particular only the moral reforms and excesses are of any concern; and further only those are worthy of note in the cases, where the individual carries out his view of life in his own behavior. Anyone may maintain a certain belief, and may likewise reduce the same to expression in literary productions or some other written composition. But, what about the men, who not only do this, but in addition mould their very conduct

in accordance with their beliefs? In this respect, however, there existed a very noticeable difference among the early romanticists. A romanticist, in the modern sense of the term, is a man who assumes a hostile attitude toward the spirit of the age, and tries by artificial means to revive the good old times. Nearest to this type was Friedrich von Hardenberg, more commonly known by the *nom de plume* Novalis.¹⁵ In him we see united the simplicity of a child and the high sensitiveness of a clairvoyant. His delicate nature revealed something saintly, something of sexless serenity, something even flowerlike. He delved into mysticism, and was very prone to flee to the land of the supernatural. In short, his plan for inner development went no further than his imagination. Thus his actions in the outside world were characterized by no extravagances. "Die Welt wird Traum, der Traum wird Welt."¹⁶ This is the ideal of existence that is held up to us in his *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. There is not one act of free moral endeavor even hinted at in this work, to say nothing of the total absence of a character, whose will power would be equal to any decisive test. The entire novel is a series of hallucinations, displaying the emancipation of the subconscious self and not the real true self. It is purely and simply characteristic of Novalis himself, with a will apart from his existence and roaming about amid the incoherent and the incredible.

Then again, consider Ludwig Tieck. He was brought to public gaze by the appearance of his *William Lovell*,—a substitution of caprice for moral law. Still, in later years, in the preface to the second edition of his novel, he claimed a moral and educational purpose for this work of his youth.¹⁷ William recalls Wieland's *Agathon*, in being a youth of the finest sensibility and of the deepest feelings. He, like the author, is an enthusiastic admirer of nature, resembling Rousseau by believing in a former ideal state of mankind, scorning the pet-

¹⁵ Heilborn, E.: Novalis der Romantiker.

¹⁶ Minor, J. (Ed.): Heinrich von Ofterdingen, Novalis Schriften, II, 217.

¹⁷ Tiecks Schriften, VI, 3 ff.

tinness of modern life compared with that of the Greeks. "Ah, the golden age of the Muses has disappeared forever! When gods full of tenderness were still walking the earth, when Beauty and Grandeur clad in harmonious robes were still dancing hand in hand on gay meadows, when the Hours with golden key still opened Aurora's gate, . . . then the sublime and the beautiful had not yet been degraded to the pretty and the alluring."¹⁸ In this sentimental longing for an imaginary state of ideal happiness, Tieck's hero becomes a victim of the first temptation, that presents itself to him in the form of a Parisian coquette. Here, his philosophy of life takes a decided turn, inadequately disguised by pantheistic phrases. "I pity the fools, who are always prattling about the depravity of the senses. . . . They offer sacrifices to a powerless deity, whose gifts cannot satisfy a human heart. . . . No, I have pledged myself to the services of a higher deity, before which all living nature is submissive, which is a union of every feeling in itself, which is rapture, love, everything—for which language has no word. Only in the embraces of Louise have I come to know what love is. The memory of Amelia appears to me now in a dim, misty distance. I never loved her."¹⁹ New temptations convince William that he needs a firmer theoretical foundation for his practice. Then in his ravings he exclaims, "Do I not walk through this life as a somnambulist? All I see is only a phantom of my inner vision. . . . All things exist only because I think them; virtue exists only because I think it. . . . Everything submits to my caprice. . . . The world . . . is suspended by the chains which are controlled by my mind. . . . I am the one supreme law of all nature."²⁰ The revolting story of seduction, murder and highway robbery, which forms the closing chapter of Lovell's career, is a practical illustration of these principles. In fine, Tieck has traced the downward path of a sensitive and passionate youth. The author was only twenty years old at the

¹⁸ William Lovell, II, 2; *Schriften*, VI, 50.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 23; l. c. VI, 95 ff.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, III, 23; l. c. VI, 177 ff.

time when he wrote this novel; and he certainly had not yet pierced to those deepest depths of human misery and sin, which he is here pretending to sound. Indeed, like Novalis, he was only dreaming; and these dreams were confined to William Lovell's career and not to Ludwig Tieck's.

It was Friedrich Schlegel, who capped the climax, namely by his writing of *Lucinde*.²¹ He was the inventor of a new moral code, thus showing that he was anything but conservative; for in this frank glorification of the flesh, he displayed open hostility to spiritual progress. No wonder that the work fell like a bombshell in the peaceful social circles, since it was more of a social program than a real novel, expressing, as it did, the author's beliefs plus that which he had already done in accordance with these beliefs,—thereby going a step further than the rest of his friends. The pervading sentiment of the book is one of contempt and hatred for all the moral rules and laws, with which man has imprisoned his spirit. Naturally it excited the liveliest interest in Rahel's coterie, whose tone had always been the freest, and whose members had often strayed beyond what was regarded as the boundary-line of propriety.²² The author's principles of composition may be inferred from his statement, that "nothing would be more to the purpose of this book than that, in writing it, he should lay aside what is called order, and assert to the fullest extent his unquestioned right to charming lawlessness."²³ The plot, such as it is, is contained in the chapter, entitled *Lehrjahre der Männlichkeit*,²⁴ which reads like a distorted catalogue of love affairs. The characters are mere types, from Julius, who stands for Schlegel himself, and who spends his entire life in "reflecting about the possibility of a permanent embrace,"²⁵ whose sole aim in life is "not to have

²¹ Rouge, I.: Erläuterungen über die *Lucinde*.

²² Sidgwick, A.: Caroline Schlegel and her Friends, p. 151.

²³ *Lucinde* (edition of Universal-Bibliothek, Vol. 320), p. 6. Boyesen, H. II.: Essays on German Literature, p. 204. Brandes, G.: Hauptströmungen der Literatur des 19. Jhts., III, 74 ff.

²⁴ *Lucinde*, p. 39.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

enjoyment alone, but also to enjoy the enjoyment,"²⁶ to Lucinde herself, the embodiment of the romantic ideal of femininity, or, in other words, to Dorothea Veit. "She, too (like Julius), was one of those who live, not in the common world, but in a world of their own creation. She, too, with a bold determination had cast off all social bonds and restrictions, and lived entirely free and independent."²⁷

But the revolutionists, who were striving for independence at the turning point of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, realized that the need of morality continues. So they gained the conception that morality could not remain unaltered, especially since all existence is progressive. Consequently, life is but a dead repetition, if there be no development, which in turn necessitates innovations. Yet, at this time advancement was permitted least of all in the sphere of morals. Therefore, one was forced by inner development to commit actions, so-called crimes, which were by no means done with an easy conscience. At that time, voluntarily acquired independence resulted in acts which seemed rather irrational. The Schlegel-Veit episode bears this out; and therefore it had to be placed within the category of excesses. In the struggle for personal liberty and personal satisfaction, some people went so far as to believe, that independent thought and action involved the right to end one's life, when one wished to suffer no longer. Novalis had similar intentions after the death of his betrothed, Sophie von Kühn;²⁸ but he sincerely deemed this the beginning of all philosophy. Friedrich Schlegel, too, at one time entertained such a view. His despondency was, however, due to remorse caused by one of his many *affaires de coeur*. The contents of his correspondence from September 1791, to May, 1792, constitute a diary of this episode. He also reflects the incident in the *Lucinde*, in connection with the Lisette affair.²⁹ In all of his previous erotic adventures Schlegel had

²⁶ *Lucinde*, p. 5.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

²⁸ Heilborn, E.: Novalis der Romantiker, pp. 54 ff.

²⁹ *Lucinde*, pp. 46 ff.

been utterly disappointed. This time, when he falls in love, his aim is to avenge his inner self. With such an idea in mind, he played with the affections of a coquette, who for once in her life wanted true love. Force of habit had made her character far inferior to the standard that was maintained even by the women, who were Schlegel's associates in Rahel's salon. Her careless mode of living prompted her lover to cherish no real love for her. He merely made her the object of his boundless passion, permitting his heart and soul to be filled with this aim. Whenever she failed to understand his inclinations, he became offended. It was not his purpose to gain any triumph of which he could boast. Not once did he try to idealize her love, not even the tragic outcome which it finally assumed. For when she had truthfully and sincerely requited his apparent affection, he had already tired of the experiment, and considered himself incapable of coping with the situation. He then abandoned her, whereupon she committed suicide. This misfortune was the cause of his awakening. He realized that she had been utterly deceived in him, and that her self-inflicted death was the consequence of his repellent behavior. Her sad death had a startling effect upon the passionate youth. He became sick at heart; his torture and remorse grew, until, in despair and desiring to end his suffering, he surrendered himself to thoughts of suicide.

All of the foregoing tended toward one goal, namely, duty to one's self. Self-contentment or self-satisfaction, not self-preservation alone, became the gist of the first law of nature. So in the mind of a man like Friedrich Schlegel, it was a greater virtue to grasp what one's nature passionately demands. Such a type of human being is apparently concerned with the fact, that man's attitude toward moral law is the determining factor of his fate. The individual is organically coherent with his environment. By environment are his duties defined; and whatever happiness is to be found on earth results from the fulfillment of these duties. This sense of duty, in conjunction with a pronounced belief in freedom from prejudice, made possible the evolution of not only the theory, but even the practice of free love. But this departure from established moral law did not in

the least suffice the revolutionists. They even reduced the same to literary expression; just as Friedrich Schlegel did in connection with the *Lucinde*, which came to the seemingly prudish Berlin society like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky. The critics readily charged such inventors with gross immorality. Yet, what do we find revealed upon an analysis of the situation? Nothing but unwarranted alarm, surprise and disgust.

The secret of such practice lay in their individualistic freedom; their actions were unconcealed and done in the presence of everyone; they assumed no cloak for whatever they did. Their conduct was directed by their own manner of thought, and by no means founded on public opinion. They differed widely from the many individuals, who were so weak and so lacking in self-reliance, as to suffer under the pressure of this public opinion, thereby becoming wretched unhappy beings for life. Such suffering was absolutely unnecessary according to the conceptions of these revolutionists; for they tried to satisfy the many different conditions, only in so far as their own personal advancement was concerned. So when love was at stake, their idea was apparently, that one might as well attempt to untie the Gordian knot as to make an effort to behave in accordance with the enigmas of public opinion. In this case the only persons, who need to be considered, are those making the choice; the outside world of busybodies, who themselves live in houses of very thin glass, can only view the situation superficially. Furthermore, love brings natural law into play. Natural law in turn involves the human instincts. Instinct in conjunction with an environment, which is in harmony with the instinct, forms a firmly established bond for concerted action. Then, too, it must be remembered that pagan philosophy inspired the people of this era to live in the senses as well as in the intellect. In fact the seventh commandment was very laxly interpreted throughout the eighteenth century. Therefore this characteristic, together with their sense of emancipation resulted in casting to the winds the ideas, upon which they had been reared, and in considering the same as remnants of gloomy asceticism, and finally in adopting a code of morals at variance with the usual Christian code.

Such natures as these were called pagan and Hellenic, and were attracted and cherished by Rahel's circle. Pauline Wiesel,³⁰ one of Rahel's dearest friends, who enraptured men as the most perfect revelation of Aphrodite, lived amid naive frankness in exact harmony with her pagan nature. She was intimate with Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia, one of the most eminent patrons of this society and a combination of all that was courageous and progressive. Since her married life had been a seething hotbed of discontentment from the start, she felt that there was absolutely no obligation to keep her behavior from bringing displeasure to her husband. After the latter had consented to a separation, Rahel displayed complete approval, writing Pauline that her strong heart was not made for suffering. It was in this direction that this group played such a great role. The men, in particular, however different they might be amongst themselves,—from a Schleiermacher to a Prince Louis Ferdinand, the "Prussian Alcibiades,"—all felt that in Rahel's salon they had seen a revelation of genuine womanly nature, or, in other words, that which to them was the means of progressive life and existence,—what men look for, what men seek. When they fail to find this sincerity and truth to oneself, this directness and freshness at home, or yet in society of "good tone," then they look for it in that of "bad tone."

Such women, even though not in harmony with the rest of their sex of the time, were very primitive and purely natural. They, like Dorothea Veit or Caroline Boehmer,³¹ were the ones who had strong rich natures to reveal, and who proved to be at all times the best inspirations of writers. Even though Sophie von Kühn was only a fifteen-year-old child, living completely outside of this environment; still she was far in advance of her age, and became the "silent witness," who gave the testimony upon which her lover, Novalis, based his literary activity. In fact, no literature was ever beautiful and fresh during periods, when women were unnatural, indirect and not true to their own

³⁰ Key, E.: *Rahel Varnhagen*, pp. 57 ff.

³¹ Sidgwick, A.: *Caroline Schlegel and her Friends*, pp. 77 ff.

femininity. Here we have the final reason for the decline of our social life. Feminine individuality came into vogue at the dawn of the nineteenth century, and has continued its development into our present century, owing to new fields of work and wider opportunities for education, thereby inducing a uniformity wherein women occupy themselves with the same tasks. They, of course, have a more independent outward position, which does not necessarily imply that they are more natural or richer personalities; but, instead, they have acquired unusual feminine qualities, which obtain recognition more easily, because the majority of their kind are in the same category. No woman will purchase her freedom of thought and action or her right to be natural, simply because she does not want to forfeit her social position, and be considered uncultivated, by deviating from the opinion of the said majority. Thus the personal element is becoming less, while the public contribution to woman's work is ever increasing. Nevertheless, woman is still prone to be an individual where a feeling of solidarity is required, and to feel collectively where she should be an individual. Woman will always be a drawback to society and to the life of the home and the community, until she comes to realize that the source of all virtues is justice for all others and courage for herself. On the other hand, the purely natural women, at whose shrine the romanticists worshipped, augmented productiveness, humanity and culture, by teaching others to seek the truth, and by judging everything as to its intrinsic value and not as to its deficiencies.

Just to show how indispensable women were to the existence of the romanticists, let a very conspicuous example be cited in this respect. As is well known, August Wilhelm Schlegel was a staunch admirer of Caroline Boehmer. In 1793, when she was living in hiding in Frankfurt, disgraced by her foolish intrigues in Mainz, he rescued her from her sad plight, and took her to Leipzig. Here he placed her under the protecting care of his brother Friedrich; but the latter soon reversed the situation. For, being charmed by her simplicity and her divine love of truth, Friedrich was quite ready to lay down his life for her; but, out of regard for his brother, he forced himself to conceal

his love from her. At any rate, she protected him, and rescued him from a life of debauchery and extravagance, that had brought him to the verge of suicide. It was she, who aroused in him the courage to do the work that gave him a place and a name in the literary annals. In one of his letters as well as in the *Lucinde*, he confesses that his association with Caroline Boehmer was of the greatest value to him,³² and that he was a better man through her untiring efforts in his behalf.

Like Rousseau, like Goethe, the romanticists drew their erotic views from their own soul and its powers of loving passionately. Whenever they saw in any personality the means for complete happiness in life, their sense of liberty and selfishness spurred them on to overstep all barriers, even those set by moral law and convention. It has been observed that Friedrich Schlegel's meeting with Dorothea Veit quickly resulted in intimate friendship. Never before had a woman made such a deep impression upon him,—which, in fact, was an indelible one. He felt convinced that this was the one love of his life, and that his affections were fully requited. He was fascinated by her generous devotion and great intelligence; and she in turn did not hesitate to yield to his personal charm, to his eloquence and boyish enthusiasm. That she was already married caused him no serious scruples. She was ready to sacrifice family, means and reputation, in her aim to love as she so desired. In the conviction that she was doing a courageous and admirable act,³³ she left her husband in the winter of 1798, and committed herself to Schlegel's keeping without the blessing of the church. Their illegal union caused terrible and scandalous gossip in and around Berlin; and the world turned its back on the sinners, deeming them social outcasts. "We all belong to the tribe of glorious outlaws," said Friedrich Schlegel in a letter to Caroline, his sister-in-law.³⁴

To cap the climax, however, during the first year of their

³² *Lucinde*, pp. 53 ff.

³³ Brandes, G.: *Die Hauptströmungen der Literatur des 19. Jhts.*, III, 89.

³⁴ Sidgwick, A.: *Caroline Schlegel and her Friends*, pp. 155 ff.

union, Schlegel published the *Lucinde*, the manifesto of his social views, in which he portrayed all of his *affaires de cocur*, even including the most recent one with Dorothea. The veil of fictitious names and circumstances was then so transparent that it concealed nothing. The book, therefore, appealed to the widespread interest that most people feel in their neighbors' affairs, especially when these doings are a bit scandalous or tragic. And then the opinions advanced by the author were so unpopular and audacious, and yet so much in harmony with certain other modern conceptions, that everyone lent a willing ear to them, either with pleasure or for the sake of attacking them with utmost violence. But it was a common characteristic of the romanticists to reduce their life's activity either partly or in its entirety to literary expression. Novalis resorted to this method in his autobiographical romance, *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*; and Tieck, too, included within his *William Lovell* his erotic experiences in conjunction with the moral views, which he happily never put into practice. But with the author of the *Lucinde*, we must be fair, and note that in his own life his heart put his intellect to shame. Still he never wavered in his devotion to the woman, who, for his sake, had braved the judgment of the world, and exchanged a life of luxury and ease for one of vain and aimless wanderings. Their love, in spite of its lawlessness, was its own law, and needed, according to their own testimony, no statute to shield it; for it rested on the sure foundation of kinship of the soul.

But men like Schlegel and Schlegel were susceptible, to an undue extent, to the charms of women, especially so, since these two made their vows, and hung their votive offerings in the temple of Rahel's salon. The newness of the types of these women fascinated them to distraction. The women, on their part, yielded all too readily to their admirers, who often refrained from shaking the tree, because of the feeling of certainty that the fruit would drop. The question of ownership would arise in this contingency together with many unpleasant complications. They therefore preferred to run away, before the temptation to pluck the fruit became irresistible. Moreover, if they could not

be lord supreme and sole usurper, they wished to be told so, in order to tear themselves away and quit the frivolous life, into which they were being led. Still further, the man had to ask himself now, what obligation he had incurred for that which he had accepted. He had to re-arrange his life with reference to the introduction of this new element of love. Perhaps the girl had not awakened in his soul all the emotions he was capable of feeling. Then he contemplated her as a disturbing factor in his scheme of existence, whereby she lost much of her fascination. Instead of helping his self-development, she threatened to interfere with it, by the claim which the mere fact of her love seemed to make upon his interest and attention. In order to escape the responsibility and pain of a definite rupture, he betakes himself away, and by cruel neglect allows the relation to dwindle away into nothing, disregarding the outcome, whether tragic or otherwise. Ofttimes he considers himself too young or too sensitive to be able to witness the pain which he has inflicted. The image of her extending him tearfully her hand at their parting haunts him. This vision, which was wont to appear, causes him much misery. Although he endeavors to condone his conduct and for a while is a prey to remorse, his sense of freedom and desire for happiness dissuades him against returning and manfully assuming responsibility for his actions. A man acts wisely in refusing to become enslaved to a life, that shows all prospects of becoming incongenial to him. To be sure, the man, who remains and bears the blunt, may also be called wise. But the rare exceptional man, richly endowed, who sees the benevolent imposition which nature practices upon him, and refuses to play into her hands, is he, after all, to be so ruthlessly condemned? Even though he tries to make amends, the critics are sure to say, that such penance is worthless. No wrong can be undone; and a mere emotional repentance, however much it may benefit the penitent, is absolutely of no value to her against whom he has sinned. But this is not the feeling of the individual, who realizes that his fate rests upon his actions alone. He knows that nature is a trickster, and that, through her laws, the power of the sex causes the young man

to imagine himself in love with the first girl who appeals to him physically. But the youth is the victim of nature, who has no regard for the individual; for she is ruthless, and achieves her aim and discards completely the medium of achievement. So we can't honestly condemn him, who fails to answer nature's call by marriage, because he awakes to see that he is only being used as a mere pawn in nature's gigantic scheme to perpetuate the human race. He feels the need of aid, sympathy and understanding in his work; he longs for companionship, a partner, and not a toy.

Still the man goes on and on through life, in search of this ideal of companionship, the attainment of which is to bring him complete happiness. Again and again he falls in love, only to find the object of his affections failing to answer the simple demand which he has made of her, namely, to help him in the upward climb and to climb with him. But, why does he not cast his project to the winds and travel without a companion? He can no more help seeking a mate than a cork can help being carried forward on the crest of a wave. For nature has him in her grasp. He obeys her; and there is no other way out of the situation. After many trials and disappointments, he is favored by fortune, if he meets the woman, who eclipses all his previous erotic adventures, and who furnishes adequate evidence of fitting in with his scheme of life. Then both individuals may look forward to a happy state of matrimony.

It was at this crisis that complications arose in the case of Friedrich Schlegel, with regard to his relations with Dorothea Veit. As has already been seen, he discerned in her love his salvation; and he therefore was averse to giving her up and sacrificing his happiness, simply because she was married. This condition led him and many of his co-workers to believe, that legal marriage was an injurious and abject institution, particularly when it entered one's life to such an extent, that it curtailed progressive self-development. To them it seemed horrible that two people, who had ceased to care for each other, should still live side by side in the midst of discontentment and unhappiness, or that either husband or wife should incur dis-

grace by yielding to a natural preference for a third person, or that a wife's rights and privileges should not be on a par with those of her husband. But since nature was still their mistress, her law was destined to take precedence over all, with conventional law as her most aggressive rival and opponent in the field of morality. In the human being nature is revealed in the form of instinct, convention in the form of habit. Therefore, there is a greater tendency for the mind to revolt against that which is acquired, rather than that which is innate. If the individual is so ultra-normally defiant as to rebel against nature, she is finished with him, tosses him aside and leaves him to shift for himself. Whether the result be recklessness and despair, or determination and realization, is a problem for the individual to solve. Inability to solve the problem causes unrest to creep into the heart of the individual concerned. As unrest is a progressive disease, its next phase is dissatisfaction, which immediately develops into rebellion and ends in disaster. Consequently, to avert such self-destruction and in despair of finding a better solution, Friedrich Schlegel resorted to "Gewissensehe" or natural marriage;³⁵ and, in taking this stand, he was even unselfishly supported and defended by the rest of his school.

The fact, that he was sincere in his convictions, is shown by the boldness manifested in his comments on marriage. "Almost all marriages are only concubinages, morganatic marriages, or rather provisional attempts at and distant approaches to a real marriage. Its real nature accords with all spiritual and worldly laws, and provides that two persons should be as one. A fine idea it is, the realization of which appears to have ever so many great complexities. On that account free will should be limited as little as possible, if it has something to do with the question, as to whether a person wants to be an individual or the integral part of a mutual personality. . . . If the state, however, desires to sustain by force the quite unsuccessful attempts at marriage, then it thereby makes impossible marriage itself, which could possibly be realized after new and perhaps

³⁵ Lucinde, pp. 62-63; 70-71.

more fortunate attempts.”³⁶ Still it must be remembered that marriage contains a large element of the unforeseen, and imposes many complex duties and obligations upon the contracting persons. So a man, who is a synonym for absolute freedom, and whose heart is bent on a definite scheme of self-development, may well shrink from embarking upon such a venturesome enterprise; for he cannot endure the conflicting dictates of artificial conventionality. Then when he, who is an extreme radical in the sphere of moral law, meets with barriers that prevent a legal union, he is very, very prone to tread paths extending far beyond the confines of conventional morality. Consequently, it was natural for a man like Schlegel to show great willingness to break the ancient bonds, and to conceive a new type of union, namely a union of the soul, “devotion unfettered.”

But Schlegel's idea was, that legal ties were absolutely unnecessary and superfluous. For the natural woman, with real feminine qualities, married in her youth to a man of her parents' choice, who is many years her senior, and for whom she has never produced a spark of affection, lives a life to which she can never become resigned. And if she awakes to the realization of her own powers by her association with a man, with whom there arises a mutual exchange of ideas and impressions, and if their mutual love makes their two lives a united whole, then there is sufficiently strong foundation for a natural union. “Her entire being is bound to him, . . . Her soul seeks to embrace him, will be satisfied with him; and only in the closest union with him can it find complete contentment. That endeavor is real womanly love; and this closest union, . . . where two become and remain as one by means of reciprocal necessities and dependence, is nothing other than marriage. A woman, who loves a man more than anything else,—who derives from him her best existence—all her existence,—who wouldn't like to live without him, and who couldn't live without him, she (to be sure) in her heart is his wife.”³⁷ Naturally such a view

³⁶ Friedrich Schlegel: *Jugendschriften* (edit. by J. Minor), II, 208, 34.

³⁷ Friedrich Schlegel: *Jugendschriften*, II, 77, 31.

only subjected its author to more and more criticism. Nowadays one might say, that such a man has no right to fall in love with any woman. But, no honorable man will court the favor of a woman and win her affection, unless he has counted the cost and means to pay it. If she deem it cheap and below standard, she, on the other hand, has no right to foster his love, and should withhold her consent, before serious complications set in. But as long as she remains reticent or expresses her sincere approval, he will naturally do as he sees fit. However, something must be said on the other side of the question. Nature has treated the male creature rather unfairly in this matter. She has implanted in him a strong passion, which draws him, in spite of his better judgment, toward the other sex. This passion beclouds his reasoning powers, and prevents him from seeing and thinking clearly. So in addition to his confusion abnormal results must come to pass, especially when mankind reaches such a stage in his quest for liberty, that he looks upon marriage as a mere obstacle.

Not much more could be expected of Friedrich Schlegel, chiefly when his close friendship with Schleiermacher is taken into consideration.³⁸ August Wilhelm thought that something might be made of his brother, Friedrich, if Schleiermacher took him in hand.³⁹ He was not wanting in ability, but his method of going to work was curious. If left to himself, he would burrow deeper and deeper like a mole. So, to make a long story short, he was entrusted to the care of Schleiermacher, who of all the romanticists was a staunch and most enthusiastic advocate of freedom and an ultra-radical despiser of conventional forms and traditions. The friendship soon ripened into intimacy; and the young protestant minister lost no time in introducing Schlegel into Berlin society. But once here, his young charge found ample meat for his liberal views, in which he found apparent encouragement even from his guardian. For at that time, Schleiermacher, then minister of the *Charité* Church in Berlin,

* Dilthey, W.: *Lieben Schleiermachers*, I, 200 ff.

³⁹ Sidgwick, A.: *Caroline Schlegel and her Friends*, pp. 131 ff.

cherished a profound admiration for the Jewess Henriette Herz, the wife of the physician Herz, and one of the chief ornaments in Rahel's circle. She voluntarily requited his affection and regard; and their relations became the most intimate. When scandalous gossip concerning his relation to Henriette began to reach his ears, he showed no surprise, and even attempted to justify himself. But not so with her; for she had from the beginning known what she risked by accepting his friendship, and calmly decided that he was worth more to her than the opinion of the world. Then the puzzling question arose as to how her husband would endure her neglect. Owing to his reticence in the matter, it was taken for granted that he sanctioned his wife's intimacy with the æsthetic clergyman. But there was revolution in the air; and it really became the fashion to shock one's fellow man. So Dr. Herz, knowing his own inferiority to his wife, probably accepted the inevitable.

Strange to say, Schleiermacher did not follow his scheme of life with such deplorable consistency as Schlegel did, in that he failed to take Henriette into his keeping. Yet, he seemingly tried to defend the viewpoint of Schlegel in his confidential letters on the *Lucinde*.⁴⁰ At all events, considering his social position as a preacher of the gospel in the Prussian capital, it was a most audacious thing for him to do. Still he did not hesitate to attack the prudish insincerity of the age, which took secret delight in the lascivious romances of Wieland, while it cried out in a virtuous horror at the immorality of Schlegel, who, dealing with essentially the same thing, had the courage to tell the truth and call it by its right name. It is likewise very expedient to note, that the opposition and criticism, which he met at the hands of his enemies, did but little to check his revolutionary ardor. His audacity increased; and he continued to revel in his extravagances, disregarding all criticism, however biting it was. But the cultivated citizen of that day had only a vague and shadowy notion of the state; and he did not recognize himself as a member of general society. His first obliga-

⁴⁰ Dilthey, W.: *Leben Schleiermachers*, I, 494 ff.

tion was to himself and his own personal interests: and his most absorbing business was to study and develop himself. This class was not exceptional in formulating this scheme of using the world as an educative agency; but they were exceptional in adhering to this formula, and in carrying out the same to the end, in making every life that came in contact with their own a tributary to theirs, and, in fine, in transforming what was individual and accidental into high literary and enduring human types.

CONCLUSION.

Without the least doubt, the early romantic school was distinctly characterized by a decided departure from and revolt against long established moral law. It must have required bold endeavor and strong initiative for anyone to rebel against the social order, existing at the time when the *Aufklärung* had placed its stamp on the whole of western Europe. The influence of a political revolution, such as was under way in France, was, however, destined to be felt in the nearby countries, especially in those contiguous to the center of the revolution. In such a case, at least two opposing factions will arise: the conservatives maintaining the *status quo*, the radicals striking out for themselves and entrusting their behavior to the imagination of their creative minds. At this juncture there is a dual environment; and no one can live apart from both phases of these surroundings. One's conduct is thereby regulated by either one of the tendencies or by both. Very often a new class will come into vogue, which will try to maintain a stand half way between the two extremes. This type is the source of the greatest contention, because its adherents attempt to kill two birds with one stone, by partly believing in the principles of one extreme and acting in accordance with those of the other. And since no human being can successfully attend to more than one thing at a time, this medial class consequently is bound to become insincere and prudish, disregarding the doings of the conservatives of the old school, but railing against the progressive and im-

aginative radical. The conscientious radical, on the other hand, acquires a more independent viewpoint, bases his actions on the same and commits acts, which are deemed irrational and which are even placed in the category of crimes. Such a type of radical is incarnated in the personalities of a Friedrich Schlegel or a Schleiermacher, whose revolutionary tendencies and impulses found their origin in the new environment of the time and were spurred on to action by the insincerity of the age.

It's a grievous fault that these men in question lived in such an environment, the radical and revolutionary tendencies of which their natures forced them to follow with lamentable consistency. Even though Schlegel was somewhat weak and effeminate, he was the greatest thinker of his school; and he could have reaped bountiful fruits, had he exerted his efforts in other fields of work. Then, too, Schleiermacher, although a clergyman and at the same time involved in matters secular, should not be too severely criticized, because he was employing a method to bring into the church the idea of fellowship. Furthermore, we of today cannot even dare to be merciless in criticizing these men of the early nineteenth century. For they cannot be considered apart from their time, in which the tastes of the people, their manner of thought and range of information were very different from those of the present day. What we with our present habits of thought may find somewhat immoral was not immoral to the romanticist more than a century ago. What we believe in the realms of morals and religion is not what they believed. Therefore, we cannot afford to be narrow in our opinions, nor set down as immoral or in bad taste all, that does not fit into our strict artificial grooves.

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