The pantheism of Goethe in its relation to that of Spinoza

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THE PANTHEISM OF GOETHE IN ITS RELATION TO THAT OF SPINOZA.

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# Table of Contents

Chapter 1.  
**Introduction.**  
1-8.

Chapter 2.  
**Marked Influences in the Development of Goethe's Thought.**  
4-13.

Chapter 3.  
**What is Pantheism?**  
14-18.

Chapter 4.  
**The Pantheism of Goethe.**  
19-25.

Chapter 5.  
**Did Spinoza Teach an Immanent God?**  
26-29.

Chapter 6.  
**The Relation of Goethe to Spinoza.**  
30-47.

Chapter 7.  
**Goethe's Own Conception of God.**  
48-55.

Chapter 8.  
**Goethe's Philosophy in Faust.**  
48-72.

Chapter 9.  
**Goethe's Approach to Theism.**  
73-96.
THE PANTHEISM OF GOETHE IN ITS RELATION TO THAT OF SPINOZA.

Chapter 1.-Introduction.

It is particularly interesting to know the world view, the philosophy, of a great poet. Recent textbooks on the history of philosophy show a tendency to broaden our former conception of this subject and make it rather the history of thought than the history of philosophy in the older meaning. In this broader conception of philosophy, the poet, particularly the great poet, has a distinct place.

The purpose of the present writing is to determine as much of Goethe's world view as relates to his conception of God, particularly in its relation to the pantheism of Spinoza. That Goethe was a disciple of Spinoza, is generally known; but it is not generally known how far Goethe either understood Spinoza's pantheism, or how far he adopted it.

The student of the two men is first impressed by the great difference in the intellectual and social environment in which they lived. There is nothing in Spinoza's life or time which corresponds to the atmosphere of romanticism in which Goethe lived and worked. Goethe was a member of a well-to-do, highly cultured German family. From childhood he was under the influence of refinement and culture, surrounded by a circle of men who possessed
the highest degree of intellectual capacity. All the advanced ideas and achievements of his time were available to him and served as a nourishment for his eagerly-grasping spirit. The environment that he enjoyed in his paternal home, the influence that he drew from the intercourse with the learned men who frequented this home, his own diligent studies, all these factors broadened his viewpoint of life, and laid the foundation for a brilliant career and a bright future. Endowed with great gifts by nature, and with a most eager mind, Goethe early developed a taste for the beautiful, the artistic, the romantic, and the scientific, showing especially pronounced inclination to poetry and literature.

The spirit of Goethe's time added much to the building up of his genius. It was the age of Romanticism. The idea was to do away with the restrictions of ecclesiastical religion, with speculative philosophy, with the categorical imperative, and with all narrow views of life. A spirit was in the air, the spirit of love for nature, the beautiful, the poetic. These were the ideals that attracted Goethe with all their power. The influences of these romantic ideas were particularly displayed in Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister." This strange book was a revelation in those puritanical days. There is something in the world besides "pure reason." There is culture (Bildung); there is individuality; there is enjoyment; there is beauty. To Goethe the world spirit is revealing itself in myriad forms of life and beauty.

How different the life of Spinoza, the man who exerted such a profound influence upon Goethe! Born from humble parents of Jewish descent, who had fled from the persecution of their Christian fellows, he grew up at Amsterdam. Little is known about his childhood and the influences that surrounded him. Spinoza developed an antagonistic attitude toward Jewish orthodoxy, which resulted in his excommunication from the synagogue in 1656. So bitter were
the feelings against the young man that an attempt was made to assassinate
him. Perhaps it was this enmity which induced him to lead the quiet life
that he did. He shunned social life entirely. A little circle of devoted
friends gathered around him, attracted by the beauty of his character and
his profound intellect. Spinoza was offered a chair of philosophy at Heidel-
berg, which he declined. He preferred a quiet life, and solitude. His contri-
bution to philosophy was a wonderful, highly intellectual system of panthe-
ism.

This man, despised by Christians and Jews of his time as an atheist and a
foe of religion, admired by Novalis as the "God-intoxicated", gave to Goethe,
the man of the world, his philosophy. Different in ideals and position, in
color and nationality, these two geniuses have a common foundation, a
spiritual relationship. Goethe was irresistibly drawn to the entirely
different Spinoza.

In the following pages it will be my task to discover the common ground
upon which our philosopher and our poet stood. Having performed this task,
I shall point out the essential difference between the two thinkers. It
will be useful, however, first to sketch briefly the development of Goethe,
and the influences that contributed mainly to his development.
Chapter 2.

Marked Influences in the Development of Goethe's Thought.

Goethe's "Weltanschauung", what influences shaped it?

That man is a product of his environment, is true of Goethe, and yet, in his case, only partially true. Perhaps never has nature herself so richly endowed one of her favored sons. Goethe was simply by nature a master-mind, born under a lucky star if ever anyone was. Beauty, wealth, education, intellect, Gemüt, all these were showered upon him by nature and circumstance. Still, even in Goethe's life the shaping influences of his environment were all-important. In this section I shall study some of these influences, particularly the determining influence of the philosopher Spinoza.

During his stay at Leipsic, Goethe came under the influence of the "Sturm und Drang" movement. His religious views were deeply shaken when the news of the earthquake at Lisbon reached his ear. He developed into a sceptic, doubting the love and magnanimity of God. Leipzig, often called "little Paris", had its temptations for the young, inexperienced, pleasure seeking poet. Yet it was here that he met Langer, a man of high moral character, who endeavored to save the "pernicious, dangerous student". The deep religious insight, the well-meant heart-to-heart talks and the open-mindedness of this wonderful man could not but leave its mark upon the receptive mind of the youthful poet.

After a few years of study at Leipsic, Goethe went to Frankfort. There he met a very talented young woman, the sincere and noble-minded Fräulein von Klettenberg. In his writing, "Bekenntnisse einer schoenen Seele", he expresses his admiration for this deeply religious, Pietistic soul. Under the influence of the Moravians, who were antagonistic to the dogmatical religion of the church of
while that time, and exposed to the effects of the growing tendency toward a rationalistic and even atheistic "Weltanschauung" of the educated classes, Goethe also, through his contact with this gifted woman, became interested in the religion of piety and morality. In his "Lichtung und Wahrheit", Goethe has preserved the religious views which he held in those days, and vividly portrayed the indelible impression that the "beautiful soul" made upon him. The same book contains certain Gnostic and Neo-Platonic ideas which he entertained at that stage of his development.

For a short time Goethe went to Strassburg. There he met a young theologian, Herder, a man who looked at the Bible from a purely scientific standpoint, but who was deeply appreciative of its literary and aesthetic values. His attitude had its marked effect upon Goethe, causing him to change his views and become broadminded. "I want to pray with Moses in the Koran," he exclaims; "Lord, widen my narrow bosom!" Feeling (Gefühl) was the dominant element in his religion, an element which Herder emphasized as the most important thing in religious experience. "Faith!" Goethe exclaimed, "is the experience of the divine love, feeling is everything."

During his stay at Strassburg, Goethe already began to form his views in regard to the Faust-Schoepfung. Great plans for poetic works occupied his mind. Caesar, Goetz, Faust rise in his imagination as heroes of future dramas. The influence of Shakespeare is likewise very marked in this period. He reverenced and attempted to imitate the great Briton. In 1771 he induced a friend, Lerse, to deliver an oration on Shakespeare Day, October 14, and wrote an inspiring discourse for that occasion. He calls Shakespeare one of his best teachers. "The first line that I read in Shakespeare," he wrote at that time, "made me his life-long friend. I was like the blind man who received his sight again by a miraculous hand, after I had read the first work."
Hellenic thought, through the literature of Homer, added to Goethe's mental equipment. He was induced to study the spirit and genius of Homer himself. "To follow his footsteps, to drink of the eternal fountain of immortality where he drank, from the bosom of Nature," was his ardent desire. "The poet in Goethe" had been touched, and the longing for creative work became more manifest in him. He began to create under the guidance of his teacher, Nature. His fiery youthful spirit was aroused. In addition to Homer, he studied Xenophon and Plato. Greek ideas and culture attracted him to such a degree that he wrote, "The Greeks are my only study. My eyes were opened. I saw my unworthiness."

Aside from his literary work, Goethe was greatly interested in works of art: the cathedrals, the statues, the creations of antiquity. All this shaped the sense of beauty in Goethe.

In 1774 he began his work, "Werther's Leiden". The fame of this little book extended beyond the borders of Germany. Napoleon read it enthusiastically. It was not so much the content as the artistic form that attracted the literary world, and, above all, the deepest and innermost feelings of mankind to which Goethe had given expression in this book.

Rousseau had proclaimed a similar message, hoping to redeem human rights, to bring to unfortunate mankind a saving remedy, to liberate men from evil. Herder was one of Rousseau's enthusiastic followers, and in his "Werther's Leiden" Goethe, whose spirit was akin to that of Herder, likewise expresses admiration for that French writer. Nor is this surprising. "It is a powerful, wonderful spectacle, how this almost unknown philosopher (Rousseau) rises in a time when knowledge had become the dominant power, culture the pride of mankind. He preached the Gospel, 'Back to Nature!' He denounced superficial knowledge by (Wissen) and the degradation caused by our highly praised civilization."

*Heinemann, p. 234.*
Young Germany, our youthful poet included, became the enthusiastic disciple of Rousseau. In "Werther" we breathe the romantic spirit, which is presented in the brilliant descriptions of nature. Rousseau's ideas of nature are here clothed in beautiful and artistic language. "There is no book in any language that is infused with, and permeated by, a deeper sympathy with nature, filled with greater love and reverence for her, glowing with more sincere longing and absorption into her mystical life, than 'Werther'." *

Another phase in the development of Goethe's genius is his acquaintance with Klopstock, the "Singer of the Messiah". The ideals of the "first genius of Germany" enchanted Goethe. From him he received the idea that a poet must follow divine inspiration, obeying his imagination (Phantasie) without regard to rule or law, like nature, creating splendid works. Herder exclaims, "Klopstock's wonderful power lies in the language of the heart." Goethe writes to Frau Roche, "Klopstock is a noble and great man, the peace of God rests upon him." These words express most beautifully his deep regard and his admiration for a man who was the quasi representative of religion, morality and freedom of his time. "Shall I not address the living, whose grave I would seek?" (Goethe, 1774.)

Brief mention should be made of the friendship with the brothers Fritz and Georg Jacobi. The main subject of the discussions between him and Fritz Jacobi were the writings of Spinoza. Jacobi regarded Spinozism as synonymous with atheism and fatalism. But Goethe began to study this philosopher, and all through his life Spinoza, more than any other man, influenced the spirit of our poet.

Many and manifold were the influences which helped to shape the philosophy of Goethe. Besides the brilliant men with whom he came in contact, there were a number of talented women who, by their noble character and lofty ideals,

*K. Heinemann, p. 234.
contributed to his greatness. The beauties of Italy, the wonders of the Orient, Greek art and literature, all these were most intimately interwoven with Goethe's thought. Wherever the poet could receive inspiration, be it in the little city of Weimar or under the sunny sky of the South, his genius created immortal works.

External Evidences of Spinoza's Influence.

Let us now trace particularly the influences which our poet received from the philosopher Spinoza. As for the external evidences of Spinoza's influence upon Goethe, we know from the poet himself that he read and studied the ETHICA with great interest as early as in 1784. A Christmas greeting sent by Goethe to Frau von Stein in that year points out very clearly the attitude of the poet toward Spinoza:

"Deinem und unserem Freund sollt' heut den heil'gen Spinoza
Als Freundesgeschenk bringen der heil'ge Christ.
Doch wie kämen der heil'ge Christ und Spinoza zusammen?
Welche vertrauliche Hand knüpfte die beiden in eins?
Schülerin des Spinoza und Schwester des heil'gen Christ,
Ein geweihter Tag knüpf't am besten das Band.
Reich' ihm seinen Weisen,den du gefällig ihm machtest,
Und Spinoza sei euch immer ein heil'ger Christ."

A few days later Goethe writes to his affinity, "I read your saint and thought of you. This may not be a mere complimentary remark; it might also express the inner agreement of the three. In a passage, seldom quoted but nevertheless somewhat significant, Goethe tells how the attack on Spinoza (it seems to have been Kortholt's "De tribus impostoribus magnis) led him to take up the "Opera Posthuma" again, after a long interval. He well remembered the effect of his first reading, and this time again he seemed to attain an extraordinary clearness, an intellectual vision. His ideas in regard to the perusal of the works are expressed as follows:
"The whole of our education and experience bids us renounce, to be re-signed: 'Cass wir entbehren sollen'. The problem of man's life is to reconcile himself to this. One ready way is the superficial way of the many, to proclaim that all is vanity. But the path of wisdom, sought only by a few, is to cut short the pains of resignation once for all, and to rest one's mind in that which is eternal, necessary and uniform, and possesses ideas which remain undisturbed by the contemplation of the transitory world."

In these lines lies the secret of the relation of the two. The first sentence, "The whole of our education and experience bids us renounce", is the experience of Goethe's ethical thought.

This, of course, does not imply the full acceptance of Spinozism by Goethe; for we know the many difficulties that would arise if the poet had completely absorbed one particular system. Addressing his friend Jacobi, he says,

"I can not be contented, in the manifold directions of my being, with one aspect of thinking. As a poet and artist, I am polytheist; as a naturalist, I am a pantheist; but one as decidedly as the other."

Yet we may confidently add that Goethe's thought was already largely pantheistic. That Goethe for some time thought of introducing "a visit to Spinoza" into his unfinished poem, "The Wandering Jew", indicates the close thought-relation of the two men. The poem, however, did not materialize.

The poet's deep reverence and personal esteem for the philosopher is shown in these words, spoken while reading the latter's works:

"I am reading Spinoza. I feel myself very near to him, though his soul is much deeper and purer than mine. I can not say that I ever read Spinoza as a whole, that the great architect of this intellectual system has at any time stood clearly before me. But looking into him I seem to understand him, that is, he always appears to me consistent with himself, and I can always gather from him very salutary influences for my own way of feeling and acting."

His acquaintance with the works of Spinoza dates back to the year 1773, when Professor Höpfner of Giessen pointed him to the philosopher. Lavater tells us in his diary that Goethe had told him of the reading of Spinoza in 1774. The terminology of Spinoza's substance, attribute, mode, was never employed.
by the poet. Schrempf, in "Goethe's Lebensanschauung", thinks that the poet did not, in the early period of his life, identify himself with the doctrine (Lehre) of Spinoza, but only borrowed his "Stimmung" (attitude of mind, disposition).

In the 14th book of "Lichtung und Wahrheit" we read,

"After I had searched the world over for a means of education (Bildungsmittel) to suit my strange personality, I finally hit upon the Ethics of this man (Spinoza). I can not give any account of what I have read out of or into that book; suffice it to say, I found in it repose for my passions; a wonderful, free view over the sensuous and the moral world unfolded itself to me."

This formal contrast between Goethe and Spinoza naturally heightened the impression of the relationship, even the equality, of the fundamental disposition (Grundstimmung). Goethe continues his own testimony by adding,

"Spinoza's all-leveling peace was in sharp contrast to my all-exciting striving; his intellectual method was the counterpart of my poetic manner of feeling and idea; his way of equalizing treatment of moral subjects, although alien to present day conceptions, made me his passionate pupil and devoted follower. Spirit and heart, reason and understanding were drawn together in the closest relationship which united two different characters."

It will be readily understood that the "limitless disinterestedness" radiating from every sentence of Spinoza's writings fascinated Goethe more than the Pietistic "Weltanschauung". That strange saying, "He who loves God must not expect God to love him in return," filled his mind with great admiration.

Although Goethe made Spinoza's "Stimmung" his own, he, on the other hand, retained his own independent view in regard to the doctrine of Spinoza, by which we mean the dogmatic system of the philosopher. From his works in general we may gain a still deeper insight into Goethe's world-view as related to that of Spinoza. The poet found in Spinoza the philosophical expression as to the identity of being (Sein) and perfection, but Spinoza's pantheism of being (Sein) was by Goethe
translated into the pantheism of becoming (Werden).

The abstract concept of substance, as self-caused, was transformed into the spiritual concept of the all-life, continually creating new forms of being. Says Spinoza: "Nature eternal, subject to eternal laws, makes no mistakes. She is always and everywhere the same, her power and faculties of activity are identical."* In Goethe's language, "everything is created according to the simple law of metamorphosis; by its activity it equalizes the symmetrical and the unsymmetrical, the comprehensible and the incomprehensible". Goethe believed that the infinite cannot become an object of our understanding, but may little by little be observed in each individual, even in the smallest beings.+) Spinoza's intellectualism in regard to the relation of God to nature is by Goethe transformed into a philosophy of feeling (Gefühl). Goethe experiences (geniesst) the infinite Being. Nature is to him the open book in which he reads of a continuous development. She is "the Eternal One, manifesting herself in many ways". The most essential feature in Goethe's conception is the idea that nature, contrary to Spinoza's view, has a history of development.

While Spinoza emphasizes the unconditioned dependence of the singular upon the whole and lays stress upon the character of the natura naturata, i.e., the eternal absorption of the singular in the whole of the divinity, Goethe gives vivid expression to the power and fulness, the infinity of the eternally creating power of God as natura naturans. Goethe thus represents nature in the process of becoming, while Spinoza emphasized the all-embracing substance.

Additional light is thrown on Goethe's relation to Spinoza by an essay which bears the title, "Die Studie nach Spinoza". Here Goethe says that every existing thing has its own scale, as all being is perfect and immeasurable.

*Ethica 3, praef. +) Goethe Jahrbuch, 12, 3.
Every being participates in the infinity of the infinite in which it exists. To the infinite, Goethe attributes no such participation.

Such thoughts evidently are akin to those of Spinoza. Goethe, in the essay mentioned above, confesses that Jacobi's conception of Spinoza's doctrine is not true to that of the author. He, therefore, refuses to share Jacobi's opinion. He emphasizes the statement that he has not accepted as his own, Spinoza's conception of nature, but admits that the Einic is fundamentally in agreement with his own ideas. The first sentence in the "Studie nach Spinoza" gives us the deepest thought that united the philosopher and the poet: "Existence and perfection are one and the same." What exists is perfect, and what is perfect exists. If existence (Taein) and perfection (Vollkommenheit) are the same, then existence and God are likewise identical. For Spinoza, existence is God, and God is existence. Goethe agreed with him in this fundamental conception. In writing to Jacobi, he says, with reference to Spinoza's doctrine concerning the identity of God and existence, "If some, for this reason, call him ATHEN, I would praise him as being THIESSIMUS and CHRISTIANISSIMUS."

While the essay here under consideration reveals the fact that Spinoza and Goethe were agreed as to the identity of God and existence, it also shows, on the other hand, that they differed in their conception of nature. While Goethe's nature is endowed with a passionately moved inner life, Spinoza entertained a geometrical conception of it. "Goethe breathed into Spinoza's God a warmth of life which Spinoza could not attribute to his God." *)

In closing this section, it will not be amiss to quote the views of a few authorities on the relation of Goethe, the poet, to Spinoza, the philosopher. HERMAN GRIMM, in his "Vorlesungen ueber Goethe", says, "No philosophy so satisfied

*) Chr. Strempel, Goethe's Lebensanschauung, p. 316.
Goethe as that of Spinoza." (See page 21.) LAVATER also testified as to Goethe's
debt to Spinoza in a discussion of the philosopher. HERDER, in a letter to
Jacobi, writes thus: "Goethe has read Spinoza in your absence. It is a great
comfort to me that he understands him as I do. You must also side with us." *)
ECKERMANN, with reference to Goethe's pantheistic conception of God, expresses
the following: "Such a standpoint was found by Goethe in regard to Spinoza
when he was still very young. He joyfully relates how the views of that great
thinker had been so welcome to him in his youth. In him he found himself; thus
he could very well understand him."

To these quotations we may well append the words of Spinoza himself. In his
"Tractatus Theologico-Politicus" he says, "If some think that my tract aims to
explain that God and Nature (nature understood as a mass or incorporeal matter)
are one and the same, they err. God is spirit, but not personal, for such a con-
ception (God conceived as having personality) would mean limitation." Here the
ways of the two men part. Goethe's pantheism was not, like that of Spinoza, of
a geometrical nature, but a system conceived as divine energy and overflowing
activity. The subject of pantheism will be treated in the next chapter. I shall
first discuss the different kinds of pantheism, and then, particularly, that of
Spinoza.

*) From Vorlaender: Kant, Schiller, Goethe, p. 122, note.
Chapter 2.

What Is Pantheism?

The term PANTEISME has a very vague meaning, and no general agreement has been reached about its definition. The immense variety of meanings has included all systems from the crudest atheism which Holbach and Uechnner proclaimed to the highest spiritualism which Saint Paul represents when he speaks of God as the One in whom we live, and move, and have our being. Robert Flint defines pantheism as follows: "Pantheism is the theory which regards all finite things as merely aspects and modifications, or parts, of one eternal and self-existent being; which views all material objects, and all particular minds, as necessarily derived from a single infinite substance. This one, absolute, all-comprehensive being is called God." Pantheism is monistic, for all nature is coextensive with God. It is also deterministic, since the world is fully expressed in divine manifestations. Pantheism, furthermore, denies that God and nature either do or can exist apart, because God and nature are eternally coexistent. In the system of Spinoza, for instance, the unity of God and nature (\( \text{E} \ \kappa \alpha \iota \ \pi \acute{\alpha} \nu \)) is strongly emphasized. God cannot exist outside or beyond the world. Nature and God are the same. Nature was not created by God, for God cannot be outside of nature. Nor is God superior to the universe or separated from it. Therefore, God does not govern it by His will. Everything follows of necessity from the essence of God. Spinoza, the father of occidental pantheism, expresses himself as follows: "I have opinions as to God and nature entirely different from those which modern Christians are wont to vindicate. To my mind, God is the immanent (that is, the intramundane), and not the transcendent (that is, the supramundane), cause of things; the totality of finite objects is posited in the ESSENCE of God, not in His will. Nature, considered per se, is one with the
essence of God." God, then, is not a personal, self-conscious being that
brought forth nature by the power of its will, but the immanent cause of the
universe, bringing it forth of necessity, in accordance with its very nature
or essence. In an essay on pantheism, William Schoeler draws the conseqqences
of such a conception of God. He says,

"If God is a necessarian, much more the creature. If God has no free will,
neither has man. If God works in accordance with the iron necessity of His na­
ture, man does too. Being but one form of the manifestation of the universal
soul, the same necessity that propels the universe urges man on also. It is
evident, therefore, that there can be no sin. What appears evil is only a ne­
cessary point of transition in the development of the good, the shadow that
depens and enhances the intensity of the light, a fall upward toward the
divine. Immortality must be rejected. All personal life resolves itself into
the impersonal, primal cause."

Pantheism does not explain the origin of cosmical matter. Thus, when Spinoza
speaks of natura naturans and natura naturata, he evidently means nature as
producing certain objects and nature as the sum of the modi. He does not ex­
plain the origin of nature.

The general statement and definition of pantheism just given applies to
pantheism in its strictly logical meaning. It is also the conception of panthe­
ism held by Spinoza. To understand the relation of Goethe to Spinoza, this
definition of pantheism should be well kept in mind. It identifies God and the
world: God is the world, and the world is God. So Spinoza held, so pantheism holds.

But now this word, PANTEISY, has been applied to other conceptions of the
world; for instance, to the Stoic conception. Let us examine this.

Stoic Pantheism.

This phase of philosophy flourished during the fourth and fifth centuries
before Christ. It incorporated largely the ideas of Heraclitus (460 B.C.).
This system was the finest fruit of Greek thought outside of Plato's system
and is closely related to Christian thought. The character of this philosophy is pantheistic-materialistic. Stoicism attempted to destroy the duality of mind and matter, and this resulted in a pantheism which regards God, not as separate from matter, but as the creative, divine energy of matter dwelling within it. The passive and changeable element was called matter, while God was the changeless activity and energy, the soul of the universe, the ruling power within. The world is a living thing; its rational soul is the deity which rules according to unalterable laws determined from eternity. This deity is the rewarder of good, the punisher of evil.

As to the essence of God, they maintained with Heraclitus that He is the fiery, heat-giving force, the life of the world, into which all individual lives are merged, in order to be renewed under new forms.

"This conception is very closely related to Heraclitus' philosophy of "becoming". Heraclitus speaks of an everlasting fire that is all-consuming and represents the abiding power of this eternal transformation and transposition, in other words, the conception of life in the most obvious and effective way." \(^*\)

Stoicism identifies God sometimes with the rational breath which pervades nature, sometimes with the fire that begets the universe, or the ether which is almost identical with the fire.

Thus Stoicism, with its doctrine of an immanent, all-pervasive force, becomes a phase of pantheism. The individual soul is, then, a part of the universal world-soul, the breath, and loses its individuality when returning back to universal reason. Stoicism, moreover, is teleological. There is a purpose in the world, and in order to fulfill this purpose, man must conform to certain laws. A discussion of these laws would lead us into the ethical part of Stoic philosophy. To study

\(^*\) From Schwegler, Hist. of Phil., Page 40: Heraclitus.
the ethical principle of Stoicism, however, does not lie within the province of this writing. We can only refer to it in a general way, in so far as it has a direct bearing upon the pantheistic character of Stoic philosophy. The moral standard of the Stoics was expressed in the statement that one must live according to nature. This is, of course, a very indefinite phrase. We immediately want to know what the term NATÜRÜ is meant to signify. The Stoics used it to affirm a first cause, a governing mind. As the soul moves the body, so does this "mind" move matter. This mind is called God, not a god that is identical with substance in the sense of Spinoza, but a beneficent being, a happy God. This Stoic conception of God is well illustrated in the celebrated

Hymn of Cleanthes.

"Thee it is lawful for all mortals to address. For we are thy offspring, and alone of living creatures possess a voice which is the image of reason. Therefore I will forever sing thee and celebrate thy power. All this universe rolling round the earth obeys thee, and follows willingly at thy command. Such a minister hast thou in thy invincible hands, the two-edged, flaming, vivid thunderbolt. O king, nothing is done without thee, neither in heaven nor on earth, nor in the sea, except what the wicked do in their foolishness. Thou makest order out of disorder, and what is worthless becomes precious in thy sight; for thou hast fitted together good and evil into one, and hast established one law that exists forever. But the wicked fly from thy law, unhappy ones, and though they desire to possess what is good, yet they see not, neither do they hear, the universal law of God. If they would follow it with understanding, they might have a good life. But they go astray, each after his own devices, some vainly striving after reputation, others turning aside after gain excessively, others after riotous living and wantonness. Nay, but, O Zeus, Giver of all things, who dwellest in dark clouds and rulest over the thunder, deliver men from their foolishness. Scatter it from their souls, and grant them to obtain wisdom. Thou dost rightly govern all things; that, being honored, we may repay thee with honor, singing thy works without ceasing, as it is right for us to do. For there is no greater thing than this, either to mortal man, or for the gods, to sing rightly the universal law."

*Transl. by Sir A. Grant in W. W. Cape's Stoicism.*
Having thus distinguished Stoic pantheism from pantheism proper and indicated that Spinoza's view belongs to the latter type, let us now examine the system of Spinoza more in detail.
Chapter 4.

The Pantheism of Spinoza.

Spinoza's famous pantheism is laid down in his "ETHICA". The whole system is geometrical, highly intellectual, and full of axioms and postulates. His philosophy is of the a priori type. It pursues the task of finding a way to perfect peace of soul, not through hedonism, nor through utilitarianism, but by a thorough intellectual procedure. Although his system is not free from serious fallacies and contradictions, it has, nevertheless, attracted many philosophically inclined men. In his "De Intellectus Emendatione" Spinoza thus states his aim: "Experience having made me see that all the ordinary events of common life are vain and futile things, I have finally formed the resolution to investigate whether there exists a true GOOD, a good which by itself alone can fill the entire soul after it has rejected all the rest; a good, in short, which, when it is found and possessed, gives to the soul the eternal and supreme happiness." To Spinoza, therefore, the most important question is, what is the essential nature of God?

In his ETHICA(1, definition 3) Spinoza explains: "By God I mean a Being absolutely infinite, i.e., Substance consisting of an infinite number of attributes, each of which expresses an eternal and infinite essence." By substance he means that which has existence in itself and is conceived of itself, the conception needing for its formation the conception of no second thing. God and Substance can not be separated, they are one and the same (א"ס).

God implies existence; for not being able to exist would indicate want of power. Thus God exists of necessity, is conscious of independence of any prior conception, and has an infinite number of attributes. Spinoza's absolute is
free from all imperfection and must be thought of as the INDWELLING ONE, working from the pure necessity of His nature. This God is eternal. "Eternity means being or entity itself as conceived to be necessarily involved in the mere definition of the thing designated as eternal." (Definition 6.) This God is identical with Substance, and consists of an infinite number of attributes. Two are commonly known to us, THOUGHT and EXTENSION. Through these God is working, through these Substance is operative. "By attribute," says Spinoza, "I mean that which intelligence perceives of Substance as constituting its essence." (Definition 4.) Thought is the cogitandi potentia; from this divine power the MOODI of thought are derived which are also called ideas. From the other attribute, Extension, the modi of actual extension, commonly called bodies, are derived. There is no interaction of the two principal attributes. As all things are in God, bodily things also have their ground in Him; they are regarded under the attribute of Extension. Every IDEAL BEING has its ground only in God as a THINKING BEING.

"The doctrine, then, of Substance and Attribute, relative to us, amounts to this: that the base of the universe, being one, necessarily throws off its phenomena in the concurrent but independent order of two functions, THOUGHT-producing and THING-producing, emerging into conscious unity in the human Ego."* Action and thought are independent powers, yet they stand side by side, being held together by the one common Substance. This God of Spinoza is independent, works for Himself, and is not subject to any compulsion from any other, foreign power. This is the essence of the freedom of God. Furthermore, God is understanding and will, but not in the same sense that we think of them.

"If intellect or will belong to God's eternal essence, each of these attributes must be taken in a sense very different from the common one, for there would

*Martineau, Study of Spinoza, p. 192.
have to be a world-wide difference between our intellect and will and the intellect and will constituting God's essence, nor could they agree in anything except in name; just as the dog, a constellation, agrees with dog, an animal that barks."

We contemplate God's being under the attribute of thought. But God does not work with free choice and understanding, according to human analogy. "Our mind, so far as it is understanding, is an eternal mode of thinking determined by another eternal mode of thinking, and that by another, and so on, ad infinitum. It constitutes God's eternal and infinite understanding."+

We cannot attribute our popular notions to God. This refers also to final causes: while man has the impulse to seek his own advantage by working toward an end, God cannot work with an end in view; for in this case He would be seeking something that He is lacking. This, however, would mean imperfection, restriction. "We must not ask for causes in the will of God, that asylum of ignorance," says Spinoza. With reference to the world, Spinoza declares that everything in this world is determined by the necessity of the divine nature. God has from eternity formed decrees, but these could be formed only by necessity. This conception of eternal determination makes his system subject to fate. As to the creation of things, Spinoza holds that these could not be produced by God in any other way, or in any other order, than that in which they have been produced. God's will is perfect; this necessitates that things be brought about in no different way but according to eternal, unchangeable decrees. For the sake of clearness, and for later reference, we here quote the following passage from Spinoza himself:

"In the mind there is no absolute or free will; but the mind is determined to will this or that by a cause, which has also been determined by another, and this again by another, and so on to infinity." (Ethica 2, 10, 1, 8.)

*) Part 1, 17 Scho.  +) Ethica 5, 10, 1.
The idea that there are no final causes in God also reflects on Spinoza's conception of goodness. The idea of goodness as an end would be an illegitimate limitation of God's being. Spinoza remarks that those who make everything dependent upon the unconditional will and pleasure of God err less widely from the truth than those who make God do everything in relation to goodness. Liberty to Spinoza is not in the free purpose but in a free necessity. That which destroys liberty in the opinion of men is to Spinoza the foundation of liberty.

Spinoza's Conception of Man.

Did Spinoza establish intermediaries between God and the universe? God, as absolute thought, represents the highest degree of knowledge. Yet there is an infinite number of souls, ideas, which constitute the NATURA NATURATA. These human souls are modes of the divine thought, in intimate relation with a corresponding mode of the divine extension, the human body. Man, therefore, represents the two divine attributes, for the human body is a definite, actually existent MODUS OF EXTENSION, while the human mind is the IDEA or MODUS of the divine thought. Man's understanding is, therefore, a part of the infinite understanding of God. In God, on the other hand, there is an idea of every other body, but these ideas are of different nature, for each of them is always the more perfect, the more perfect the body is.

As to the composition of the body and the soul we have the same parallelism. Just as the body consists of numerous parts, so is the idea which forms the human mind composed of numerous ideas.

The human mind is the instrument by which knowledge is imparted and acquired. Spinoza distinguishes three stages of knowledge. The lowest stage is
knowledge of our opinions. The second stage is knowledge of reason which rises from particular to general notions, while the last and the highest stage is that on which we rise to the highest notion of God. This knowledge is the principle of all truth and certainty. In the treatise, "Tractatus De Deo", (Chapter 24, note k,) there is a comparison of the three stages with the three stages of the religious and moral progress of salvation. False opinion is coincident with sin, true faith with the law that accuses of sin, while true knowledge is the grace that frees us from sin. "The foundation of Spinoza's philosophical doctrine of salvation is the proposition: 'Will and Understanding are the same, and are destitute of any power except to pass on to the next idea'.") The human mind, as a definite mode of the divine thought, is determined in everyone of its acts of judgment.

As for the MORAL TEACHINGS of Spinoza, he, in the beginning of the third book of his Ethica, remarks that he did not wish to sit in judgment on affections in the manner of moralists, but that his idea was to understand them as natural effects of natural causes. We are under bondage because we do not fix our affections upon things eternal, but prefer the transitory things. Our mind naturally strives to preserve the self under the different conditions. Self-preservation is the essence of life according to Spinoza; this may depend entirely upon ourselves, as do actions; or it may lie beyond ourselves, as in the case of passion. As all our sense-perception is confused, so all our ideas are inadequate. Man must, in order to understand the true essence and reality of ideas, view everything sub specie eternitatis. Only thus do we understand our natures. Only the active mind sees things as they are in God. To preserve our being, and to persevere in clear thinking, we must strive to understand emotions.

*) Martineau, Study of Spinoza, p. 232.
"Motion, which is called a passion of the soul, is a confused idea through which the mind affirms the energy of existence possessed by its body." Desire, pain and pleasure are the elements by which all emotions can be determined. To attain freedom, we must escape from emotions and false and confused ideas, we must learn to understand whether these further or hinder us in our life. Under the influence of passions we are but slaves. How, then, must we act according to the laws of nature? The power to accomplish this is destroyed in passion. The result is strife and conflict. Therefore, we must find means to cut an end to such slavery, and this can be done, not by commands or sermons on morals, but by destroying our affection by an opposite stronger affection. The stronger are those which rise from the knowledge of the adequate ideas. These are not only the product of mind, but the latter also becomes aware of its own power of action, and feels joy in this experience. "We are virtuous in so far as we are strong, and as the understanding is active; to be weak, or passive, is to be vicious. Thus, not only hatred and envy are vices, but also dainty, shame, humility, and resentment."*)

Virtue consists in nothing but the maintenance of our own being. The impulse of self-preservation is the first and only foundation of virtue. "Act in conformity to the laws of nature." Mind must find its highest virtue in the knowledge of God. (Here Søren Kierkegaard's conception of God takes on a tinge of mysticism.) The consequence of such a doctrine would be pure egotism, if we did not take into consideration the principle that all morality rests on the spontaneous activity of reason, the divine element in man. Søren Kierkegaard tries to combine two elements, the ethical and the rational. Reason is the basis of Morality. In affirming this, Søren Kierkegaard does not treat the social or love impulses with the same consideration.

*) Rogers, Stud. Hist. of Phil., p. 297.
In order, then, to come to perfect freedom, we must have a clear idea of our affections as necessary links in the causal nexus of things. In attempting to find the causes of our affections we weaken their power. Another means is to have definite principles in our way of living. At last, we must look at all things from the viewpoint of eternity. If we do this, we shall be conscious of God's perfection, and our mind will contemplate the intellectual love of God through the scientia intuitiva. "God's love for men and the love of the mind for God are the same." Thus we shall find blessedness and peace.

"Blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but it is virtue itself; nor do we rejoice in it because we destroy the desires, but, on the contrary, because we rejoice in it, we are able to restrain the desires." (Pt. 51.) The stronger the spirit to subdue our passions, the greater the love of God. Supreme happiness consists of the highest knowledge which may be attained by the philosophic soul. To seek the infinite, to free ourselves from bondage, must be our aim. The human mind can not be absolutely destroyed by the body, but something of it remains which is eternal. (Ethics 5, 28.) Socrates reflected and practiced his philosophy in his life. Removed from the busy walks of life, absorbed in contemplation, disregarding the pleasures of this life, he gave to men a philosophy that proclaimed the oneness of God with the All, the absorption into this being, which brought him the name, "the God-intoxicated". This wonderful intellectual system attracted many, among them Goethe. In order to understand fully the conception of God and Nature in Socrates's system in its relation to Goethe, it will be advisable to add a brief discussion as to the immanence of God in Nature. If we would understand Goethe, we must ask the question, Did Goethe accept fully Socrates's idea of God-Nature? Was Socrates's God an immanent God?
Chapter 5.

Did Spinoza Teach an Immanent God?

The reason for asking this question is highly important and most significant in connection with our subject, the relation of Goethe's pantheism in its relation to that of Spinoza. It is for us to determine, if possible, in what sense Spinoza teaches the immanence of God. Not until then can we decide whether Goethe's conception of God's immanence is of the same or of a different type.

In his ETHICA Spinoza says, "Things are in God, and they stay there. He is the immanent, but NOT THE TRANSIENT, cause of things. ETHICA 1, 19: CAUSA IMMANENS. non vera TRANSIENS. James Lindsay writes, "Spinoza's substance is not opposed to spirit, since it may be said to carry within it all the immanent energies and functions of spirit." Another critic, Paulsen, characterizes the God of Spinoza as the actual independent being or SUBSTANCE. The world is the immanent evolution of his essence. In using popular language, and calling God the cause of things, it must be understood that "God is not a cause in the sense in which a particular object is the cause of another that exists independently of it. He is the immanent cause of all things, and hence remains in them, or rather they are in him. He is the cause, not only of their form and movement, but also of their existence and essence." God to Spinoza is spirit, and not a particular spirit, for we can not ascribe thinking to him. He is the unitary principle of the conscious world, the finite qualities do not belong to him. DEUS, SIVE NATURA is a convertible formula. Thus, while he speaks of a God in whom we live, and move, and have our being, God to him is really identical with SUBSTANCE, which in turn includes all that exists. It is hard to see where Spinoza's God differs from what is commonly called Nature. Spinoza might have
expressed himself more distinctly if he had foreseen the age which so loudly proclaims an atomistic atheism.

If God is the IMMANENT, and not the TRANSIENT, cause of things, and if immanence finds shelter under the roof of pantheism, and if God is the theological expression of what Spinoza means by NATURE, we can easily see what Spinoza means by immanence.

Hoeffding has about the same opinion concerning Spinoza's conception of immanence. He says, "According to Spinoza, there exists between Substance and God an intimate relationship, an indwelling, immanent relation. We are justified in saving that if God is the immanent cause, he is also the immanent effect, the spirit. On the other hand, the statement, 'God is Substance' would be equivalent to a complete denial of his existence, to atheism. The main question of our present subject is, What does Spinoza mean when in his ETHICA I, Proposition 18, he refers to God as the CAUSA OMNIUM IMMANENS, NON VERA TRANSIENS? In the fundamental argument we read, 'Omnia quae sunt in deo et per deum conici debent. Aleoque deus rerum, quae in insco sunt, est causa.'**) What Spinoza really means by God as CAUSA IMMANENS is that God is the immanent cause only in the sense that he is in the world, and does not transcend it. To Spinoza there are no miraculous incursions, creative or otherwise, from without the self-sufficient system of nature. Spinoza, then, does not hold that immanence means immediacy in the sense that God is the immediate cause of things. There is no doubt that Spinoza uses the word IMMANENT in a very loose sense. In his "Life of Spinoza" Frederick Pollock says, "In harmony with his loose conception of IMMANENCE, the expression 'in God', when employed by Spinoza, does not generally mean 'in the Absolute', but only in the system of nature.

*) Hoeffding, Hist. of Mod. Phil., I, 205.
It is equally difficult to explain from this conception of immanence what the philosopher means by 'the world is in God'. God and Substance, as we have seen, are identical. The word 'God', then, would mean that we could eliminate it entirely, and regard it only as superficial, or we may assert that Spinoza intended to ornament his system by using theological terms. Furthermore, according to his first definition, this God is CAUSA SUI, by which he understands 'that of which the essence involves existence; that is, whose nature cannot be conceived otherwise than as existing'. This definition does not include, in any sense, immanence. We never read in Spinoza's works that he has a God who is the creative, working power in nature. His system bears the character of a mechanism rather than that of a working power within nature. "May we not say, with Flint, "The definition of God includes all other definitions; the whole of his doctrine concerning God is in germ in his definition of God. Spinozism is founded on the error that substance cannot be defined; that no human mind can comprehend it. God and nature, therefore, are eternally coexistent. God, then, is the one and all of Substance, beyond which there is nothing, and in which all that is has such being as belongs to it."*) Rudolph Bucken, referring to Spinoza's use of the word IMMANENCE, says, "From the 13th century onward, an action or a cause was called immanent in so far as it remained within the acting subject, and transeunt in so far as it went beyond to something else. It is in this sense that God is the immanent, but not the transeunt, cause of all things. It means that God does not go outside of Himself when He works upon things, but that He remains by Himself, thus carrying the world within Himself. From this point of view, the world is in God rather than God in the world."+)

From all the statements and the different views that have been presented, *

*) Flint, Anti-theistic Theories.

+ ) Main Currents, page 462.
there is no real idea to be gotten from the writings of Spinoza as to the
particular understanding of this IMMANENCE. One thing is apparent: Spinoza
endeavors to save the unity of God, theologically speaking, and of nature, as
identical with God. As we have stated, this "it" which he calls God, is in rea-

lity a mere theological term. Therefore, we must lay too much stress on the
fact that Spinoza attributes immanence to God. Spinoza would seem to use the
word IMMANENT only to express distinctly that there is no transcendence, no
miraculous creative Spirit outside of substance, which substance exists per se
and in se. There is no reason, therefore, for saying that Spinoza taught the im-
manence of God in nature. It is to be borne in mind that the word IMMANENCE
is a very vague term, under which all forms of immanence find shelter. Like the
term PANTHEISM, it has different shades of meaning. If we, for instance, were to
judge Spinoza from the standpoint of Kant's interpretation of the word God,
it would be impossible to classify Spinoza's God as immanent. Jacobi, who ac-
cepts Kant's conception as a criterion, designates Spinoza as an atheist.*

There is no doubt as to Goethe's conception of immanence. It will be my
task to show what the poet understood by this term. Spinoza and Goethe, it must
be conceded, entertained like views in many respects; but in their conception of
immanence there existed a wide chasm between the two. To this difference let
us direct our attention.

*) Compare J. Martineau, Study of Spinoza.
Chapter 6.

The Relation of Goethe and Spinoza.

Since Goethe and Spinoza have many ideas in common, the former may be called a Spinozist. This chapter will be devoted to a discussion of their philosophical relationship. It will be seen that Goethe did not accept the ideas of Spinoza in any slavish manner. In fact, pantheistic tendencies were manifest in Goethe's soul before he ever read Spinoza. Lavater, whom Goethe accompanied on his way from Würzburg to Frankfort, reports the following conversation that took place between them:

"Goethe told me many things about Spinoza and his writings. He stated that the philosopher was in complete harmony with the teachings of the Savior Himself. There exists no doubt in his mind as to the sincerity of Spinoza and the frankness of his character. Men in high positions asked his advice in most important matters. He may justly be called homo temperatissimus. Prudence and disinterestedness were features of his character. The number of his admirers, therefore, was large. Although he denied the prophets of the Old Testament, he was a prophet himself. His words breathed the spirit of humanity and sincerity."(*)

This conversation gives us an idea of the deep influence which the philosopher exerted upon Goethe. Spinoza became his idol. It will be very interesting to point out in how far Spinoza was the prototype of Goethe. But we must be guarded against the idea as if they had agreed in every particular. They differed, for instance, in their conception of nature.

Let us, however, first consider the similarities in the thoughts and writings of the two men.

It was in 1778 that Goethe suddenly turned to Spinoza. The latter's influence upon the poet lasted all through his life. Goethe derived great comfort

*) Translation by the present writer.
from the books of Spinoza, although they were considered atheistic. On his journeys Goethe often read the inspiring ETHICA. It would be wrong to say that Goethe was fully satisfied with this system. His own words that we hear quoted so often, "Two souls, alas! dwell in my breast," indicate that the poet never fully gained philosophical poise. Later citations from his writings will show this inner restlessness and inconsistency in the poet. Yet that inner unity which he never gained he nevertheless devoutly wished. Said he,

"Teilen kann ich nicht das Leben.  
Nicht das Innen noch das Aussen.  
Allen muss das Ganze gebéhen,  
Um mit euch und mir zu hausen.  
Immer hab' ich nur geschrieben,  
Wie ich fühle, wie ichs meine.  
Und so sollt ich Dich, Ihr Lieben,  
Und bin innerfort der Eine." *)

what Goethe saw and felt, that Spinoza proved and defined. The eternal universe which was to the philosopher a theorem was to the poet a matter of the emotions. Goethe welcomes a philosophy that "confirms our original feelings as though we were one with nature, as is expressed in the following words:

"His all reconciling peace contrasted with my all-agitating endeavor; his intellectual measure was the counterpart of my poetic way of feeling and expressing myself, and even the inflexible regularity of his logical procedure which might be considered ill-adapted to moral subjects made him his most passionate scholar, and his devoted adherent. Mind and heart, understanding and sense, were drawn together with an inevitable elective affinity, and this at the same time produced an intimate union between individuals of such different types."

*) Life to me resists division,  
Both the inner and the outer.  
Must the whole to all be given,  
Thus with you and me communing.  
That alone have I been writing  
Which I deeply feel and cherish.  
Thus a cleavage I must suffer,  
Yet one and the same remaining.
Fundamentally, Spinoza and Goethe were in harmony with respect to the following points:

First, the Unity of God and the World.
Secondly, the Divinity of Nature.
Thirdly, the Determination of the Universe and All Beings by Necessity.
Fourthly, God Is the Causa Imanens of the World.

That they were in agreement with regard to the first three of these points, is generally conceded. The contention, however, that they were in accord on the fourth proposition, is a matter of unsettled opinion. The critics do not all express themselves affirmatively.

Goethe did not feel the need of proof for the unity and divinity of nature. In the bosom of creative nature he saw divine forces working. In his soul he experienced the infinite world. Full of reverence and in deep contemplation he could worship the unseen powers. The bird in the air, the worm on the earth he called his brothers; for he felt divine power everywhere and the unity of nature was revealed to him directly in all living beings.

In a conversation with Eckermann Goethe said,

"Did God not endow the bird with this eternal love toward its young? And if the same could not be said of all living creatures in nature, the world could not exist. Thus the divine power is diffused everywhere, and God's eternal love was effective in all his beings." +)

In an aphorism, "Die Natur", we find these remarkable words:

"I trust her(nature); she may command me. She will not hate her work. I speak of her. She has spoken. Everything is her guilt or her merit."

Another important statement is found in ZAHME XENIEN, 260, where Goethe goes a step farther, saying, "The more thou hast the feeling of being a man, the more thou art like the gods."

Although these words express nothing but self-worship, to Goethe they are

Pfleiderer, Goethe.
May 29, 1831. +)
the highest type of reverence. He is in accord with Spinoza's contention, "when we say that the human mind perceives this or that thing, we say nothing else but that God has this or that idea." For we find this same idea expressed in the first part of Faust:

"Wo fass' ich dich, unendliche Natur?
Nur Brust, wo? Ihr Quellen alles Lebens,
An denen Himmel und Erde hängt,
Einen, welcher Brust sich drängt,
Ihr quell't, ihr tränkt, und schmacht' ich so vergebens?"

A quotation from Pflueger will throw more light on the intimate relation of Spinoza's conception of God-Nature to Goethe's view:

"Spinoza made the inviolable regularity of the world the cornerstone of his thinking, he who saw in the regular order and unbroken connection of all that comes to pass the omnipotence of creative nature or the causality of God immanent in the world, and who in his knowledge of the unconditioned, all-conditioning One had found emancipation from the tyranny of the passions and the blessed rest of the intellectual love of God."

This idea of God was to Goethe the foundation of his moral world. The dependence upon the eternal divine law, which the deity even could not change, was a balm for the passionate soul of our philosopher-poet. The following passage contains the thought of dependence upon God as the poet's foundation of his moral world. Faust tells Margaret, when she asks him as to his belief in God, that he believes in a power that includes all, upholds all and sustains all. He tells her:

"Nenn' es dann, wie du willst.
Nenn's Glück! Herz! Liebe! Gott!
Ich habe 'seinem Namen
Dafür! Gefühl ist alles."

"Then name it as you will:
Name 't Bliss! Heart! Love! God!
Name for it have I none!
Feeling is all in all."

*) Where shall I grasp thee, infinite Nature, where?
Ye breasts, ye fountains of all life, whereon
Hang heaven and earth, from which the blighted soul
Yearneth to draw sweet solace, still ye roll
Your sweet and fostering tides, where are ye, where?
In a letter written to Jacobi May 5, 1786, Goethe vigorously protests against anthropomorphism:

"I attach myself more and more to the worship of Sóinóza's God, and I leave it to you to call religion what you seem to call it. You emphasize faith in God, I affirm: we must behold God. Sóinóza speaks of the scientia intuitiva, saying, 'Hoc cognoscendi genus procedit ab adeo unita idea essentiae formulis aut undam Eai attributorum ad adeo unitam cognitionem essentiae rerum.' These few words contain great comfort for me: they lend me courage to devote my whole life to the contemplation of those things that may be obtained by me."

To call God a person would be a humiliation, and below His dignity. Infinite, boundless, eternal God and Nature was the thought both of Sóinóza and Goethe. God and nature are inseparable. If Christianity should teach that God is separate, or outside of nature, Goethe would prefer to join forces with the heathen, and with the Eóhesian goldsmith cry out, "Great is Diana of the Eóhesians!"

Goethe, the poet, first of all praises self-certainty (Selbstsicherheit). This idea rests upon the fact that one thinks himself a part of the mighty whole that is governed according to eternal, inviolable laws. This is strictly Sóinóza's idea. The idea of Selbstsicherheit was not the dominating one in Prometheus. The latter defied the gods, rebelling even against Zeus himself. This idea is in sharp contradiction to the calmness and peacefulness of the soul of Sóinóza.

Goethe had a restless, turbulent mind, yet this particular feature of self-assurance, so expressively held by Sóinóza, made a deep and lasting impression on him. The following words of the poet are, we may say, a reproduction of Sóinóza's thought:

"Hier meine Welt, mein All! Hier fühlt ich mich! Hier alle meine Wünsche In körperlichen Gestalten! Meinen Geist so tausendfach Geteilt und ganz in meinen teuren Kindern."

We must act according to our nature; this is the highest perfection. Another

Translated by the present writer."

From poem, "Gross ist die Diana der Eóheser."
one of Soinoza's thoughts is expressed in this poem: nature rules according to eternal laws that can not be altered even by God Himself.

"Und welch ein Recht
Ersehnen sich die stolzen
Bewohner des Olympus
Auf meine Kräfte?
Sie sind mein, und mein ist ihr Gebrauch."

Furthermore, it would seem that the conception of the relativity of good and evil, as expressed in this poem, is the same as that held by our philosopher.

"Ihr seid nicht ausgeartet, meine Kinder,
Seid arbeitsam und Faul.
Und drausam, mild,
Freidebis, seizis,
Gleichet all euren Schicksalsbrüdern.
Gleichet den Tieren und den Göttern."

Goethe's intention, as expressed in the "Prometheus", needs no further illumination. He declares that he will follow his own genius, trusting himself to the full, defying the world and its resistance. Like nature, he will create mighty works. This is his ideal. The theme of the poem is the colossal power to create. It represents the power of will in contest with the power to act. In this respect, Goethe found himself in opposition to the prevailing opinion of his time, as Soinoza did when he had his place of habitation among the sons of men. The man under the sway of the Storm and Stress age discovered in the peaceful, even-tempered Soinoza certain features that made a strong appeal to him.

*) You are not degraded, my children,
You're industrious and idle,
Cruel and mild,
Generous and grasping,
Like unto the brothers of your fate,
Like unto both animals and gods.
The kinship of ideas expressed in the "Prometheus" with those of Spinoza should not, however, be regarded as proof of Goethe's unqualified discipleship. Care may be right in his opinion that "Goethe était plus de la famille de Spinoza que de son ñcole." *) We add a passage from "Lichtung und Wahrheit", in which Goethe says, "Nature works according to eternal laws, such as the deity cannot change...... One reflects how a natural phenomenon that aims at reason, understanding, creates astonishment, indeed brings horror." In "Die Natur" (1738) we read, "One obeys the laws of nature even when one resists them; one works with her even when one intends to work against her. According to the law by which thou hast come hither, thou must thou be, thou canst not extricate thyself. Conditions and law, and all volition is decreed, and in the presence of will caprice keeps silent." A few lines from "Metamorphose der Tiere" (1819) may also fittingly be inserted here:

"Doch im Inneren scheint ein Geist gewaltig zu ringen,
Wie er durchbräche den Kreis, Willkür zu schaffen den Formen,
Wie dem Wollen; doch was er beginnt, beginnt er vergehe.

(Yet, it appears, a spirit within does mightily wrestle
Striving the circle to break, and forms to endow with discretion.
E'en as the will; but, strive as it may, its strife is still idle.)

The testimony of Schiller will greatly strengthen the assertion that Goethe was in complete harmony with the philosopher Spinoza. He recognized at an early date that it was impossible for Goethe to be anything but a Spinozist, that it would mean the destruction of his beautiful, naive nature if he were to become a libertarian. He also told Goethe that he would find nothing kindred in Kant, and advised him not to adhere to Kant's philosophy.

On his Italian journey Goethe writes (Sept. 6, 1718), "The grand and beautiful works of art have still been created by men according to true and natural laws.

*) Goethe was more of the family of Spinoza than of his school.
Here all caorice, all assumotion, falls to the ground. There is necessity, there is God." In the 16th book of his "Dichtung und Wahrheit" Goethe says, "I have come to the conviction that my indwelling poetic talent is simply nature."

The doctrine expressed in the above passages leads Goethe to trust God in all his actions and undertakings. He believes that God deals with us as He thinks is well. God is more powerful and wiser than we: He deals with us according to His own good pleasure. We live as long, Goethe asserts, as God has determined. Of his "Wilhelm Meister" he says, "He does not seem to say anything else but that man in spite of foolishness and errors is led by a higher hand, that he will at last come to a happy end."

We are, therefore, of the opinion that Goethe and Spinoza agree upon the doctrine of determinism. The world, as well as individuals, is subject to the eternal, inviolable and unchangeable laws of God.

On Immortality.

We have, in another chapter, considered Spinoza's doctrine of IMMORTALITY. A few words will suffice to recall his ideas on this subject, and will enable us to answer the question as to whether Goethe shared them. The closing words of the ETHICA tell us that the soul of the sage can scarcely be troubled. Possessing, by a sort of eternal necessity, the consciousness of himself, and of God, and of all things, he never ceases to be, and he possesses forever true peace of soul. Spinoza, furthermore, believes that darkened souls must perish, while philosophic souls are above death. To quote Saisset (Page 142), "In proportion as we render our soul purer, and more reasonable, we increase our right to immortality, and prepare ourselves a happier destiny." Reason, then, which sees all things sub specie aeternitatis, is immortal. Spinoza holds the doctrine of eternal happiness for
philosophic souls. "We feel," he exclaims, "that we are eternal." This sentence, according to Saissert, may mean "that the human soul is but a transitory form of an eternal principle, and that we feel our successive existence flow away, like a rapid wave, upon the changeless ocean of universal life." Spinoza's doctrine of immortality is far from clear since the word "eternal" which he uses is not understood as applying to the order of time. Goethe, however, thinks men in concrete terms and his views as regards immortality are clear. In his Gesprächen mit Eckermann, February 4, 1829, Goethe says, "Man must believe in immortality. He has a right to believe in it according to his nature; he may trust religious promises. But if a philosopher were to seek for a proof of immortality taken from a legend, this would be very insufficient. If I work unceasingly to the end of my life, nature is under obligation to show me another form of existence when the present one can no longer support my spirit." In poetical form, the same thought is expressed in the following quotation from Faust, Part I:

"Auf dieser Erde, wo Leben meinen Spuren
Und diese Sonne scheint meinen Schmerzen,
Kann ich nicht erst von ihnen scheiden.
Denn was will und kann geschehen:
Daran will ich nichts weiter hören,
Ob man auch künftig hasst und liebt,
Und ob es auch in anderen Himmel und einen Unten gibt." *)

These words express the unlimited joy of life in this world, but also point to an existence beyond, the exact manner of which, however, is shrouded in mystery. (*)This earth the fountain whence my pleasures flow.
This sun in which daily shine upon my woe.
And can I but from these divorce my lot,
Then come what may, to me it matters not.
Henceforward to this theme I close mine ears:
Whether hereafter we shall hate or love,
And whether also, in those distant spheres,
There is a depth below, or height above.
Goethe cheerfully believes that his life activity will be continued indefinitely. A restless striving, a ceaseless rushing on, is immortality for Goethe. This philosophy of striving is undoubtedly in great contrast to Sinozoa's ideas, yet we may detect a grain of his thought also in these words of Goethe. For do they not express the acquiescentia animi of the philosopher? Do they not breathe a humble submission to the will of God? Sinozoa imbued Goethe with the knowledge of the eternal divine laws of the world. We must depend entirely upon God, for He determines everything.

This thought of immortality is beautifully expressed in Goethe's Zaehme Xenien, S. 1324:

"Eu hast Unsterblichkeit im Sinn:
Kannst du uns deine Grunde nennen?
Gar wohl, der Hauptgrund liest darin,
Lasst wir sie nicht entbehren können."*}

The thought of immortality can not be surrendered. We can not renounce it. It is too precious. Although Goethe taught the lesson of self-denial, we must not think that this was with him an end in itself, but rather a means to liberate the spirit, to make him capable of doing good. He sought a haven of rest for his passionate soul, yet his whole life, even death, meant for him activity without ceasing. We hear him exclaiming,

"Ach, ich bin des Treibens müde;
Was soll all der Schmerz, die Lust?
Süßer Friede,
Komm' in meine Brust."

But his whole life remains a struggle, not with adverse circumstances, but with his moral self. This inner conflict, apparently, led him to give vent to the cry,

*) In immortality dost thou believe?
And canst thou arguments produce?
Indeed, the one most to be emphasized
Is this: that we can not dispense with it. -Tr. by H. B.
"Zwei Menschen hab' ich, ach! in meiner Brust!" (Two souls, alas! have I within my breast.) This thought, this uncertainty, this apparent desolation is very significant in Goethe. Sometimes the poet is absorbed in eternity, sometimes he dreads it. "Eternity", he says, "may be too narrow for me". )

"Ein Sadduzäer will ich bleiben; Das könnt' mich zur Verzweiflung treiben, Dass von dem Volk, das mich hier drängt, Die Ewigkeit wür'd' eingeengt. Das war' doch nur der alte Patsch, Und droben gäbs nur verklärten Klatsch." *)

Goethe's conception of immortality was closely related to that of his evolutionary theory. Like everything in the realm of nature, immortality is progress, movement. It is continued activity of the spirit. The poet advises us to direct our attention to the things of this life rather than to eternity. To our poet, eternity does not mean a heaven in the Biblical sense. His "beyond" means beyond the grave, but still in this actual world of ours. Eternity to him is a continuous struggle. The greatest treasure that we can bequeath to our fellowmen, a treasure immortal, are our souls, our lives, our ideals. The first thought, that our treasures, thus defined, can not wither, is brought out in a passage which I shall quote from Faust:

"Ja! Diesem Sinne bin ich ganz ergeben, Das ist der Weisheit letzter Schluss: Nur der verdient sich Freiheit wie das Leben, Der täglich sie erobern muss."

*) A Sadducee will I remain, For it would mean despair and pain If the Philistines that now oppress me Should in eternity possess me. 'Twould be the same old fiddle faddle, Above to have celestial twaddle. Com. Tr.

+ )Remark from Pfleiderer.
Zum Augenblicke dürft' ich sagen:
Verweile doch, du bist so schön!
Was kann die Söhn von meinen Erdentagen
Nicht in sechs untersehn."*)

The last two lines express in richest beauty Goethe's whole thought. There is no perishing, no decay of the higher powers of the soul. "Nature does not surrender its capital under any circumstances."+) Immortality, in a word, is activity. It is said that about 1734 Goethe renounced theology and metaphysics forever. He believed that two fundamental principles, belief in God and immortality, would satisfy the heart. From the ETHICA of Soinoza he drew two golden life principles. The philosophy of Soinoza employed disinterestedness and resignation. Resignation, Entsagung, in regard to the happiness of life, results from the necessary immutability of the course of the world. Goethe emphasizes this truth as follows: "Our physical and social life, our customs and habits, wisdom and philosophy, religion and indeed many a casual event, all these preach to us: DASS WIR ENTSAGEN SOLLEN."++

In poetical form Goethe makes his philosophy of resignation appear still more beautiful to us when he says,

"Was kann die Welt mir wohl gewähren?
Entbehren sollst du, splißst entbehren.
Das ist der ewige Gesang,
Der jedem an die Ohren klingt.
Uns' unser ganzes Leben lang
Uns heiser jede Stunde singt."+++)

*) Yes! to this thought I hold with firm persistence.
The last result of wisdom stamps it true:
He only earns his freedom and existence
Who daily conquers it anew.
Then dared I hate the moment fleeing:
Ah, still delay, thou art so fair!
The traces can not, of mine earthly being,
In eons perish-they are there!-Tr. by Bavard Taylor.

+) Gespräch mit Falk, Jan. 23, 1913.
**+Faust, Part I.

**) Lichtung und Wahrheit, 16(1876).
The culmination of renunciation upon which Soinoza fixed his gaze was also the goal of Goethe's striving. Renunciation, then, results from the surrender of everything that may hinder the practice of our moral duties. Every moment in life demands resignation. In "Werther" Goethe dwells upon resignation as being necessary, even if difficult. Our physical and our social life alike demand resignation. Nature has endowed man with overflowing life and activity. We renounce one passion and substitute another. We try occupations, inclinations, favorite schemes, and in the end exclaim, "All is vanity!" Goethe admits that only few men are able to renounce everything and be resigned in every respect. But the principle he affirms, nevertheless—"In asking ourselves and in observing others, we find that we are seldom compelled by ourselves to renounce this or that wish. In the majority of cases we must admit that external conditions are causes of our renouncing so many things." These are words which Goethe spoke in conversation with German emigrants. His own life is the best illustration of how his ideas are realized. He fought, he succumbed, he rose, he fell, always conscious of the principle, "Thou shalt renounce!" In "Zahme Xenien", 5, 106, we read that a man will never succeed in life if he is unable to exercise selfcontrol. We must live according to the dictates of divine reason, and learn to renounce the pleasures of the present. Although this is a bitter task in the beginning, the fruit will be sweet as time goes on. We must renounce, not the present only, but we must renounce always: only thus can we find peace and free ourselves from the tyrannical rule of the world and of our own passions. Soinoza's inner blessedness, the peace that characterized his spirit, was balm to Goethe's passionate soul. He endeavored to realize the philosopher's attitude of mind in his own experience. He undoubtedly rejoiced in renunciation, but he was overflowing with passions, and as a hot-blooded child of the world often allowed himself to be drawn from

*) A. Bielschowsky, Goethe's Philosophy. Tr. by Cooper.
real, lasting pleasures to the enjoyment of the moment." Alas! two souls dwell in my breast!" Goethe felt the immense task of conquering, of winning the victory. In hours of despair and restlessness he turned to Spinoza, his teacher, and it seemed as if he succeeded in finding his way again to the Eternal. "I had to yield up my life, in order to be," he writes to Schubart (July 9, 1820). Goethe's mighty spirit with a holy desire lifts itself up, and, like a "moth with holy longing, he flies into the divine flame to turn away the earthly, temporal man, and let the man of eternity come into being."*

Another beautiful thought is interwoven with the doctrine of renunciation. We ask how to renounce. Goethe's answer is, We must strive, conquer, overcome! Spinoza did not demand monastic resignation, or ask man to leave the world and retire into solitude. He would advise us to learn about the eternal. Knowledge of God is real joy, and an object worth striving for. Goethe tried to act upon this advice, and free himself from the powers that enslave men. He strove to conquer. His ideal finds expression in these words:

"Von der Gewalt, die alle Menschen bindet.
Befreit der Mensch sich, der sich überwindet."

What Spinoza meant by seeking the eternal, Goethe understandably tells us:

"True guardian spirits walk beside us,
As highest master gently guide us
To Him who made and maketh all.
The soul that gladly self effaceth
Will weariness no longer fret,
Not passion, made determination,
Not irksome call, strict obligation:
Self-yielding'tis will joy beget." +)

Spinoza was a believer in temperate pleasures. "The wise man" he says, "enjoys things. He desires refreshment from the temperate use of agreeable food and

*) Quoted from Bielschowsky, p. 165.

and drink, from the fragrance and the beauty of growing plants, from ornaments, athletic contests; the theatre, and the like." Goethe, in full harmony with the philosopher, says in his "Vermächtnis,

"Genieße massig und Sedan; Vernunft sei überall zugegen, wo Leben sich des Lebens freut."*)

We shall conclude this paragraph with a word from Goethe that is touched with deep emotion, and that displays the full knowledge which the poet had of the guidance of the heavenly powers, guiding us through sorrow, tears, and humility, until the goal of inner rest is attained.

"Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass, Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte Auf seinem Bette weinend ass, Der kennt euch nicht, ihr himmlischen Mächte."+)

Having seen how deeply Goethe was interested in Spinoza's idea of resignation and renunciation, let us, for a few moments, inquire as to what extent he approached the philosopher's view with regard to the principle of disinterestedness. While resignation refers to the persona inissa, disinterestedness relates to our social life, to our activities and connections with the outside world.** With Goethe, however, the development of his personality was always the most satisfying task. This never-changing inner labor kept his mind receptive to other lines of thought than those purely pantheistic. While chiefly interested in the development of his

*) Good fortune's boon enjoy with measure,
   Let reason reign in every pleasure,
   Where life in life takes sheer delight.
   
+) Who ne'er in tears his moral ate,
   Who ne'er in sorrow's night sat waiting
   For gloom and darkness to abate.
   The bow'r's celestial, is not rating.

own personality, the Spinozistic ideal of "infinite disinterestedness" was simultaneously developed by him and vitally experienced in the discharge of his professional activities, lending his services to the duke, to whom he was personally befriended, and upon whom he exercised a powerful influence. While his own character, under the influence of Spinoza's philosophical writings, was gradually developed into clearness and purity, he came to see in Frau von Stein the personification of his ideal. Writing to Jacobi (Nov. 17, 1782), he expresses the hope that his heart may be freed from selfishness, like gold tested in fire. The means to this end was his daily work, "the article of faith." This inner reformation led him to the desire to infuse pure and harmonious influences into those surrounding him. "God grant," he says, "that we may keep our souls open and also open our good souls to others."

Frau von Stein became to him the highest inspiration toward reaching this ideal. He entrusted to her, not only his poetical aspirations, but also his professional duties. His intimate companionship with this wonderful woman is a phase of that disinterestedness which he had learned in the school of the philosopher Spinoza. She came to be his teacher, his inspiration, and his lasting ideal. In "Dichtung und Wahrheit", 14 (1774), Goethe testifies as follows:

"This miraculous word: 'He who loves God can not endeavor to have God love him in return;" fills my whole thinking. To be disinterested in all things, most disinterested in love and friendship, was my greatest desire, my maxim, my practice."

May we add Mr. Bielschowsky's comment in regard to Goethe's relation to Spinoza on this subject of disinterestedness:

"Such is the plea of the much misunderstood poem "Das Göttliche", which, far from being opposed to, tenets of Spinoza, is in complete harmony with them."

In concluding this line of thought, it will not be amiss to cite a few words from the poem entitled "Das Göttliche," as a summary of what has been said on the preceding pages:

*) Ethica, 5.
"Noble be man, helpful and good!  
Hail to those unknown higher Beings  
Whom we divine!  
Like unto them be man, teaching faith in them  
By his example. — Goethe's translation, p. 167.

*) The wist in heaven born  
All our pain and anguish stillest,  
Doubly with elation füllest,  

Ah, of strife, my heart doth tire,  
Naught stirs my needed feet  
Sweet peace, my soul inspire  
Fill my weary, troubled breast  

Tr. by H.P.
This thought expressed in the spirit of Goethe might be formulated thus: only in personality do we find the true type of happiness. There must be no yielding to blind passion. Far from giving up personality, we must preserve it by means of reason. According to Spinoza, our reason is a part of divine reason, which we, therefore, must learn to understand and discern. In doing this, we shall distinguish between lasting values and those that are only temporary. Passions do not satisfy man for any length of time; they are only momentary. One must win those lasting relations that "win eternity for the spirit." The right thing to do is to be guided by the "gentle sway of reason". There is no individual thing in nature which is more useful to man than a man who lives under the guidance of reason.

Ethica 4, §5

Spinoza says that self-preservation is the first and only foundation of virtue. Here we may also quote a sentence that expresses the philosopher's idea of good and evil: "The knowledge of good and evil is nothing but emotion of pleasure and pain in so far as we are conscious of it." Self-assertion is to Spinoza the only power of virtue. We are endowed with virtue in crocration to our endeavor in seeking what is useful to preserve our being. Like Spinoza, Goethe believed the attainment of happiness to depend upon the substitution of harmful passions by those that are useful in the preservation of the better self. This presupposes a real knowledge of the passions. Such knowledge, if attained by us, is God's knowledge, is moral perfection, is the sumnum bonum.

Ethica 4, §6

The highest good, says Spinoza, "is the knowledge of God." (Ethica 4, §5)

*) Written by Goethe from Italy.

++) Carlyle's Essay on Goethe.

+++) Ethica 4, §5.

In closing this chapter, we can not resist the temptation of quoting a passage from Carlyle, a sincere friend and a great admirer of the poet Goethe. He characterizes him as follows:

"In Goethe we have a rare and a complex nature. He strikes us by his beauty and calmness. This man rules, and is not ruled. Stern and fiery energies of a most passionate soul lie silent in the center of his being. He was not ruled by the iron sway of passion, but guided in kindly union under the mild sway of reason. His peace is not from blindness, but from clear vision. His mind was in unity with itself. There is no whining over human woes; it is understood that we must simply all strive to alleviate or remove them."
Chapter 7.

Goethe's Own Conception of God.

What was Goethe's conception of God; and what was his attitude toward nature? We shall find that he is not altogether in accord with the rigid pantheism of Spinoza; highly as he esteemed him. Spinoza taught that the world is in God; while Goethe maintains that God is immanent in the world. According to Goethe's view, God is not separate from the world; and not identical with mere substance, but "das eine Urbedingende." He sees God manifesting Himself in Nature and her phenomena. There is no action from without, but there creates an inner life, a creative power that pervades the universe. Nature is a mysterious whole. It surrounds us all, and is the original source of all life. Goethe says that he will explore this power with all his heart. He speaks of Nature as despising the immature; and revealing her secrets only to the natural, the true, the pure.

A most striking, and in parts touching, deification of nature and her work will be found in Goethe's rhapsody on nature, which is inserted here for the purpose of enabling us to gain a somewhat more direct insight into the poet's conception of this subject.

Rhapsody on Nature.**

"Nature! By her we are surrounded and encompassed. Unable are we either to step out of her, or to enter more deeply into her. Unsolicited and unwarned she receives us into the circle of her dance, and hurries along with us till we are exhausted and drop out of her arms.

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She ever creates new forms; what now is never was before. What was comes not again. All is new, and yet old.

We live in her midst; and are strangers to her. She speaks to us incessantly, yet betrays not her mystery to us. We affect her constantly, but have no power over her.

She seems to have contrived everything for individuals, yet saves nothing for individuals. She builds ever, and ever destroys; and her workshop is inaccessible.

She lives in her children alone; and her mother, where is she? She is the only artist: from the simplest subject to the greatest contrasts, without apparent effort accomplishing the greatest perfection; the most precise exactness, and always covered with something gentle. Every one of her works has a being of its own, every one of her phenomena has the most isolated idea; and yet they all merge into one.

She acts a play on the stage: whether she sees it herself, we know not; and yet she plays it for us who stand in the corner.

There is an eternal living, becoming, and moving in her; and yet she exceeds no farther. She transfers herself forever, and there is no moment when she stands still. Of remaining in a spot, she does not think, and to standing still she attaches her curse. She is firm; her step is measured, her exertions rare, her laws unalterable.

All men are in her, and she is in all. With all she carries on friendly game and rejoices the more if they win from her. She plays the game with many so secretly that she plays it to the end before they know it.

The most unnatural also is nature; even the most stupid Philistine hath something of her genius. Who sees her not everywhere sees her nowhere aright.

She loves herself and ever clings to herself, having eyes and hearts without number. Ever she lets new enjoyment grow, insatiable to impart herself.

She delights in illusion. Whoever destroys this in himself and others, him she punishes, showing herself the strictest tyrant. Whoever trustfully follows her, him she presses like a child to her heart.

Her children are without number. To no one is she altogether niggardly; but she has favorites upon whom she showers much; and to whom she sacrifices much. To greatness she has pledged her protection. She has few springs, but those are never worn out, always active, always manifold.

Her play is never new, because she ever creates new spectators. Life is her finest invention; and death is her artifice to get more life.

She veils man in darkness, and spurs him continually to the light. She makes his dependent upon the earth, dull and heavy, and keeps rousing him afresh.

She gives wants, because she loves action. The wonder is that she accomplishes all this motion with so little. Every want is a benefit quickly satisfied, quickly
rowing again. If she gives one more, it is a new source of pleasure; but she soon comes into equilibrium.

She sets out every moment for the longest race, and is every moment at the goal.

She is vanity itself, but not for us, to whom she has made herself the greatest weight.

She lets every child tinker with her, every fool pass judgment on her; thousands stumble over her, and see nothing; and she has her joy in all, and she finds in all her account.

Man obeys her laws, even when she strives against him; he works with her even when he would work against her.

She makes of all she gives a blessing, for she first makes it indispensable.

She leads, that we may long for her; she hastens, that we may not grow weary of her.

She has no speech or language, but she creates tongues and hearts through which she feels and speaks.

Her crown is love. Only through it can man approach her. She creates gaps between all things, and is always ready to engulf all.

She has isolated all, to draw all together. By a few draughts from the cup of love she makes up for a life full of trouble.

She is all. She rewards herself and punishes herself, delights and tortures herself. She is rude and gentle, lovely and terrible, powerless and almighty.

All is always now in her. Past and future know she not. The present is her eternity.

She is kindly. I praise her with all her works. She is wise and quiet. One can tear no explanation from her, extort from her no gift which she gives not of her own free will.

She is whole, and yet never completed. As she plies it, she can always ply it.

To every one she appears in a form of her own. She hides herself in a thousand names and terms, and is always the same.

She has placed me here, she will lead me away. I trust myself to her. She may do as she likes with me. She will not hate her work. It is not I who speak of her. Nay, the true and the false, she has spoken it all. All the guilt is hers, and hers all the merit."

These utterances, quoted at length, plainly reveal to us the Goethean attitude towards Nature. From them it becomes evident that in 1782 he was a pantheist, believing in the divinity of nature, a divinity in which we live, and move, and have our being. Later he changed his views somewhat, saying, "Nature does not move
forward, she remains the same. Her laws are unchangeable. Nature places me within life; she will lead me out of it; I confide in her."

He does not object to his former belief; but he now appreciates progress in nature, a constant metamorphosis. In his "Illustration to the Aphoristic Essay on Nature" under date of May 24, 1826, he addresses Chancellor Mueller as follows: "This essay was sent to me a short time ago from among the papers of the late revered Duchess Anna Amalia; it is written by a familiar hand of which I was accustomed to avail myself in my affairs in the year 1768. I do not exactly remember having written these reflections, but they agree very well with the ideas which had at that time become developed in my mind. I might term the degree of insight which I possessed a comparative one, which was trying to express its tendency toward a superlative not yet attained."

To the mature Goethe, nature is not a spiritless mechanism, but the manifestation of God, the "garment of divinity". He reverences her, listens to her secrets, and worships her. He denies nature as a divine organ, he says, may deny all revelation. To Echermann he addresses the following words: "If you would ask me whether it would be in harmony with my thought to extend divine worship to the sun, I should have to answer in the affirmative; for it is the revelation of the Supreme Being; and indeed the most powerful one. I worship the light and the creative power of God in whom we live, move, and have our being." In his talks with Mueller (1826) Goethe says, "Behind every organic being lies a higher idea; this is the God whom we all seek and hope to behold, though we can have only forebodings of Him."

From the above utterances of Goethe we are able to conclude that he knew how to make a distinction between God and Nature. He does not identify God and Nature, but the latter is a revelation of Him in many and manifold ways. The growth and development of the earth, the light of the sun, the springs in the field make manifest His His power and essence. God is immanent in the world, not
identical with it, nor apart from it. Nature, in her beauty and splendor, is the image of Him who is beauty and perfection itself. The eternal is in the transient:

"Kein Wesen kann in nichts zerfallen,
Das Wäde regt sich fort in allen!" *)

There is no ultimate destruction and death in nature, but eternally budding and pulsating life.

"Natur, du ewig keimende,
Schaffst jeden zur Genuss des Lebens,
Hast deine Kinder alle mütterlich
Mit Erbteil ausgestattet.
O leite meinen Gang, Natur,
Einen Fremdungs-reisetritt,
Einen über Gräber
Heiliger Vergangenheit
Ich wandele!" **) 

Nature was the poet's mother who cared for him, nursed him, and endowed him with lustre. The trees, the water and the air he called his brethren. The forest and the cave with their mysterious charm he designated as the bosom of a friend. All his love, all his trust he gave to Nature, that had endowed him with blessings innumerable. The starry sky with its beauty and grandeur filled him with awe. 

*) No being can completely crumble,
Th' Eternal permeates the humble.

**) Nature, thou ever budding age,
Thou formest each for life's enjoyments
And, like a mother, all thy children dear
Besegest with thy sweet heritage—a home.
O natur, guide me on my way!
The wandering stranger guide,
The o'er the togs
Of holy bygone days is passing.

Tr. by N. H. Eole (Goethe's Frakt. Works).
Joyful praises rise to heaven unceasingly. Even the dust upon the ground and the
turfy stone must help to complete the whole. God dwells in the depths of the sea and in the bosom of the earth. The winds that stir the leaves of the trees are to the poet as the breath of the divinity.

Some parts of his poetical writings may seem to betray only a yearning for

communion with nature. Thus he exclaims:

"Where, boundless nature, shall I clutch at thee?
Ye breasts, where are ye? Ye perennial springs
Of life whereon hang heaven and earth,
Where to the blighted bosom clings,
Ye dust, ye slake all thirst,
Yet I pine on in dearth."

But the deeper meaning of his rhapsodies to nature, as being permeated by the

the divinity, finds indubitable expression in the following lines:

"In the current of life, in action's storm,
I wander and I wave;
Everywhere I be!
Birth and the grave,
An infinite sea,
A web ever growing,
A life ever glowing,
Thus at time's whirling loom I spin,
And weave the living vesture
That God is mantled in."

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*) Trans. by Sir Th. Martin, p. 28, Faust 1. **) Trans. by Sir Th. Martin, p. 28.

:"**) In Lebensfluten, im Tatensturm,  
Wäll' ich auf und ab,  
Web'e hin und her,  
Geburt und Grab,  
Ein ewiges Weer,  
Ein wechselnd Leben,  
Ein erfüllend Leben,  
So schaff ich an spuenden Webatuhl der Zeit  
Und wirke der Gottheit lebendiges Fleid.  

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Nature is to Goethe the "living vesture" of God. Life is gushing forth, like the stream from the mountain. The fulness of life, the increasing activity, the force of action, all these are the majestic revelation of the divinity, which is in the All.

Thus we arrive at a point where Goethe differs from Spinoza. Whereas the latter, in his rigidly intellectual system of philosophy, identifies God with Substance, Goethe's conception of God is that of an immanent, all-pervading divinity.
Chapter 7.

Goethe's Philosophy in Faust.

"Faust may be regarded as a synthesis of world and spirit, which gives us the most blessed assurance of the eternal harmony of all Being." (Goethe.) According to Eielschowsky, one of his latest biographers, Goethe has done much for the cause of religion; for he based his religious conclusions, not on abstract principles, but on the observation of the whole great chain of natural phenomena and their interrelations. Goethe was a great observer of nature and her phenomena; he believed in the Controlling Power of life. To learn about this power, we need light; therefore, the "Zeitgeist", the spirit of the time in which Goethe lived, may justly be called The Enlightenment. Romanticism has brought to light the beauty, the harmony, the life in nature. Goethe, more than any other poet, has succeeded in making nature the center of his thought. In this chapter, it will be my task, not to trace the philosophical thought in Faust fully and completely, but only to investigate such passages as show clearly the poet's relation to, or agreement with, Spinoza. Faust is a drama of life, its problems, its errors, the solution of the Welträtseel, to use Haeckel's term. Service is the key-note of life, and unceasing activity is its goal. Broadly speaking, the underlying thought in Faust is IIFFE. It streams from God and permeates the All. There is a Power that controls the universe, not from without, but from within.

"Was war das für ein Gott,
Ler nur von aussen stieße?"

asks Goethe. God, moreover, is the Creative force exercising its beneficent influence in Nature. Goethe, as we have already mentioned, worshiped the sun,
the life-bearing, self-sustaining, creative action in the universe. This same creative tendency is present also in man. All human activities, all human strifes and struggles, all human progress and development, are to be interpreted as manifestations of the All-life. In August, 1794, Schiller writes to Goethe, "You look at Nature as a Whole: when seeking to have light thrown upon her individual parts, you look for the explanation of the individual in the totality of all her various manifestations." Goethe himself says to Wiener, in 1807, "Life is a stream, and we must obstruct it; our actions must be in accordance with it." We reiterate that Goethe felt God to be in the world, while Spinoza believed the world to be in God, making Him the causa immanens, yet reducing Him to abstract substance.

Another underlying thought in Faust is that of the manifestation of evil powers, the unhappiness, the miseries, which seem to obstruct the stream of life and impede our activities. But Goethe is optimistic. All the evils benefit the individual, although they create disharmony. They are a test of life, and spur us to further activity. To Eckermann Goethe says (1821), "Nature in no wise favors our weaknesses, but either makes something out of us or will have nothing at all to do with us." That which is weak, evil, unfit, must serve a higher purpose, must incite us to greater activity and a more abundant life.

Goethe's World-Soul in Faust.

Contrary to the system of Spinoza which held that God is only substance whence all beings, the corporeal as well as the spiritual, must be derived with logical consistency, Goethe developed the concept of Substance independently. To Spinoza, God and the world are identical. Substance, he taught, has two attributes, Thought and Extension. These have an infinite number of modes.
Of one of the multitudinous modi, human beings are but phenomenal forms.
There are no isolated events; everywhere there is unity; all things must be viewed sub specie aeternitatis. How different Goethe's view! Although the thought of God and nature as being identical appealed to him very strongly, he conceived of nature as a development, as a constant change. He is strongly opposed to mathematical formulas, as stiff and unmovable. They change living things into dead matter.

Turning, then, to Faust, the personification of life and activity, we immediately behold the majesty of life incorporated in the Erath-Spirit. Goethe, as represented by Faust, yearns to see the Spirit that holds the All together. This Spirit, the source of all human thought, work and life, the fountain of the beautiful, the noble and the elevating, also knows the nameless sin and guilt of man. Therefore, who dare face him? But the request to see him has been made, and it is granted. The Erath-Spirit appears; and thus addresses Faust:

"To view me were thy prayer and choice,
To see my face, to hear my voice.
Well! by thy potent prayer won o'er,
I come, and thou that wouldst be more
Than mortal, having thy behest,
Art with a craven fear possessed!
Where art thou; Faust, whose summons rang so wide,
Who stormed my haunts, and would not be denied?
Is this thing thou? this that my breath doth make
Through every nerve and fibre awake,
A crawling, hovering, timorous worm?" .

In this Earth-Spirit we have the divine power immanent in nature, the reflex image of the Almighty, the fountain of all light, invisibly permeating the world, the "Abglanz jenes Lichtes droben, das unsichtbar die ganze Welt erleuchtet". ** Goethe, having been granted his wish, which he, in the rôle of

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Tr. by Sir Th. Martin.*

***Aus dem Theater-vorspiel, Sept. 18, 1807.
of Faust, had voiced so ardently, and brought face to face with the Earth-Spirit, thus exclaiming:

"Majestic spirit, thou hast giv'n me all
For which I prayed. Thou not in vain didst turn
Thy countenance to me in fire and flame.
Thou glorious Nature for my realm hast given,
With power to feel, and to enjoy her. Thou
No mere cold glance of wonder hast vouchsafed,
But lett'st me peer deep down into thy breast,
When as into the bosom of a friend.
Before me thou in long procession lead'st
All things that live, and teachest me to know
My kindred in still grove, in air and stream.
And, when the storm sweeps roaring through the woods,
Uprocking, wrenching by the roots the giant pines,
Whose neighboring trunks and intertangled boughs
In crashing ruin tear each other down,
And shake with roar of thunder all the hills,
There show'st me to myself, and mine own soul
Teers marvels forth I weended not of before.
And when the pure moon, with her mellowing light,
Mounts as I gaze, then from the rocky walls,
And out from the dark underwood ascend
Forms silver-clad of ages long ago;
And soften the austere delight of thought."*"

The poet's overflowing soul is deeply stirred by the majesty of the spirit, and his heart is filled with emotions of gratitude for his endowment with power to enjoy Nature, and to know his kindred in air and stream. What Nature produces is the poet's kindred. Through the peals and crashes of thunder upon the mountains, Nature speaks to him. In all things, both great and small, moves the omnipresent spirit, God. Nature is His mirror, we are His images. The trees with their luxuriant foliage, the flowers in their fragrant beauty, the worm that crawls over the moistened earth, all are the manifestations of that divinity

*Tr. by Sir Th. Martin.
by which the universe is pervaded.

The Central Idea in "Faust".

In the foregoing, we have dealt with the Goethean idea of immanence, as represented by the Earth-Spirit. We have also stated that this idea is the one which marks a point of distinction between Goethe and Spinoza, since the latter identified God with Substance, instead of letting be immanent in the world, as the all-pervading creative power. Yet we shall have to mention one feature in regard to which there is a kinship between these two master minds. Let us proceed to discover this particular feature in "Faust".

Evidently, Faust had not understood the "Majestic spirit". He likened himself unto him. The essence of the Earth-Spirit was the working out of the power of life, Bestätigung der Lebenskraft. This was what Faust needed. The spirit, touched with sympathy, recognizes Faust's yearning for activity, his ardent desire to absorb the joys and sufferings of humanity; to become real man, human in the truest sense of the word. This same spirit sends Nephistic, whom Faust addresses as "great, illustrious Spirit". Nephistic, by his influence upon Faust, accomplishes the ruin of Gretchen. Full of despair over Gretchen's fate, Faust again voices his emotions to the great spirit, and says to him, with reference to Nephistic, "Change him, thou infinite Spirit, change the reptile once more into that resemblance of a dog in which he often delighted to gambol before me at night." Here the strange contradiction that the evil spirit is sent by the spirit of heaven, the great Earth-Spirit, the reflex image of the Almighty, is to be explained by Goethe's Spinozic view of God. He, being like Spinoza in this particular, regarded God as the source and sender both of good and evil. Good and evil are, in fact, correlated. The one does not exist without the other. Nephistic in the Urfaust is none other than the one in the finished drama; "ein Teil von jener
Kraft, die stets das Eise will und stets das Gute schafft: Part of that power is he that, being constantly intent upon evil, always effects the good.

The fact that the Earth-Spirit, the reflex image of the Almighty, sends Mephisto to Faust as his companion makes the ultimate salvation of Faust possible. Nay, Mephisto is to assist Faust in reaching the goal of salvation. Faust translates the beginning of the Gospel of St. John thus: "Im Anfang war die Tat." In the beginning was the Word, here is the redeeming word. Faust makes a pact with the evil one. The latter attempts by all fiendish means to effect the destruction of Faust, who, however, sees most clearly the emptiness of his life.

The outcome is not yet apparent. From the reader's point of view, it hangs in the balance. But redemption is not outside of the realm of possibility.

Let us be a trifle more specific. Mephisto thus characterizes himself:

"The spirit I that evermore denies,
And justly am I thus employed,
For surely naught was e'er begot
But it deserved to be destroyed;
So were it better, things should not
Eat into being brought at all.
Thus all these matters which you call
Sin, Mischief, Evil, in a word,
Are my congenial elements."

This "spirit that evermore denies", agrees to lead Faust to the goal of happiness, though bent on his ruin. Yet Faust is on the right path. He knows the life activities of those men who fight and conquer human passions will lead to triumph. His pact with the evil one is significant:

"By hand upon it! There! To the passing moment e'er I say,
No linger still, thou art so fair!
Then cast me into chains you may,
Then will I die without a care!
Then may the death-bell sound its call,
Then art thou from thy service free,
The clock may stand, the index fall,
And time and tide may cease for me."**

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*Tr. by Sir Th. Martin, Faust I, p. 252.
**Tr. by Th. Martin, p. 277.
Mephisto verily show himself to be the spirit of negation. He maintains that the devils made the world; he himself was part of a part that once was All, a part of the darkness that once bore the light. But to Goethe, Faust is simply the force of differentiation. This power of darkness in the form of an angel of light leads Faust from step to step, from pleasure to pleasure. All his passions are stirred in him. It was not only the animal instinct that drove Faust to Gretchen, but rather the overpowering, irresistible charm of beauty. This is seen from the words of Faust when he stood before a mirror beholding the image of a woman in the witches' kitchen:

"A woman!s form beyond expression fair!
Can a woman be so fair? Or must I deem
In this recumbent form I see revealed
The quintessence of all that heaven can yield?
On earth can aught be found of beauty so supreme?"

This may be called the contents of the whole Gretchen tragedy. It was not all passion that impelled Faust, but he was also inspired by holy love. The lowest and the highest impulses have their origin in human nature. Mephisto seems to have been conscious only of the one, the evil impulse. Faust, on the other hand, also is aware of the pure inspiration of love that irresistibly draws him to Gretchen. The good and the evil are at war in him. Though he falls, he will rise again. His constant striving for the mastery makes him at last triumphant.

The philosophy of Faust is summed in these lines:

"Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
Den können wir erlösen."

In regard to the tragic figure of Gretchen, we may add that she, too, is supposed to have acted according to nature. She obeys the natural impulse, and sin and shame are the result. But she is regarded by the poet as having violated

"Tr. by Th. Martin, Faust I, 116."
only a man-made law; a conventional code; her fate is but a great accusation against the prevailing customs. However, her intense repentance and heroic resolution to atone her wrong in death erase all guilt. * A voice from heaven proclaims, "She is saved!"

Goethe was convinced that an authoritative faith, imposed by law and insculcated by the Catechism, must give way to a more vital religion, one that liberates from the burden of creeds and authority. We must follow nature. She will not despise her work. All is her guilt, all her merit."

**Brief Summary of "Faust I."**

Our preceding discussions have largely dwelt upon the outstanding features of the Faust drama. Let us now concentrate more particularly upon our problem, in so far as Goethe's Faust has to do with it. We are interested in discovering to what extent Goethe was influenced by Spinoza, and in what way he differed from him, particularly in his conception of God.

The Faust drama makes it clear that the poet did not follow Spinoza blindly. The great theme of this remarkable play is life, with its deeper problems, such as Gretchen's wonderful prayer to the Father of Sorrows is here appended as indicative of her state of soul:

"0, thou the sorest
Fangs thou borest,
On mine look down with face benign!
With anguish eying,
Thy dear Son dying,
The sword that pierced His heart in thine!
Help, sufferer divine!
Save me, oh, save
From shame and from the grave!
And Thou, the sorest pangs that borest,
On mine look down with countenance benign."

Tr. by Th. Martin, 178.
as the one that has to do with the source of all life, or the problem of evil in all its various bearings.

Right here it will be in place to observe that Goethe, like Faust, plunged himself into life. Goethe was the hero of life, in sharp distinction from Spinoza, whose bent of mind prompted him to avoid all contact with the world. While the one built up his philosophy on experience, the other based his upon mathematical speculations. While Spinoza defined God as Substance, Goethe conceived of Him as the indwelling spirit of the universe. The philosophy of Spinoza is a closed system, that of Goethe is one of becoming and he sees in the world continuous development. His idea of God, even undergoes modifications in the course of time. He was a pantheist, but instead of identifying God with the world, as Spinoza did, God is to him rather the all-pervading Spirit. In his later years, Goethe approached to a kind of theism, though never renouncing his pantheistic views.

But let us return to Faust! Were speculations, such is Faust's conclusion, do not lead to happiness, but one must act in accordance with the Gospel that finds expression in the altered words of St. John, "In the beginning was the deed." Faust stands for the philosophy of life and action. He plunges himself into life.

Mephisto appears on the scene, the embodiment of all the destructive agencies, all the evils, delusions and miseries that afflict mankind. He is the spirit that ever negates, aiming at destruction rather than creation. Yet while he intends to do evil, he ever effects the opposite. Accompanied by this "Geist, der stets verneint", Faust empties the cup of worldly pleasures to the very dregs. It is here that the character of Gretchen demands a word of interpretation. "The beautiful, devoted, actively useful, self-renouncing woman, ever giving forth self in creative, sustaining activity, is that image of the creative force which is the theme of the
The dramatic scene now follows. It culminates in the death of Gretchen, her mother, brother and child. The unhappy, fatal outcome is due to the destructive effect of the false idea of the "right to the pursuit of happiness," as well as to the wrong conceptions which society has with reference to moral standards. Gretchen voluntarily surrenders her mortal life to the "judgment of God," and by this final act of self-renunciation she becomes immortal. She has come to be in accord with the creative power, and she is saved.

The principle of self-renunciation, and a willing surrender to the higher laws, however understood and defined, is asserted by Goethe also in plain terms, outside of any dramatic setting. It was in February, 1814, that Goethe wrote to Biemer: "The moral is an eternal attempt to pacify our personal demands and adapt them to the laws of an invisible realm. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, morality had become slack and slavish, as men would subject it to wavering calculations of a mere theory of the right to the pursuit of happiness. Kant first grasped and comprehended the subject in its supernatural significance in his theory of the Categorical Imperative; and, though he may have overstrained this idea in giving it expression, yet he rendered an immortal service in bringing us out of that weakness into which we had sunk."

With another quotation from Goethe's prose writings, we may fittingly conclude the discussion of the first part of Faust. On the 29th of April, 1818, he wrote to Mueller as follows: "If one observes the impulses and actions of mankind for thousands of years, one may recognize some universal formulas that ever, from all time, have exercised a magic power over whole nations, as well as over single individuals; and these formulas, eternally returning amid thousands of ---

*Andrews, K. to G. F. 51.
varicolored adornments of the same, are the mysterious dower of a Higher
Power of life. Each translates these formulas into his own peculiar language,
and adapts them in many ways to his specifically individual conditions, and
mixes therewith so much that is impure, ignoble, or the result of self-interest,
that they can hardly be any longer recognized in their original significance.
But this true significance, ever unseen, springs forth again, now in this, now
in that, people; and the observant investigator constructs for himself, out of
these formulas, a kind of alphabet of the World-Spirit."

The second part of "Faust, to which we now direct our attention, differs from
the first in various ways; which we can not stop to discuss. We are studying it
merely for the sake of finding out what contribution it is able to make toward
the solution of our problem. We want to inquire whether the second part of
Faust contains any pantheistic thoughts, in how far they reflect Goethe's
philosophy of life, and to what extent they are in harmony with those of Spino­
za.

Goethe himself states the difference between the first and second part of his
"Faust as follows: The first part is to objectify "Lebensgenuss", life-enjoyment,
as characterized in passions and their practical outworking. The second part
praises "Tatengenuss", activity-enjoyment, with its realization in beauty. Helena,
a Greek woman, is the outstanding figure, the centre of the drama. The leading
motive for the creation of the second part were the heroic wars of Greece
against the Turkish oppressors. Lord Eyron was an enthusiastic participant in
these struggles for freedom.

As to the drama itself, it has been said that the poetical creation is more
difficult to understand than that presented in the first part of the play.
Indeed, the whole work presupposes a knowledge of Greek culture. It contains
many beautiful illustrations of an aesthetic and artistic nature. Helena represents the Greek type of beauty. The leading thought is the yearning for inner harmony. This is revealed to Faust in the hour of death. Not knowledge, not enjoyment, not wealth, nor liberty, but the contest for possession, the striving for fortune, the inner contentment which work itself offers, the LUST, is the fortune, the Glück of man. These thoughts find expression in the following words of Faust:

"Das ist der weisheit letzter schluss:
Nur der verdient sich Freiheit wie das Leben,
Der täglich sie erobern muss.
Zum Augenblicke dürft' ich sagen:
Verweile doch, du bist so schön!
Da kann die Spur von meinen Ardenten
Nicht in Aeonen untergeh'n."

"At the very beginning of the drama, which opens with a musical prelude, we see the figure of Faust suffering from the torments of remorse for the destructiveness caused by his leaving the "one right way" of action serviceable to the creative tendency of life."

"Faust, awakening from sleep and greeting the sun, the most beautiful manifestation of God, exclaims,

"Das Lebens Pulse schlagen frisch lebendig,
Aetherische Färmerung milds zu begrüssen;
Du, Erde, warst auch diese Nacht beständig
Und strest neu erzwickt zu meinen Füssen.
Du regst und rührst ein kräftiges Eeschliessen
Zur höchsten Easein immerfort zu streben!"

"The last result of wisdom stamps it true:
He only earns his freedom and existence
Who daily conquers them anew.
Then dared I hail the moment fleeting:
Ah, still delay, thou art so fair!
The traces can not of mine earthly being
In aeons perish, they are there!"

--Andrews' Key to Goethe.
These words remind us of one of Goethe's remarks, that he was "like a man walking in the twilight of dawn, until the idea of the immanence of God in all things shown upon him, and illuminated his way through the labyrinth of life".

As has been indicated, nature plays but a subordinate part in this drama. More is said about the attempts of Faust to discover the beauty of Hellenic civilization. But it will not be possible to point out in this drama the many touches of Greek beauty and Hellenic ideals. Our aim must be to look for such passages as fit into the frame of our discussion.

It should be noted that the current of creative power, of the productivity of the sun, runs through the whole of the drama; for the sun is the highest manifestation of the creative power, the power of attraction, the feminine power that holds her "brother spheres" on their course. Its practical, individualistic outworking is found in the "power of attraction ever drawing man upward to higher development."

"Das Unbeschreibliche,
Hier ist's getan;
Das Ewig Weibliche
Zieht uns hinaus."

We may in this connection emphasize the importance of the creative power of the sun, the highest manifestation of the deity in nature, and refer to a passage in the Prologue to Faust:

"Die Sonne tont nach alter Weise
In Brudersphaeren Weltgesang,
Und ihre vorgeschriebene Feise
Vollendet sie mit Hohngang."**

These words do not breathe Spinoza's spirit, but unmistakably point to the

**Quoted from Andrews.**

The sun in chorus, as of old,
With brother spheres in sounding still,
And on its thunderous orbit rolled,
Toth its appointed course fulfill.

Faust, Prologue.
immanent creative power in nature. This thought of some deep mysterious attrac-
tive power, ever working, and directing the courses of the spheres from within,
yet not identical with them, is quite foreign to the mechanical and static system
of Spinoza. Perhaps it was the restless striving, the fiery spirit, the Taten-
drang in Goethe, and his conception of the world as being imbued with the same
irresistible power, which made the quiet resignation of Spinoza seem doubly
attractive to him. The Seelenruhe of Spinoza, reflected in his system, was balm
for Goethe's soul. But here is the very point at which the two men differ, not
only in temperament and disposition, but in their view of the world as a whole,
in their world-view, in their philosophy. The one is dominated by the intellect,
the other feels the warm pulse-beat of life within himself and in nature. The
one has a philosophy of being, the other one of becoming. The one defines God
as Substance, to the other God is immanent in the universe, yet not identified
with it. The pantheism of the one is a rigid, deterministic, unchangeable system
of cold principles, the pantheism of the other is akin to that of St. Paul, as
expressed in those familiar words, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being."
Even where Spinoza and Goethe use the same terms they do not altogether agree
in their fundamental ideas and ideals. Thus, the "intellectual love" of which Spino-
za speaks has little kinship with the deeply emotional love of Goethe.

We have mentioned the poet's philosophy of striving, his irresistible Taten-
drang. This finds expression in the following lines:

"...Dieser Erdenkreis
Gewährt noch Raum zu grossen Taten;
Erstaunenswürdiges soll geraten,
Ich fühle Kraft zu kühnem Fleiss."

Goethe, the Teacher of the Immanent God, as Seen in His Poetry.

The religion of the poet is the philosophical religion of awe and reverence
for the Higher Powers. All the different relations point to the highest unity.
Misery, humiliation, disappointment, failure in life, all these are to be a furtherance, and not a hindrance, to higher activity. We must dedicate our lives to something higher, nobler, better.

Goethe did not adhere to Spinoza's abstract Substance, but changed it into Creative Power. "The unsubstantial modes were translated into substantial forces; the mere mechanical causality, into a development instinct with life, and with immanent ideas." (Fleiderer.) Goethe's contemplative spirit toward nature, his delight in the harmony and beauty of the whole, are not of Spinozistic origin. Goethe's God rules, not only in history, but also in nature, not from without, but from within; as the source and motive power of all things. Human nature is not God-forsaken, but filled with God; as we read in the following masterful poem:

"Wär' nicht das Auge sonnenhaft,
Die Sonne könnt' es nie erblicken;
Läg' nicht in uns des Gottes eigene Kraft,
Wie könnt' uns Göttrliches erquicken?"

The soul's relationship to God is fascinatingly expressed in the poem, "Gesang der Geister über den Wässern:

"Les Menschen Seele
Gleicht dem Wasser:
Vor Himmel kommt es
Und wieder nieder
Zur Erde muss es,
Ewig wechselnd."

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* Were it not to the sun akin,
The eye no sun could view in wonder;
G'd not God's power dwell within,
On Him with joy we could not ponder. - Tr. by H.B.

** "The soul of man is like the water:
From heaven it cometh,
To heaven it goeth,
And then returneth to the earth,
Forever alternating."
--- Tr. by Th. Martin.
In his "Mahomet's Song", Goethe sings of the God who moves within nature:

"In the valley down below,
'Neath His footstools spring the flowers,
And the meadow
In His breath finds life."

God's spirit moves in everything, even in the smallest, the seemingly unimportant things. Every flower, every blade is touched by the divine spirit.

The streamlets from the mountains shout with joy, exclaiming:

"Brother, take thy brethren with thee,
With thee to thine aged father,
To the everlasting ocean,
Who, his arms to us extending,
Waiteth for us;
Ah, in vain his arms he opens
To embrace his yearning children;
For the thirsty sand consumes us
In the desert waste; the sunbeams
Drink our life-blood; hills around us
Into lakes would force us. Brother,
Take thy brethren of the fountain,
Take thy brethren of the mountain
With thee to thy father's arms."

According to the poet's own words, Mahomet was determined to fulfill his mission. His life is represented under the figure of the stream. The streamlets that stream from the mountains are the stream's brethren. Like him, they long for their father, the great, wide ocean. The whole poem is a picture of a God-infused nature. A soul lives in All, even in the tiny streamlet. "Creative nature is the eternal mother producing one form after another, like an artist, with wise calculation and deep insight, ascending from the simple to the complex, from the smaller things to the rich and manifold formations. In every activity anticipating the next, she holds the whole in its perfection before her eyes." "Nature seems so manifold, yet she is one; manifesting herself, partly, in everything, the whole must be fundamental to all."
In glancing over the whole of the organic world, the poet sees and feels life everywhere, and yet the one law is in the All. This thought filled him with intense joy, and induced him more and more to study "das geheimnisvolle Wirken der Natur". She was to him the mysterious workshop of the divinity; her laws were forbode by the poet, her activity experienced by him. Still more,

"Jede Eranze verkündigt dir die ewigen Gesetze,
Jede Elume, sie spricht lauter und lauter mit dir.
Aber entzifferst du hier der Göttin heilige Lettern,
Überall siehst du sie dann, auch im veränderten Zug."

In another poem entitled "Weltseele" and published in 1783, the poet finds even the particle of dust filled with life:

"Und jedes Staubschen lebt."

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*Metamorphose der Pflanzen, 1783.
Chapter 9.

Goethe's Approach to Theism.

"Theism is the belief in God without any qualification."* We have learned from Goethe himself that he never adhered to one conception of God exclusively. Although pantheistic at heart, he not infrequently showed an inclination toward theism, especially in the later years of his life. Indeed, this may be quite distinctly seen in those writings which betray the partial appropriation of medieval and oriental cultural elements. Thus, Goethe gives expression to his opinion concerning the religion of Islam when he says,

*"Närrisch, dass jeder in seinem Falle
Seine besondere Meinung preist!
Wenn Islam "Gott ergeben" heisst,
Im Islam leben und sterben wir alle."*

Not that the prophet's religion as such impressed him and led him to this poetical effluence; but the thought of Göttergebenheit, the idea of being resigned to God, had a certain charm for him, and seems slightly to have modified his religious views.

Again, his thought along ethical lines tended to affect his conception of God in favor of a sort of theism. In a letter to Willener, written Dec. 5, 1806, he says, "The isolated man never reaches his aim," and attempts to show that the individual can best serve humanity as a whole when working in harmony with it, though fully retaining his personality and individuality. "This ethical procedure of thinking gradually leads to the development of a theistic concep–

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*Carus, God, p. 288. + Foolishly everyone (low or high)
Clothes in what he has claimed.
If Islam means to God resigned.
In Islam we all must live and die.—From Livan, 6, 65.
tion of God in Goethe. The individual has the personal desire to resign himself to a divinity that personally directs his steps, with a view to his welfare."

On June 15, 1828, Goethe says to Eckermann, "God deals with us according to his own good knowledge." He also (Sprüche No. 572) gives vent to the thought that "God is more powerful and wiser than we, and therefore deals with us according to His own good pleasure." Such expressions would seem to justify the conclusion that, during the later epoch of his development, a slight change in his views concerning God becomes noticeable.

From this point of view, we are able to understand a remark which Goethe made in a discussion with F. v. Wüller, "that trust and confidence are the genuine foundations of every religion, and that there must be submission to a higher, all-governing will that we cannot comprehend, because it is higher than our will and understanding."

This conviction prompts the poet to address the deity in prayers. "As incense refreshes the life of a coal, so does prayer refresh the hopes of the heart," with these words he describes the effect of prayer upon the inner life. The content of his prayers he states in the following terms: "Great thoughts and a pure heart, these we shall ask of God."

In this connection his famous hymn of Mahomet may find a place:

"Hebe, lieben Herz, dem erschaffenden dich!
Sei mein Herr, du mein Gott! du Allieberender du,
Ler die Sonne, dem Mond und die Sterne:
Schuf, Erde und Himmel und mich!
(Up, loving heart, to Him that createth ascend!
Be Thou my Lord, O my God, and upon me attend!
The sun, and the moon, and the stars by Thee came to be,
Thou maddest the earth, and the heavens, and also me!)

*O Harnack, Goethe in der Epochen seiner Vollendung, p. 49.
+Wanderjahre 1/10-1821.
Another hymn, deeply religious and full of longing for communion with a personal God, may here be recalled:

"Hinauf, hinauf strebt's!
Es schweben die Wolken
Abwärts, die Wolken
Neigen sich der sehnden Liebe,
Wir, wir!
'In eurem Schoosse aufwärts,
Umfandend, umfangen,
Aufwärts an deinen Eusen,
'Allliebender Vater!
'(Upward, upward my course!
Clouds from high heaven
Downward are tending,
Here yearning love to encounter,
We, we!
Upon your bosom upward,
Embraced and embracing,
Upward, to lie on Thy breast,
O all-loving Father!)

Poems like these indicate a slight change in Goethe's conception of God. But we would err if we were to conclude that Goethe wholly renounced his pantheism and became a theist. Although he addresses prayers to the all-loving Father, to "Him that creatheth" this does not imply that the poet had accepted a view similar to the Christian. This would mean a complete change and overthrow of a life-philosophy that had inspired him and given him, partly, contentment. All those passages which seem to indicate the change in the God-concept of Goethe must be very carefully weighed. First of all, they are poetical creations, Schöpfungen, the result of the study of oriental culture, Bildung. How else could Goethe give expression to oriental thought than by accepting, for the

Written in 1774.—Tr. by H.P.
moment, a theistic view as a basis for a religious belief about to be given vent in poetry?

When Goethe writes to Herder, (July, 1772), "I would like to pray as Moses in the Koran: Lord, widen my narrow bosom", we have here only a more or less poetical wish that does not in itself indicate a change of Goethe's conception of God.

There is no doubt that Goethe deserted Spinoza in his attitude to prayer. The philosopher has no room for prayer in his system, though his religious nature seeks refuge in contemplation, and attempts to embrace the intellectual love in a mystical way. Goethe, on the other hand, expressed himself so theistically, that a careless reader who does not know the poet's fundamental God-idea may regard him in the light of a Christian. We must always understand the view of a thinker in relation to his whole thought. Rücken is undoubtedly correct when he states that "Goethe observes the inexhaustible flood of life, which to him did not dissolve into vagueness and emptiness, but shaped itself into definite forms and rational relationships." The singular is the image of the whole. There is a constant intercourse between the two; for the inner can not realize itself without the outer. Thus Goethe, in the light of the poems and the different discourses to which we have referred, remains true to his fundamental conception of a God immanent in nature, yet he has the desire to give poetical expression to his oriental ideas, and so offers prayers and praises to a God who is not only immanent in nature, but also, in a certain aspect, transcendental. This attitude of a poet is admirably brought out by the following lines from Goethe's Tasso:

"Sein Ohr vernimmt den Einklang der Natur;
Was die Geschichte reicht, das Leben giebt,
Sein Busen nimmt es gleich und willig auf;
Es weit Zerstreute sammelt sein Gemüt,
Und sein Gefühl belebt das Unbelebte."
(His ear doth sense the harmony of nature;
What history presents; and life itself,
His eager spirit straightway doth receive;
That which is scattered he unites in thought,
And, deeply feeling, animates the dead.)

It must be distinctly borne in mind that it was characteristic of Goethe, as a poet, to select from the philosophical system of Spinoza those views that corresponded with his emotional nature. Thus only can we understand in how far he was willing to share Spinoza's views. The poem which we have cited shows very clearly that Goethe leaned toward a theism that has a transcendental touch, but is based upon feeling. "Sein Gefühl belebt das Unbelebte." Feeling was the motive of Goethe's religion. He felt his dependence upon God, who is not only the All, not only permeating Nature, but also, in a certain sense, "above us." To Him we direct our prayers, His throne we dare approach. This God is called Creator. Goethe's Weltanschauung was broad enough to incorporate a God who was not mere substance, but the All-life that reveals itself in the universe as the creative force. This power, God, may be addressed in prayer and words of praise. Thus Goethe's God-view widens to a peculiar theism. Let us here again call attention to the fact that pantheism, as interpreted by Goethe, in the sense of an indwelling, immanent God, is not inconsistent with theism in its broader meaning. "Theism, in short, as a well defined species, involves a belief in the personality of the deity, as well as in His transcendence; in a sense, that is not inconsistent with the immanence of His presence and agency in the world and in man." "Applying this to Goethe, we may say that a number of poems, and a number of sayings, especially in the later period of his life, seem to aim at theism. God is looked upon as personality, and a rather transcendental

*Tr. by B. E.
deity to which we pray and in whose hands our fate rests.

In summing up, we may say that in Spinoza we have the intellectual philosopher, far removed from life and its manifold activities, a man who looked at life dispassionately and enjoyed that deep rest of soul which Goethe found so attractive. In Goethe, on the other hand, we see the man of the world, who plunges into the stream of life, who is swayed by the emotions quite as much as by the intellect, and who, while searching for that deeper calm of soul which Spinoza's philosophy portrayed, develops the philosophy of striving, of which he is himself a classic representative. Ruled to a great extent by his surging desires and aspirations, he finds no lasting peace, but confesses to Eckermann, in his old age, "I have always been praised as a man highly favored by fortune, yet I have not in all had four weeks of real contentment. It has been the eternal rolling of a stone that ever had to be lifted anew. Too many demands have been made upon me in regard to my activity. My only happiness (Glück) has been my poetical work and thinking. But this, too, was considerably disturbed by my position."

After all, it was not really peace that Goethe longed for. It was rather adventure that he sought; adventure and experience, activity, joy and art; in a word, it was life. And perhaps, over all, there was in Goethe's mind the longing for redemption; and while in theory the Spinozistic doctrine of redemption, the redemption through acquiescence and submission, appealed to him, his own active and aspiring nature rebelled against this view and he found a higher kind of redemption through activity and aspiration.

"Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
Len können wir erlösen."

*Gespräch mit Eckermann, Jan. 27, 1824.*
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