

of the former as compared with the vague, even mystical, meaning of the latter. That Kantism was not as abstract a doctrine as it *prima facie* appeared to be was made abundantly clear by the publication of Kant's later writings, which attracted not only philosophers by profession but also poetical minds like Schiller and even Goethe. On the other side, the strictly logical, not to say mathematical, formalism of Spinoza repelled his earlier admirers, such as Lessing, Goethe, and Herder. It was clearly brought out and appreciated in its consistency and in its ultimate conclusions at a much later

impiety and absurdity of Bruno, and treats Spinoza not less unfairly. In the year 1773 Goethe wrote the Fragment entitled 'Prometheus,' in which some passages are quite in the spirit of Spinoza, and he tells us in his 'Autobiography' ('Dichtung und Wahrheit,' bk. 14 and 16) how Spinoza became a common and uniting subject of interest when, in the year 1774, he met F. H. Jacobi. Having only cursorily dipped into Spinoza himself, Goethe tells us that, whilst repelled by Lavater's orthodoxy and Basedow's didactics, he experienced an inner harmony with Jacobi's manner of approaching the Inscrutable for which to some extent he had been prepared by "assimilating the attitude of thought of an extraordinary man." "This man who impressed me so decidedly, and who was to have such an important influence on my whole way of thinking, was Spinoza. For, having everywhere searched in vain for a means of culture for my own perplexing self, I at last came into contact with 'The Ethics' of this thinker. . . . A large and liberal view into the sensuous and moral world seemed

to be opened out to me. But what attracted me most in him was the boundless unselfishness which appeared in every one of his sentences." Goethe also refers to the totally inadequate article on Spinoza in Bayle's celebrated Dictionary,—“a book which through erudition and acuteness was quite as estimable and useful as it was, through gossip and sermonising, ludicrous and harmful.” In the year 1780, not long after the meeting of Jacobi and Goethe, the former paid a visit to Lessing, and being desirous to learn more about Lessing's opinion regarding Spinoza, entered into a conversation with him which he introduced by showing Lessing a copy of Goethe's 'Prometheus.' The purport of this conversation Jacobi, after the death of Lessing, published in his 'Letters on the Doctrine of Spinoza' (1785). This created an enormous sensation, and no doubt promoted very much the study of Spinoza, who had, in a one-sided manner, been considered by the popular philosophy of the day as an atheistic writer. This feeling was entirely reversed by the leaders of the New Thought.