

narrow and purely logical spirit. The consequence was that the critical movement which in philosophy was initiated by Kant's writings was for a long time cast into the background, being superseded by the more enticing and, as it seemed, more promising constructive movement of thought. The purely scientific position which starts from a definition and seeks for a criterion of knowledge was abandoned in the attempt to give expression to an actually existing higher kind of knowledge, an ideal content, which was labouring into birth in the writings of the great representatives of German literature, notably in the works of Herder and Goethe.<sup>1</sup> Those

43.  
Criticism  
superseded  
by construc-  
tion.

<sup>1</sup> In order to realise the new influence which was to make itself felt in the development of Kantian ideas, it is well to recall some facts and dates showing the great activity in the literary world during the decade which preceded the arrival of Reinhold at Weimar. Herder had published the most important and stirring of his theological writings, having progressed from his early critical, through a poetical, to a deeper philosophical treatment of the religious problem. During the decade from 1774 to 1784 he published, *inter alia*, the following Works:—

- 'Vom Erkennen und Empfinden der Menschlichen Seele.'
  - 'Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte.'
  - 'Aelteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts.'
  - 'Provinzialblätter an Prediger.'
  - 'Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament.'
  - 'Volkslieder.'
  - 'Theologische Briefe.'
  - 'Vom Geist der Ebräischen Poesie.'
  - 'Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte.'
- Lessing's 'Nathan der Weise' ap-

peared in 1779; Wieland's 'Oberon,' 1780; Bürger's 'Lyrics,' 1781 to 1785. Above all there towered the enormous productivity of Goethe, who had given to the world 'Götz von Berlichingen,' 'Prometheus,' 'Werther's Leiden,' 'Klavigo,' 'Faust' (first form privately circulated), 'Wilhelm Meister,' 'Iphigenie.' Turning away from his earlier critical and lyrical writings, and liberating himself from the influence of the "storm and stress" literature, Goethe had assimilated the spirit of the Antique: through it and through a simultaneous study of nature and art during his journeys to the Harz, the Alps, and Italy, he rose to that unique conception of the world and life, and that philosophical calm which separated him for some time from Schiller, whose early stirring dramatic works began to appear in the year that saw the publication of Kant's 'Critique.' To this we must add the renewed influence of Rousseau, whose 'Confessions' appeared after his death in 1778, and the still greater influence which the study of Spinoza exerted on all these thinkers.