

ornamentation or grace produces beauty, and the sketch becomes perfect only by the elaboration of detail.<sup>1</sup> This charming effusion of Goethe's, a piece of fiction in letters and dialogue, must have been before the mind of Schelling when he wrote and delivered before the Academy of Munich, nine years later, his celebrated address "on the relation of the fine arts to nature."<sup>2</sup> He there succeeds in giving a yet correcter expression of what must have been an underlying thought in Goethe's mind. The passage is worth repeating in full: "How does it come about that to every person of fairly educated taste imitations of so-called reality which are so close as to become deceptive, appear nevertheless to be untrue, that they make the impression of spectres; whereas a work of art in which a thought is dominant captivates with a full power of truth, placing you as it were in the truly real world? How does it come to pass except through the, more or less, hidden feeling which declares that thought is the only living principle in things, everything else being without substance, a vain shadow? On the same ground all the reverse instances are explained which are brought up as examples to show how nature has been surpassed by art. If the artist stays the rapid current of man's years, combining the power of developed

26.  
Schelling on  
Art and the  
problem of  
Reality.

<sup>1</sup> The term characteristic had been introduced by Hirt (1759-1836), had been commended by Goethe in correspondence with his friend Meyer, and had then been playfully treated in the Dialogue mentioned in the text. It has, however, been correctly remarked, *e.g.*, by Bielchowsky, *loc. cit.*, vol. iii. p. 238), that for Goethe himself these

marked differences, expressed by the terms Real, Ideal, and Characteristic, do not exist, as his view was eminently synoptic, and averse, as we have seen before (vol. iii. p. 608), to minute analysis and philosophical distinctions.

<sup>2</sup> Published in Schelling's 'Werke,' sec. i., vol. vii. pp. 289 *sqq.*