

has been done in a less systematic manner in other countries, and, in the first instance, in this country. It is a very significant fact that it was the literary creations and the personality of Goethe himself which first gave to one of the foremost thinkers in this country a deeper insight into, and a real understanding of, the originality and importance of German thought. It is still more remarkable and noteworthy that among those who created this interest in German thought Thomas Carlyle stands out as by far the most impressive and powerful writer; a man who had been brought up within the narrowest and hardest form of Scotch puritanism, who for a moment was in danger of losing his deeper hold of the Spiritual, but who, after a violent struggle with unbelief, passed from the "Everlasting No" through the centre of indifference to the "Everlasting Yea," and laid down in a series of writings, which are unique, and have become classical in English literature, the story of his doubts and the restoration of his belief.<sup>1</sup> And among his numerous essays none is more remarkable than the one in which he introduces to his readers that very work of Goethe which deals with the religious problem in *Education*.<sup>2</sup> To many thoughtful persons in this

<sup>1</sup> A very interesting study of this subject is to be found in a tract by J. H. Wilhelmi, entitled 'Th. Carlyle und Fr. Nietzsche, Wie sie Gott suchten, und, was für einen Gott sie fanden' (1897). It draws a parallel between Carlyle and Nietzsche as having encountered the same doubts and difficulties, and contrasts the direction and result of their respective solutions; admitting at the same time that Nietzsche's solution was probably not

final, as his philosophical development was prematurely cut short.

<sup>2</sup> It is a remarkable fact that Carlyle's appreciation of Goethe written during the lifetime of the poet still ranks amongst the best utterances on the subject, containing not only a full and true estimate of Goethe's genius and personality, but also a very adequate appreciation of his influence, both on German and more generally on European thought and literature.