

LETTERS AND DIARIES OF GEORGE BANCROFT

EDITED BY M. A. DEWOLFE HOWE

I

STUDENT DAYS IN EUROPE



THE advantage of being born in a year of so round a number as 1800 is that the events of a lifetime and the dates of their occurrence are readily related to each other. In 1800 George Bancroft was born; in 1817 he graduated at Harvard College, at the age of seventeen; in 1891 he died at the age of ninety-one. The intervening years were filled with activities of great variety and importance. The following pages will be devoted to extracts from the profuse journals and letters written during the four years of his early European study, 1818-1822.

It was an act of pioneer adventure for any young New Englander in 1818 to go to Europe to round out his education. Bancroft was not the first of the pioneer band, for Edward Everett, George Ticknor, and Joseph W. Cogswell were his seniors in point both of years and of foreign study. Bancroft's opportunity to go was no mere gift of fortune, but a direct result of the capacity for scholarship revealed during his college years. His father was the Rev. Aaron Bancroft, of Worcester, a minister of slender means and large family, well known as the author of a popular life of Washington, and as a leader in the Unitarian movement which rent New England Congregationalism asunder. His son George must naturally have made his own way at home, but for the interest taken in his intellectual welfare and the infant cause of American letters by President Kirkland, Edward Everett, Prof. Andrews Norton, and others. His own appreciation of what was done for him is generously expressed in a letter to his father from Berlin (October 20, 1820) from which the following sentences are quoted: "From the earliest years of childhood, from the moment of entering with you the chaise

that was to take us to Exeter, I have met with benefactors and friends. The benevolence of an uncle whom I delight to reverence and love, assisted me in the years of college life, and as I was entering on more advanced studies under narrow and discouraging circumstances, I have been enabled to visit the first universities of Europe. This is heart-moving and exalting. Encouragement, such as I have received, must give a new impulse to exertion, and I feel as if something more than a moderate degree of usefulness may hereafter be justly demanded of me. When I return I shall be willing to serve in any station, to which those, to whom I owe so much, may think most suitable for me."

With the financial provision secured for him by President Kirkland, with letters of introduction to German scholars, and with what proved to be a rare personal power of forming and sustaining relations of friendship with his elders, George Bancroft sailed from Boston, June 27, 1818. His destination was the University of Georgia Augusta at Göttingen. The reader need not be reminded that the experiences related in the ensuing passages befell a young man between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two.

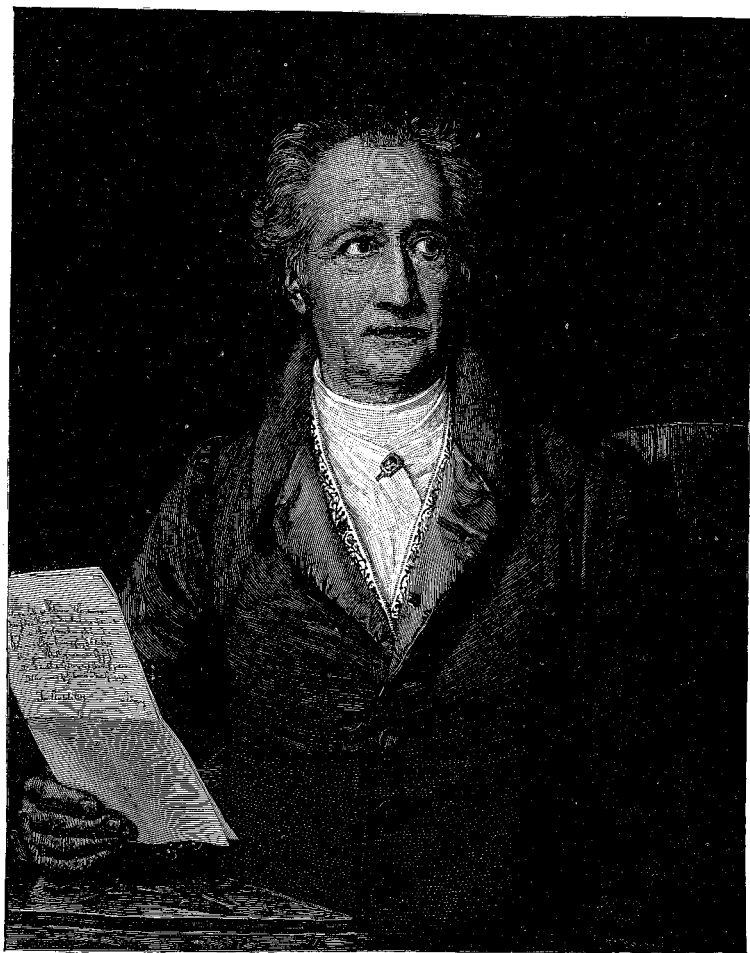
One of his first letters written in Europe between his landing and his arrival at Göttingen was addressed to the friend to whom seventeen years later he wrote: "It was your advice to our excellent Kirkland, which carried me to Germany; it was your letters which made me friends there, taught me how to keep in the ruts, and how to profit by my opportunities."

To Edward Everett,

LEYDEN, August 14, 1818.

DEAR SIR:—

Many, very many thanks I return to you for your kind letters. They leave me nothing to desire, and nothing to fear. One delay having succeeded another, the autumn



Goethe.

Engraved by M. Haider after a painting by Stieler.

instead of the spring finds me actually on my way to Göttingen, & to you may I look for advice to regulate my conduct & studies? The important question with me is, How can I pass three years at the Georgia Augusta to the greatest advantage? The first object should be the general improvement of the mind & the second the acquisition of good learning. My course of studies must also be regulated by the expectations & desires of my friends at home, & by a consideration of what will most contribute to rendering me useful on my return. The wishes of Dr. Kirkland, so far as they are expressed, would be superior to all other considerations. These, however, he has never very fully communicated. In his

letters which he has given me for Professor Eichhorn, he observes of me that "his friends wish him to attend especially to Philology, the ancient languages & Oriental, literature, that he may thus be qualified to pursue theological studies to the greatest benefit, to give instruction as any opening may occur & invite, & become an accomplished philologist & Biblical Critic, able to expound & defend the oracles of God." Dr. Kirkland has also told me, that I must not give my time so exclusively to critical studies as to unfit myself for a clergyman, since it is at least doubtful whether the University will ever have occasion to demand of me any services.

The primary object of my studies must

therefore be, to gain the three ancient languages, & I hope that a few hours, won from leisure & repose will give me such of the modern as are worth the labour of acquiring.

One thing I must confess with regret. When in college I had no idea, that I should ever be able to devote my life to literary labours, & the classics did not obtain so much of my time as I could now wish. Of Hebrew I knew little beyond the letters, & cannot read with ease the higher Greek authors.

The kindness of my friends places at my disposal \$700 per ann. At Göttingen Dr. K. assured me, that \$500 or perhaps less would place me in a respectable & comfortable situation for the year.

If you have leisure, & are willing to lend me your counsels, I pray you, believe I do not fear labour, nor am I fond of expense. I wish to live an useful life, as I believe I shall a happy one. . . .

On the 14th of August the young student found himself in Göttingen. The next morning he presented his first letter of introduction. "I found Mr. Benecke," says the journal, "the Patron in chief of all students who speak English only, to be a friendly man, of about fifty, under whose auspices I found myself two days after established in my little dominions. [A letter to one of his sisters describes his two comfortable rooms "in a fine wide street, the first in the city," his simple fare and manner of life.] Under his care I study the German Language, spending an hour privatissimé each day with him; and it was at first quite amusing to me to see how careful he was in observing the second when the hour had elapsed, and how uneasy and even disturbed he is when I am rude enough to stay a moment beyond the time. I must rise and fly at the instant, when the hand of time is on the point of the hour, even if in the midst of a line, aye, or of a long word."

The presentation of letters to Gauss, the astronomer, and Blumenbach, the physiologist, took place within a few days. By each the newcomer was hospitably received. Meanwhile the diary records diligent reading of Schiller and Goethe. "I am only more & more astonished at the indecency & immorality of the latter. He appears to prefer to represent vice as lovely & exciting

sympathy, than virtue, & would rather take for his heroine a prostitute or a profligate, than give birth to that purity of thought & loftiness of soul, which it is the peculiar duty of the poet to raise, by connecting his inventions with the actions of heroes, & embodying in verse the merits of the benefactors of mankind."

August 30. . . . This evening again have I been with Prof. Blumenbach and family. They are kind to me indeed. The Professor spoke of Goethe. He (Goethe) is a large stout man of about seventy, fond of amusement & mirth, fonder of eating & drinking, and notwithstanding his love of good company & good living, possessed of a great deal of majesty & form. Beside his works in poetry & *belles-lettres*, he has written on mineralogy, on botany, & lately published a very voluminous work in three vols. upon optics. The object of this treatise was to annihilate Sir Isaac Newton, & his theory; but, alas! it fell stillborn from the press, excited no attention, gained not even one opposer, call [ed] forth not one refutation. The reviewers bestowed only five or six lines upon it, lamenting that men would write books on subjects about which they are profoundly ignorant. The poor man, who had hoped to crown his fame by this, was wofully disappointed & mortified.

Madame B., in whose hands I had put Prof. Frisbie's Inaugural Address, expressed great and real satisfaction with the work, particularly admiring & approving the remarks upon the German writers. I had, during the week, received a letter of introduction to Prof. B. from Mr. Everett, which was charmingly written. They applauded it to the skies, & Fräulein B. insisted that it was *sehr göttlich*.

September 9. . . . This evening I for the first time visited Prof. Dissen, so celebrated for his learning & genius. He is a short man, extremely near-sighted, wonderfully learned, very kind & obliging, & has offered me his good counsel, whenever I shall need them. He spoke of my countryman Prof. Everett. He (Prof. E.), when here, set no bounds to his industry. He allowed himself no more than six hours for sleep, & devoted the whole of the day to study. At first he employed some time with the Oriental Languages, but afterwards devoted himself almost exclusively

to philology, & became exceedingly learned. Besides this, he had a vast number of acquaintances in Germany, & during the vacations, he visited the principal cities, particularly Weimar, Dresden, Berlin, &c. He also used the very best instructors, sparing no labour or expense in improving his mind & acquiring good learning. . . .

September 13. . . . I have seen Eichhorn today, for the first time. He is old, yet stout & hearty; very strong built, of fine proportions, broad shoulders, tall enough, with a fine open countenance, goodnatured in his manners, & familiar. He reached me his hand very cordially, enquired particularly about my accommodations, and the manner of securing the best and bade me come & see him very often. He enquired about the system of studies I must pursue, & on my stating my wishes on this subject, he invited me at once to attend his lectures, & promised me the best place in his lecture room. He spoke of America, that she was now making gigantic strides in improvement, & added with a wink, that she was much dreaded by England. He repeated his invitation to visit him very often, saying he was well acquainted with the American gentlemen who have resided here, particularly with Mr. Everett, for whom he has the highest regard.

October 1. I have been for some days a regularly matriculated student of the University of Göttingen. On the 22nd of September I obtained my *Matrikel*. The process of procuring it is very simple. The doors of the University stand ever open; & all are invited to the rich banquet of learning. Nothing is necessary toward becoming a member of the institution, except to give your name, your country, the occupation of your father, & the studies to which you will devote yourself; on this being known, a paper is immediately handed you, by which you become entitled to all the privileges and rights of a citizen of the Georgia Augusta. At the same time you shake hands with the Prorector, by which form you are understood to promise that you will obey the laws of the University. There is particular mention made in the *Matrikel* of duelling, of directly resenting an injury, instead of appealing to the proper authorities, of the preservation of a good character, & pure morals, of the associations called *Landsmannschafter*, & of ap-

pearing always in decent clothing. The fees amount to about one Louis d'or. The present Prorector is Consistorial-Rath Pott. He appeared particularly pleased on my declaring myself an American, and pointing to the name last entered in his book, which happened to be the name of a Grecian, bade me notice from what distant parts of the globe there were representatives at Göttingen. He then very particularly requested me to visit him, adding that he should have then detained me to hold a conversation with me, but he was involved in business and duties of his office.

October 2. . . . Behold, I have seen a wonder! A learned woman, modest, & who once might have been handsome; a learned woman, Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Arts, & one of the best informed *men* in the place.

Old Slüzer,* who died some ten years ago, was a stern republican abroad & very naturally a tyrant in his own house. (He wrote a very admirable book on the coins of the Russian Empire.) Well—this man married—his wife became pregnant, he was mightily rejoiced, felt sure it was a boy, boasted of the circumstance to his friends, & destined the young man in his own mind for a scholar. His wife was brought to bed, & behold, a little miss came to light. The Professor, however, nought intimidated, still clung to his resolution, & determined to show the world that a woman could master the classics as well as anyone. He accordingly educated her completely as a boy, employing her constantly with her books. As she was really possessed of a vast deal of mind, she made great proficiency, & he determined that she should join the University. This she actually did; attending lectures, going like the rest of the students with her portfolio under her arm, and differing from them only in this, that she was exceedingly handsome, & wore petticoats. Her conduct, however, was so perfectly pure & modest, that she never received the least indignity, nor was her character ever impeached. After becoming in this [way] uncommonly learned her father said she must take a degree. This, too, she did, acquitting herself undoubtedly with great honour in the latin extemporary disputation & of course received, *bona fide*, a doctor's degree.

* Presumably August Ludwig von Schlözer, 1735-1809.

Shortly after this, to escape this unnatural mode of life, she married & removed to Lübeck; her husband failed to a large amount, & she removed to Göttingen. Here she lives at present, & was visited a great deal, but now she is getting on in life, & on account of frequent ill health sees not much company. In her character & conversation she is irreproachable & from a long acquaintance with her, I am told, one would never hear from her a word that would betray her learning.

To the Rev. Aaron Bancroft

Oct. 3d, 1818.

MY DEAR FATHER:—

. . . The University has no splendid public buildings—economy is the order of the day. Nothing is spent in vain, and since a plain building will answer as well as any other to hold their Library, they think it better to spend their gold in collecting new books than in ornament and display. Notwithstanding all this, every thing that is necessary for the purpose of instruction, or the dignity of the Institution is procured at once, without hesitation or meanness in the use of money. They have a grand botanical garden, an anatomical Hall, an admirable observatory, superintended by one of the best astronomers in the world, several hospitals for the poor and sick, by means of which excellent Physicians are educated, a museum (though not very good), and a library of more than two hundred thousand volumes. This is by no means all. They have a large body of learned and powerful men collected here, men of talents, ardour and miraculous industry, and by these is this fine instrument put in motion. There are about fifty Professors, and every one of them laborious and learned, besides a vast number of doctors who are about twenty-four or thirty years old, and who are attached to the University and take part in instruction in every department. In addition to this, there are several instructors in each of the modern languages, and who are not so immediately a part of the University as the former. There are then at Göttingen about eighty regularly educated men, many of them in the very first rank of men, such as do honour, not only to their country, but their species, all of them thoroughly learned in the strictest sense of the term, and superior

in this respect to anything we have in America. Besides this number of eighty who are engaged in the weighty affairs of science, there are a large number (as I have just said) who teach the modern languages and accomplishments of that kind; and, yet further, regularly appointed masters of fencing, riding and dancing &c.; of all this vast number I can take my choice, & accordingly I have selected the best in each of those departments to which I devote myself. . . .

October 3. . . . Wolf, the Greek Professor at Berlin, is perhaps the greatest scholar in Germany; & as such one hears his name incessantly repeated & with terms of the highest admiration. His character as a man is an entirely different affair, & a thing which never comes into consideration, when he is spoken of as a scholar. . . . He treated his wife in so shocking a manner, that she was obliged to obtain a separation, in which state she now lives. He has a daughter also. This poor girl he would often keep up very late at night reading Homer to him, while he lay in bed; & if the unhappy creature happened to nod a little towards twelve or one o'clock, he would give her a violent box on the ear. The consequence of this was that she took the first opportunity to elope with a young Prussian officer.

Wolf is now quite old. Of course his days of most active exertion are past. He now does little or nothing. The salary which he receives as Professor, he procures without giving much in return. He announces that he will read lectures on this & that author, but he merely makes a beginning, reads for a week or two, & then makes a journey. A short time ago he gave out that he would read no lectures at all, & was actually determined to trouble himself no more about them. The Prussian Government, however, interfered, & told him that if he read no lectures he should receive no salary. "Well," said he, "if it must be done—I dine from two to three; so I will read a lecture from 3 to 4, just to assist digestion."

October 9. Michaelis* was an avaricious old man, & his passion for money was in no degree inferior to his passion for fame. It is the custom for the poor students to go to the professors, & request, on account of

*Johann David Michaelis, biblical scholar and professor at Göttingen. Died 1791.

their extreme poverty, the permission of hearing their lectures without paying the fee, which is one Louis d'or. A poor fellow one day went to Michaelis for this purpose, & thought, as he was going to visit so famous a man, he must dress particularly fine. According[ly], he put on a pair of silver shoe buckles, & sallied forth on his expedition. On making his request, Michaelis answered by pointing to his shoe-buckles, saying he could sell those, & with the money pay the *honorarium*; "or rather," added he, "you may leave them with me, & I will accept of them as the fee." This the student actually did, & after leaving him, went to one of his friends, a gentleman since become very celebrated, & complained of the barbarous treatment he had received. The gentleman immediately took out of his pocket a Louis d'or, & bade the scholar give that to Michaelis with his compliments & demand back the buckles. The poor fellow received the money with the utmost thankfulness; & went directly to the Professor, delivered the message, gave him the gold, & reclaimed his beloved buckles.

Michaelis always exacted the fee for his lectures; & defended himself by saying he was not avaricious, but it was his opinion the poor had better be kept at their own proper business, & not come starving & begging to the University.

October 25. . . . Today, also, I dined with Professor Eichhorn: a very particular & distinguished favour. In Göttingen one does not give dinners; it costs too much money & too much time. The venerable old man, however, invited me to dine with him today, & at the same time to make him [me?] acquainted with his beloved. The company consisted of 3 professors & another gentleman, who was apparently one of the family, or a very near relation. I will just mention the order of dishes, to give an idea of a German dinner. First, soup was given round; this, of course, was followed by boiled meat; then appeared sour-crust with bacon & a sort of ball made of meat & spices; then came fish, & after this a roasted fowl; all with proper sauces, but of vegetables there were few, according to the German custom. For the desert, first cake of a most superior order, then little puffs, then grapes and apples. The whole dinner was accompanied with various sorts of low wines, though of quite a superior quality.

To Mrs. Lucretia Bancroft.

GÖTTINGEN, November 25.

MY DEAR MOTHER:—

. . . Pray can you find me out in this dark city? My kingdom is situated in the widest street of the Town, in the largest house in that street on the third story. It is about the same size as Eliza's chamber, only a little higher, and I have with it a small bedchamber as large as the adjoining one—Mary's chamber as you call'd it in old times. I rise before five in the morning, though in this high Northern region the sun does not get [up] till very late. On rising I find my stove already warm and the room comfortable, and a pot of coffee on the table. I drink at once a cup of this, and so on at intervals of half an hour till all is gone. At seven I go to my drawer and cut me from my brown loaf a piece of bread and butter. This lasts me till dinner which, as you already know, is brought to me and is a solitary meal. After dinner the Germans drink coffee again. The evening is the time for visits, that is to say if anyone has an inclination to visit, and friends who will be glad to see him. If one will study, however, in the evening, bread & butter and a cup of tea is his repast, and he can labour very well on a light stomach. There are several places also to which the students very frequently go to eat something warm in the evening. At these places they eat as if they were eating the passover, "with their hats on their heads, their staves in their hands, and they eat in haste." If anyone takes off his hat (or rather his cap, for we wear a sort of cloth cap), or shews the least air of a gentleman, the rest of the students begin hooting at the poor criminal. At these houses it costs very little to get a supper, and many of the scholars in consequence go there very frequently. A very agreeable way of passing an hour of the evening is to call on one of the married Professors. There, instead of sitting round the table and drinking tea like Christians, as we do in America, I have a cup of tea brought to me by the youngest daughter of the Lady whom I visit. She pours me out one cup at a time, brings me this in one hand and sugar and cream in the other. This is drank, with a little bit of bread and butter. We wait perhaps half an hour, and then obtain a second cup; and so on for an hour. In the mean

time the Ladies sew or knit, even though it be Sunday night, and the young men talk to them. In a large tea party the manner is somewhat changed. A maid-servant brings round tea as with us—cake also, and what will perhaps surprise you, they also put on the salver with tea a bottle of rum—yes, my dear mother, of *rum*, a substance which the old ladies find tastes very well in tea. The Balls here are always on Sunday Evening. I have been to one out of curiosity, and seen there not only dances common among us, but also waltzing—an affair carried on in great style throughout all Germany. They do not require of me to dance in consideration of my being a foreigner and a student. . . .

February 27, 1819. . . . A few evenings ago I was invited to a supper by the Prorector of the University. He told me to come at 7½, and accordingly I went in due time and reached the place before 8 o'clock. The company consisted entirely of Professors, Doctors, & the College of Lawyers, all of them tolerably advanced in age. On my entering, they were not yet fully collected, but by degrees they dropped in, & by nine the whole host was there. This first hour was most eminently tedious. The Orientalists collected in one corner, and talked of Persia; the lawyers in another, & talked of I know not what; while the Prorector stalked from one room to the other snuffing the candles. At length we were called to supper, and a well lighted table seemed to be a cheering sight after our stupidity. I was placed by the side of the Prorector, with one of the oldest and most distinguished professors on my other side, who was, however, unluckily deaf. Conversation flagged, but as the supper was good, the jaws were not idle. By and bye the wine began to operate, and the learned body began to buzz with great animation. Jests of the most noble sort were made, deep remarks and sage criticisms pronounced. The people spoke of their watches. "My watch," cried the Prorector, "keeps the best time of any one in Göttingen. I set it every hour." It was sometime before the point of this was seen, but a heavy laugh at length came, although a little later than could have been desired. Schleiermacher's name was mentioned. "Er macht viele Sachen unter einem Schleyer," said the Prorector. It was asked, what is the

characteristick of a good Lutheran? "To love wine," said the Prorector, seizing on the bottle. "Yes," exclaimed a venerable Professor, "he who does not love wine, woman and song, remains a fool all the days of his life." A little after 11 o'clock, our wine was ended, the skins of the Professors pretty full. We rose therefore from table, & each made the best of his way home.

To Mrs. Lucretia Bancroft.

GÖTTINGEN, Mar. 11, 1819.

MY DEAR MOTHER:—

. . . I am by this time, too, become quite accustomed to Germans and German customs, and were you to see me at present in my German costume, I am afraid you would hardly recognize me. What will you think of me when I tell you that I no longer eat a regular breakfast, no longer drink tea with regularity, that on rising early in the morning I drink a cup of strong coffee, and an hour or two afterwards devour in a moment a crust of bread and butter without any ceremony, and that this passes for my breakfast?—that my dinner is absolutely a solitary meal, eaten in silence and in haste—that I wear to my lectures a coat which, with an elegant velvet collar, trimmings, and everything else, cost scarcely seven dollars? What will you say of me when I add that in every large party where I have been present I have seen waltzing, and that the largest Balls are invariably on Sunday evening? Indeed, my dear Mother, I have had to accustom myself to much that was new and much that was disagreeable, yet now I am become quite Germanized, can bear with all, be pleased with all things, and with all this think constantly of home with new and increased affection. . . .

To this letter may be appended the roster of a day's work written on the back of a map of Göttingen, which Bancroft sent to Professor Andrews Norton:

- 5—7 Hebrew & Syriac
- 7—8 Heeren in Ethnography
- 8—9 Church history by the elder Planck
- 9—10 Exegesis of the N. T. by old Eichhorn
- 10—11 " of the O. T. "

- 11-12 Syriac by old Eichhorn
- 12-1 Dinner & walk
- 1-2 Library
- 2-4 Latin or French
- 4-5 Philological Encyclopedie by Dissen
- 5-7 Greek
- 7-8 Syriac
- 8-9 Tea & walk
- 9-11 Repetition of the old lectures & preparation for the new.

April 5. Eichhorn told me yesterday that he labors at present from 5 in the morning till 9 at night, that he has all his life gone on in much the same way; that when he was first made professor, he studied 15 hours daily, & never experienced any inconvenience in respect of his health. When he first began studying, he sate up very late at night. This he found ruinous, and soon abandoned it. But ever since he has risen early, & retired early, & this he finds the only way of effecting much. He lays it down as a fixed principle that cannot be denied, that no man naturally possessed of a good constitution ever died of study. He does not deny that hard students may have died who might have lived, if they had led another course of life. But they died of anxiety, or sadness, or melancholy, of passion, or what you will, but never of hard study. He tells me that at present, at my age, when the habits of the body are not fully formed, twelve hours of diligent study will answer, & even if I do not work more than 10 hours a day, my conscience may be at ease, but at the end of two years or two & a half, it will be quite another thing.

April 11. Prof. Gauss has never been to a ball or to any public amusement within the memory or knowledge of man. Once, indeed, his wife persuaded him to attend her to a ball. It was a beautiful starlight night; on stepping into the carriage, he cast his [eye] on the heavens, & observing how beautiful it was above, cried out, "but there is something new there, which I have never seen before." No sooner said than he was vanished from the carriage and at once by his telescope, whilst his poor lady was left to find her way alone to the assembly. On arriving there she mentioned the adventure, so that there can be no doubt of its truth.

To Miss Jane Bancroft

GÖTTINGEN, April 14, 1819.

MY DEAR JANE:—

It is a strange world we live in, and full of more things than are dreamt of in your philosophy. My life on it, you have not formed a conception of a set of beings like the German students. I remember even now the first time that I saw a party of them collected and I believed never to have seen any of my fellow beings so rough, uncivilized and without cultivation. They are young, & therefore wild and noisy—live chiefly among themselves, without mixing in society, and are therefore careless in their deportment, awkward and slovenly. Many of them wear mustachios, a thing almost unknown in America, and all of them make themselves vile by a Beard, dirty and monstrous. Scarcely one of them uses a hat, but instead of it a cap which sometimes can scarcely be distinguished from a nightcap. This business of wearing only an apology for a hat I find so exceedingly convenient, that I have fallen into it. When the scholars are assembled for a lecture the collection of unpleasant odours is prodigious, & until the professor enters the room there is a great noise of whistling, talking and disputing, all which however is instantly hushed on sight of the Professor though generally wound up by a short but violent hiss. This hiss is only a signal for order and tranquillity. When silence is thus put in possession of the throne the professor begins. The students have in the mean time opened their Portfolios, which they always carry with them into lectures, taken out and arranged their papers, mended their quills and brought every thing to order so that they are ready to take down every word that comes from the speaker's lips. A lecture lasts always an hour; but the instant the clock strikes it must be ended; for the lectures are counted from the striking of the clock to the striking again, and the young men must hasten to another professor. Sometimes a person is thus necessitated to stop in the middle of a paragraph, and I state what is positively true when I say I have known the lecturer break off in the middle of a sentence. If a professor read a moment after the hour has struck, be he who he may, the oldest and most learned, even Eichhorn himself, a

curious scene of riot ensues. First the students shut up their books; i. e. slam them together, the next step is to stop writing and put up their paper, if this do not avail, they take their inkstands and strike the benches most vehemently, & then begin kicking the floor. All this happens in half a minute and the professor is always brought to reason before the minute is completed. It is however very seldom the case that any one overreaches beyond his time. You will from this get an idea of the manner in which a lecture in general is heard. On great occasions something extraordinary must be done. So for instance if Eichhorn sneeze, every scholar in the room, or at least the larger number, begins drumming with the feet, or beating the floor, as if trying its strength. I asked the reason of this strange procedure, and was told it implied as much as God bless you. If a Professor speak so fast that it is difficult to follow him in writing down what he says, they begin to scrape with their feet; the floor being sandy and the feet moving with rapidity, it produces a very grating and interrupting noise—the same is done on all occasions whatsoever when the instructor displeases his audience. This language of the feet when put in words, signifies thou art an ass.

It is the custom in Göttingen for every man who can, to make jests in his lectures, and for every man who cannot to attempt it. When a good one is made, they clatter with their feet in token of approbation. The same happens at the end of any lecture that has been particularly good; and also at the end of the term when the lectures are closed. On this occasion the students undertake to demonstrate their love for the favourite professors; and the degree of love entertained for a Professor is measured by the degree of noise, absolute actual noise which is made and which often lasts several minutes and can be heard as you may well suppose no inconsiderable distance. Is this information enough of the blessed human beings among whom I live? . . .

June 27, 1819. This morning I went out to a village in the vicinity & delivered a sermon in the German language. Many were astonished at my boldness in daring to do a thing of the kind, & feared I should fail. But I met with nothing which made me repent my having attempted to hold a

sermon; on the contrary the audience were uncommonly still & attentive & on leaving the pulpit I received the congratulations of my friends, some of whom, though unknown to me, had been induced by curiosity or affection to become my hearers.

Sept. 9. I heard a good story of Professor Forster, the famous voyager, who went once round the world with Captain Cook, & was afterwards made professor at Halle. He was a rude, ill-mannered fellow. A young Jewish girl happened to be in company with him one evening. The company was rather dull. She was guilty of yawning. Forster, perceiving her mouth distended, during the operation cried out, "Lord, Miss, I hope you don't mean to eat me." "Never fear," answered she, "I'm a Jewess."

It was at Halle that Bancroft heard this story, here reproduced in evidence of the antiquity of current anecdotes. He had at the time just set out with three German students on a holiday walking trip. The chief places visited at first were Halle, Leipzig and Dresden. Conversations with Gesenius, Spohn, and other eminent scholars are recorded. The diary for the days in Dresden glows with all the enthusiasm of first acquaintance with masterpieces of painting and sculpture. From Dresden Bancroft proceeded to Prague, and on the way back to Göttingen, from which he was absent six weeks in all, passed through Jena and Weimar. In the first of these places he saw Goethe; in the second Goethe's home.

JENA, Oct. 12, 1819. . . . I visited Goethe towards noon. He was talkative & affable, began at first with speaking of common affairs. Then the discourse came on German philosophy. Kant was mentioned with reverence. The state of America became then the subject of conversation. He seemed to think he was quite well acquainted with it. He spoke of several books on the country, of Warden's Statistical account of America, &c., &c. Then too, Cogswell had given him an essay on American Literature, which appeared in Edinburgh. This essay Goethe praised much for the beauty of its style & for the liveliness & fancy with which it was written, & smiled as he mentioned the freedom with which he spoke of the different pro-

fessions. Then the talk was of Cogswell, a leiber Mann—a man of great excellence.

He spoke with pleasure of the visits Cogswell had paid him, &c., &c. At length I, gathering courage from talking with him, took occasion to bring him upon the English poets. Byron he praised in the highest terms, declared himself one of a large party in Germany who admired him unboundedly & seized on & swallowed everything that came from him. Of Scott we had time to talk; of Wordsworth—Southey he knew nothing; of Coleridge, the name—had forgotten however his works. The author of *Bertram** was praised. "The tragedy," said Goethe, "has many beautiful passages." Byron, however, seemed to remain the most admired of all. After this, Goethe asked after my pursuits, praised me, on my mentioning them, for coming to Germany, & spoke a word or two on Oriental matters. After this he asked what way I was to take the next day, & finding I was going to Weimar, offered me at once a letter which should make me welcome to the library. After a few more remarks I departed. In speaking of matters, I came into a strait almost as bad as poor Jennie with the Queen. Of Byron I said his last poem was reported to contain the most splendid exertions of poetical power, mixed with the lowest and most disgraceful indecencies. I did not think at the moment of Goethe's "*Faust*." I mentioned, too, Byron's wife, forgetting that Goethe had not been happy in the married state. . . . I spoke a word, too, of Eichhorn's writing so many books, forgetting that Goethe had found no end with writing many.

As for his person, Goethe is somewhat large, tho' not very, with a marked countenance, a fine clear eye, large & very expressive features, well built, & giving at once a favourable impression. In his manners he is very dignified, or rather he has a sort of dignified stiffness, which he means should pass for genuine dignity. He walks amazingly upright. I found him quite in dishabille. He had on an Oberrock—i. e. a surtout, but no waistcoat, a ruffled shirt, not altogether clean, a cravat like the shirt, fast inclining to dark complexion. His boots were of quite an ordinary cut. No

*Rev. C. R. Maturin. The tragedy, on Byron's recommendation, was produced in 1816, with Kean in the leading rôle.

Dandi would have worn them. He received me in the garden.

Some months later Bancroft wrote this different account of his experience to two of his sisters:

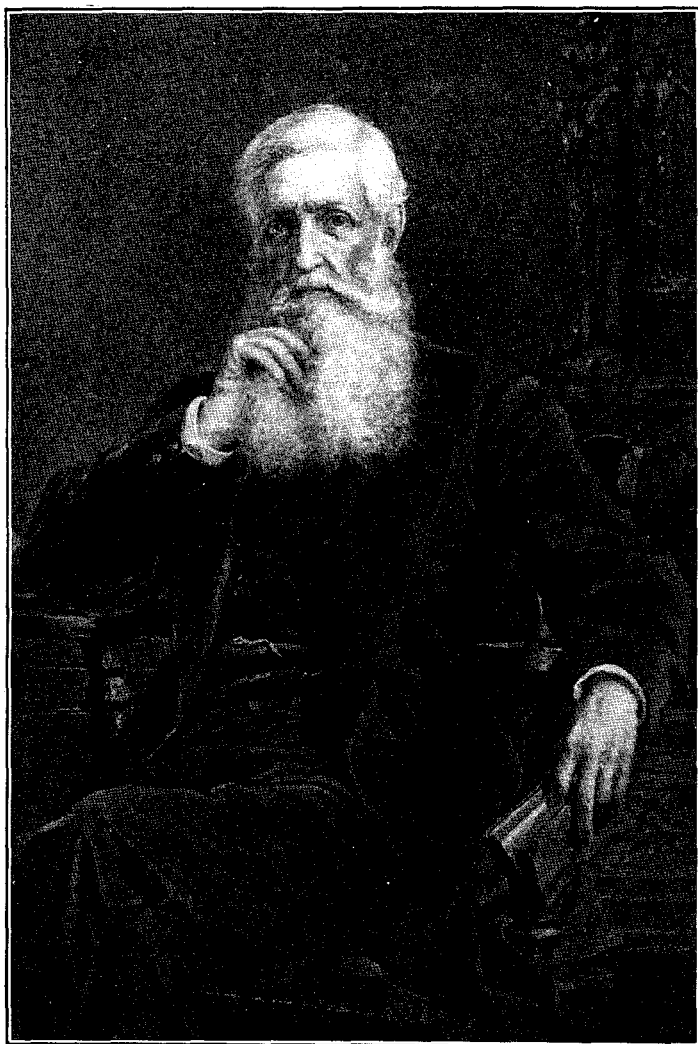
To Misses Jane and Sarah Bancroft.

May, 1820.

MY DEAR SISTERS:—

. . . I was particularly gratified by seeing the first poet of the Germans—I mean Goethe. Perhaps of all popular writers alive, he is in Germany the most popular. Whatever he writes they are ready to admire, and he bends them to his taste and whims at pleasure. He is now very old, yet still vigorous and firm in his walk. His features are large and expressive, and must once have been very handsome. His eye is dark and sparkling. He is well built, and dignified in his deportment and his hair is whiter and finer than I have ever seen on an old man's head. He received us in the garden. His dress was somewhat that of a sloven; indeed all the German professors and men of letters are horribly dirty fellows in their dress and manners. But Goethe has seen the world, and knows well what propriety demands. He wore a neckcloth of a dark complexion, and his shirt was not so light coloured as linen ought to be. He had on a surtout, but neither coat nor waistcoat beneath it, and his boots were not at all of a fashionable cut. But then he had an air of majesty about him, & his grey locks made him look so respectable that I wondered how I could mind such a trifle as his dress. Among other things which he talked about were the present living poets of England. He spoke of Byron in terms of the highest admiration. Every new work of Byron he seizes on with avidity, as he said. I was glad to hear our opinion of Byron confirmed by such high authority. On leaving him, he gave me a letter to his family at Weimar, which procured me an introduction to the library of the Grand Duke also. . . .

WEIMAR, October 13, 1819. I arose early in the morning, & having engaged a servant to carry my knapsack, proceeded on foot from Jena to Weimar. The distance is not far from 10 miles. On reach-



George Bancroft.

From the portrait by Gustave Richter at Harvard University.

ing Weimar, I went directly to the library to visit the gentleman to whom Goethe had commended me. It was a very common man, one Kräusler, but he was secretary at the library, & therefore best able to show me the matters which were worthy of attention. . . . After making an end at the library, I was invited by Kräusler to go to Goethe's house, & I found (what I had not expected) that Goethe had written word for me to be presented to his son & daughter-in-law. On calling, I found only the Frau Kammeräthinn von Goethe at home. She invited me to tea in the even-

ing. Leaving her, I walked in the city. . . . In Goethe's daughter-in-law I found a very pretty little woman, of lively sprightly manners, witty & agreeable & spirituelle, saying all things, even common ones, very prettily, never coming into embarrassment, knowing always what to say. The son seem'd rather a stupid & ignorant fellow. I was shown Goethe's study & apartments, his library, where *nota bene* the best German translations of the classics were to be found, his garden, his collections, &c., &c. I left Goethe's just in time for the after piece at the theater, &

everybody knows that the theater at Weimar is one of the handsomest in Germany. The piece represented was a farce, & it was laughable enough.

The winter of 1819-1820 was devoted to hard work at Göttingen, broken in the

little city of the world than of a German city. The most interesting of these foreigners are the Grecians, of whom at present between twelve & twenty are here. It would seem as if a noble spirit animated the fallen nation. The little city of Athens, now poor and possessing but small re-



Friederich August Wolf.
From a portrait by Jo. Wolf.

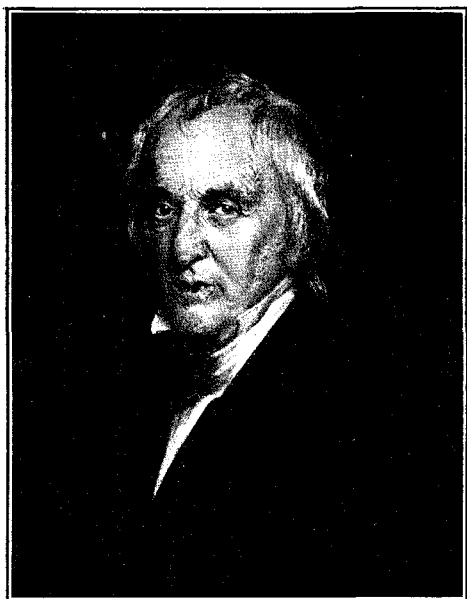
spring by a walking trip in the Harz Mountains with four fellow students. These, as Bancroft describes them, were a Pole, a Dutchman, a Hanoverian, a Teutonico-Anglico-Livonian. The cosmopolitan influences of these days are further suggested by an extract from a letter:

To Dr. Kirkland.

GÖTTINGEN, July 18, 1820.

. . . The first winter of my being at Göttingen, I was almost the only foreigner here. Now there are throngs of them from the North, & the East & the South, and Göttingen has more the appearance of a

sources, has established a Gymnasium in its vicinity, & sent an excellent young man to Germany & the west of Europe to prepare himself for managing it. From Chios there are three or four who are to become professors in the college there on their return. From the University of the seven isles there are still more, some of them men of very good minds, and undaunted industry. One of them from Athens speaks of the honey & olives of Attica, as if they were now quite as excellent as in the old days of liberty, and cannot mention calmly the ruined state of the Parthenon, & the destruction which Lord Elgin has been spreading there.



Aaron Bancroft, father of George Bancroft.
From a miniature in the possession of Wilder D. Bancroft.



Lucretia Bancroft, mother of George Bancroft.
From a miniature in the possession of Andrew McFarland Davis.

Bancroft's stay in Göttingen was now drawing to a close. The two following extracts from family letters described the securing of his degree of Doctor of Philosophy:

GÖTTINGEN, September 2, 1820.

I have just returned from the faculty in Göttingen. For the first time in my life I have been decorated with small clothes and silk stockings, & for the first time too, have been talking Latin publicly. "Hail, native language!" I may well say now, and be thankful that my trial is over. In a word I have been examined this afternoon by mighty men for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy, and now nothing remains for me to do but to appear in public and take the oath of allegiance to the University, in order to become as good and regular a Dr. as any that have been coined in these latter days; but I will try and relate the history of the whole matter. The candidate for a degree writes two papers which he presents to the faculty. In the one he declares his wish to be admitted to an examination; in the other he gives a short history of his life. These being communicated to each member of the Academic Senate, a meeting is called of the faculty for the purpose of trying the powers of the candidate, and examining

him in those departments of science to which he has particularly attended. To-day was appointed for me. At 4 o'clock I entered the house of the Dean of the faculty, Prof. Eichhorn, and after waiting a few minutes was ushered into the room where eight venerable men were assembled. A chair was placed for me. Mr. Eichhorn then began the ceremony by addressing to me a short speech in Latin of course, and after speaking a few words introductory to the examination, ended by saying he should examine me in ancient history, in Hebrew & Arabic, & invited his colleague, the celebrated Mitscherlich*, to examine me in Greek. He then commenced the examination by questions relating to the cities of Phenicia & the fate of Tyre. He then gave me the Hebrew Bible and requested me to translate the 23rd chapter of Isaiah, which is a most difficult chapter. After this an Arabic poem was put into my hands, which I also translated and explained. Then one half of my examination was over. Wine and cake were presented, and these being tasted the work proceeded. Mr. Mitscherlich made me a short speech in which he announced his intention of ascertaining

*Christopher Wilhelm Mitscherlich, 1760-1854; professor at Göttingen, 1794-1833.

how much Greek I knew, and in order to effect that, he gave me an ode of Pindar to translate. Now Pindar, you [know] is of all authors the most difficult. But as I had studied him a good deal of late, I succeeded in satisfying the good professor in my answers. The ode which he selected was the fourth Nemean ode, which commenced with, "The best Physician for labours that are ended is hilarity." The manner of interpreting was as follows: First the sentence was read, then each individual word which had any difficulty was explained, reduced to its primitive root, and its several meanings mentioned. This done, the construction of the words was told, and then the passage was translated into Latin. All this is done in Latin, which is the only language allowed at an examination, or at any public solemnities of the University. After the passage is thus translated, if it contain any allusions to mythology, these are enquired after, if any grammatical difficulties, they must be cleared up, if any incorrected readings, they must be corrected. Of the ode of Pindar, about 30 lines were interpreted in this way. By this time it was past six, so I was desired to withdraw for a few moments. The deliberation was held as to the event of the trial. I was soon summoned to appear, when the Dean made a

short speech again, declaring the satisfaction of the faculty with the appearance I had made, setting forth his readiness to create me a Dr. as soon as I should have disputed in public, and adding his congratulations on his own part and that of the faculty, on the honour I was about to obtain, and then I was dismissed. Next week on Saturday I am to appear in public and defend against two or more opponents the theses which are to be printed in the course of the week. Then, after taking an oath to honour the University, &c., I am to receive a diploma in due form and order, as Doctor of Philosophy. . . .



Johann Friedrich Blumenbach.



Karl Friedrich Gauss.

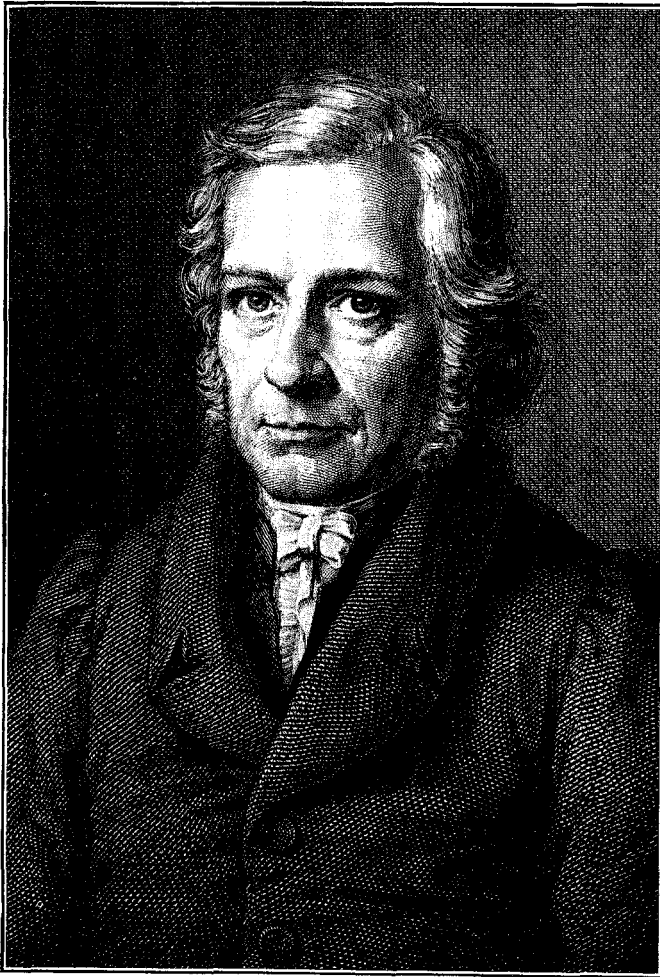
Medals from Göttingen University.

GÖTTINGEN,
Sept. 16 1820.

MY DEAREST
UNCLE:—

Do you remember the good story you used to tell me about the honest countryman of Stow, who, after long sighing for the honour, was at length made Justice of the Peace; and then you know as a neighbor saluted him in a friendly way by the plain title of Mr., he deigned no

answer, but collecting himself most proudly, exclaimed after a long pause, "and pray why not 'Squire!'" So now if Miss Murray or Miss Hall or any of the elect of Lancaster, should happen to speak of George Bancroft, or Mr. George, I pray you to rebuke them gravely and ask, "pray why not Doctor!" Last Saturday I was made Doc-

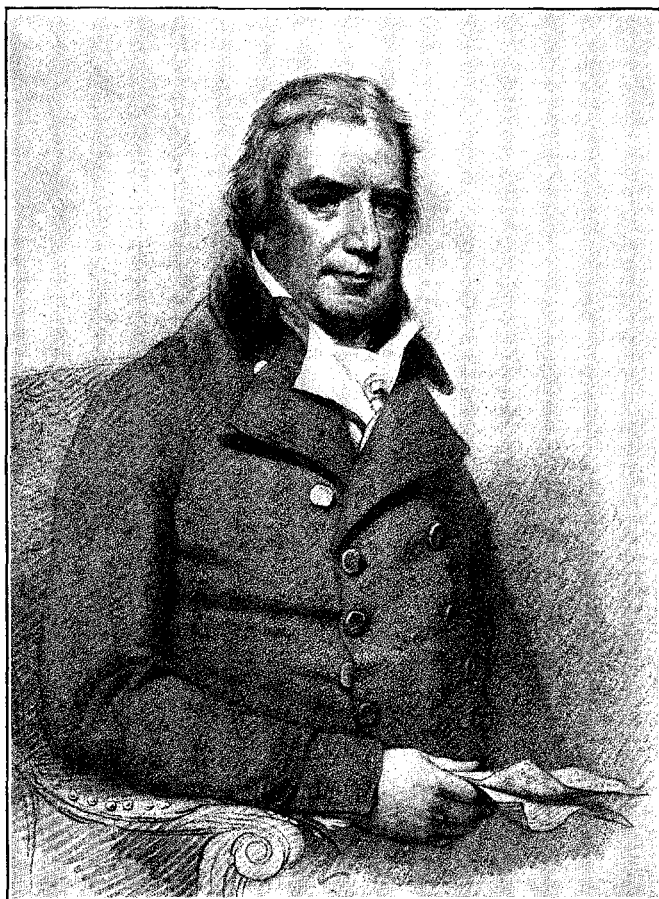


F. E. D. Schleiermacher.

From an engraving by Schultheis after a drawing by L. Heine.

tor of Philosophy and Master of Arts according to the strictest forms of the law. The customs of the place and the statutes of the University render it necessary for the candidate to proceed thus: In the course of the week he prints several propositions which he declares himself ready to defend in public. These are generally of a paradoxical nature, such as few men are disposed to believe, and on new and unusual subjects. These being printed and distributed, two or more opponents are appointed to enter the lists and oppose the candidate. The day for this intellectual warfare being appointed, the candidate proceeds early in the morning, dressed fully in black, in small clothes and silk stockings, to arrange the

business of the day. He drives in a carriage first to his opponents. These he takes with him to his room where breakfast is waiting for them. The morning repast being ended, he conducts them in the carriage as before, to the hall of the University where they take the places appointed for them—opposite the desk destined for the candidate. Then he drives to the Dean of the faculty, and invites him to appear and preside at the ceremony. In the mean time theses are distributed to every one that comes to hear the dispute. The Dean and he who is to be dubbed Dr. arrive. The Dean leads him to his place where he is to stand firmly and await all attacks. First, however, he holds a speech which com-

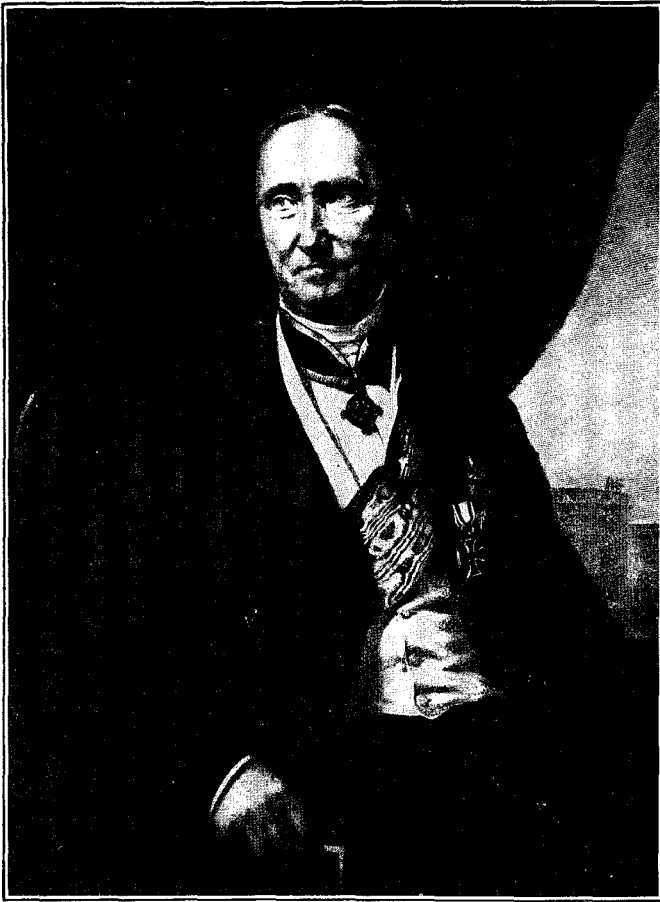


The Right Honorable George Rose.

From a drawing by W. Evans after a painting by Sir William Beechey, R.A.

monly lasts from ten to fifteen minutes. The Dean is at present the celebrated Mr. Eichhorn, one of the most learned men in the world. He led me to the Desk and from that moment no word might be uttered except in Latin. Then I delivered a speech which lasted about 12 minutes and this gave me time to collect myself. The oration pleased, though some thought I spoke too theatrically. 'Tis not the custom here to declaim, but I chose to do it as an American, and for the sake of trying something new to the good people. After the discourse was ended, I called on one of my opponents to contradict any one of the propositions I had asserted. He chose one about a line of Horace. It may seem to you in Lancaster of very little consequence whether one word or another be used there

—but here we are bound to hold it a sacred duty to render every ancient author as correct as possible. The young Gentleman who opposed me is son of the King's preacher at Dresden, a very well educated man. We talked a full half hour about the true reading with liveliness—I might almost say acrimony. The Professor of eloquence, Mitscherlich, who has published an edition of Horace, was all along on my side. We could hear him exclaiming against the arguments of my adversary as of no moment, and encouraging me by approving mine. The dispute with Ammon being at an end, I invited Dr. Hoch to oppose me upon another of my theses. He is an excellent man, already well known for his learning. The question related to the language of the earliest inhabitants of



Baron von Savigny.
From a painting by Franz Krüger.

Greece, and was treated with proper coolness and deliberation. It is a difficult subject, as the testimony of early writers is so contradictory upon it. This question was discussed for about 20 minutes, and then the battle was ended and the field remained to me without any one to dispute my right to it. My peroration followed, & in this I was first obliged, according to the customs of ceremony, to say a word for the King, for the Duke of Cambridge and for the University. Then, turning to the Professors, I thanked them for their kindness to me during my stay at Göttingen, said farewell to my friends and fellow students, and then begged the Dean to confer on me the honour I had sought for. Mr. Eichhorn mounted the desk, held a speech to the audience, said some civil things to me,

added his hopes and wishes for my welfare in life, and then called on the Beadle of the University to read me the Doctor's oath. This being administered, I was called on to ascend two steps higher, and my diploma was presented me. The audience dispersed, each professor came up and congratulated me on the successful event of my trial, then turned away and departed. The Dean I conducted home in my carriage, & I remained a Dr. in Philosophy, and was then, am now, and ever shall be your loving nephew.

The journal goes on with the story of his departure for Berlin and of the winter spent there in attendance at the University.

On Tuesday the 19th of September, I finished my residence at Göttingen. Two



Wilhelm von Humboldt.
From a sketch by J. Schmeller.

years have passed rapidly away in the stillness & activity of a student's life, and I think I may look back on them as on years which have been usefully employed. I had formed a plan of travelling to Berlin with two Grecians—Maurus, from Constantinople, & Polyzoides from Thessalonica. Many of their countrymen were desirous of accompanying us a few miles, that they might delay as long as possible the moment destined for a parting embrace. About 9 we left the walls & spires of Göttingen behind us; we had taken leave of all our friends, & now we bade adieu to their city, to its pleasant walks, the rich vales around it, & its magnificent scientific institutions.

Farewell, oh! Georgia Augusta, & mayst thou long continue to bring forth offspring worthy of thy pleasant glory.

At noon we reached Nordheim. Here we dined for the last time in company with our Grecian friends. The hour at table was indeed moving. The welfare of our friends & our countries was drunk with enthusiasm. After dinner a Greek war song was sung, which animated every heart. Young Blastos from Chios, a pleasant little fellow, whom I was especially fond of, could hardly restrain his feelings. At length Psylas from Athens arose, & addressed his Grecian brethren in a short song, animating them to exertion & patriotism. Then

followed the last embrace, the parting kiss of friendship, & lost in pleasant reminiscences, we continued our way towards Brunswick in silence & reflection.

[Berlin] September 30. I went to deliver my cards of recommendation to several Professors. . . . Schleiermacher delighted me extremely. He has a sharp eye, a remarkable countenance, and in general his appearance is very striking. He is small and somewhat hump-backed; but his manners are so lively and spirited that one hardly notices his personal ugliness. He spoke with a good deal of interest of the religious affairs of America. The professors of Berlin seem to have the good custom of seeing company in the evening.

October 2. . . . Schleiermacher's mode of preaching is very dignified & severe. Language flows from his lips most fluently & uninterruptedly. He is the best extempore speaker I have ever heard. He makes almost no use of his hands, but without gestures pronounces his discourse with rational warmth, but never with impassioned vehemence. He is a preacher for the understanding, not for the heart. His voice is clear & distinct, his countenance intelligent & expressive, his eye black & clear, & in the pulpit his whole appearance is full of dignity.

October 10. Professor Ritter called on me today. He is a well informed man; & in addition to being very learned, he understands how to talk interestingly. He spoke of Madame de Staël whom he knew very well at Geneva. Her heart, he assured me, was excellent. He knew her well & a long time, & never saw anything in her which savoured of ill morals, or loose principles. On the contrary, she was warm in the cause of good. Her private charities were immense. Her ideas of parental love, of the duties of a mother &c., were almost enthusiastically high & severe. She kept her household in most excellent order, & was always resorted to by the poor or the distressed, for all were sure of finding relief from her. In dress she was odd, very singular, and often tasteless. She would dress sometimes in an Oriental style, with turband turned up, displaying her countenance completely, & rigged out in a variety of flaring & disagreeable colours. She had the manners of a French woman, was bold & forward in company, fond of talking

with sensible men, & did not always regard the strict forms of society. But this resulted from her character. She was manly in her understanding, & therefore masculine in her manners.

She sought every opportunity of gaining knowledge in conversation. When in Germany, she visited every learned man of eminence, & sought every opportunity of getting accounts of books & discoveries & systems in her intercourse with men of letters. Fichte & Schelling she knew very well. She was intimate with the Schlegels. If she saw a philosopher, "*donnez-moi une aperçue de la philosophie Kantienne*", she would say; if an admirer of Goethe, "*donnez-moi une aperçue de sa Farben-Lehre?*" In this way she became superficially versed with every thing of interest in Germany, & she had a wonderful talent at gaining possession of the ideas of another & adopting them in so far as they seemed just, as her own. Yet everything which she heard and adopted, she modified in her own way, & it always received the impress of her genius. She was warm in her feelings, enthusiastic; her passions were strong & she was sometimes governed by them; but never to do wrong, for though her principles were not austere or rigidly severe, she yet adhered to them most tenaciously, & never acted contrary to her honest convictions. Her last husband was an honest man and a good soldier. The marriage with him could not be publicly acknowledged on account of the critical situation in which she was placed, being constantly an object of fear and dislike to Carnot & the French Government.

December 21. Wolf talked to me about himself & his daughter with the greatest openness. The Queen, said he, passed thro' Halle, & was at a large company there. She selected his daughter for a companion, saying, "*Come & sit by me, my child. I hear you know so vastly much English. Did not you find it hard?*" "*Not at all, your Majesty.*" "*I thought the *th* & other sounds very hard,*" said the Queen. "*I made nothing of them*", said the little girl. "*Why? How did you learn English, then?*" "*Papa taught it me in the water when I was five years old.*" "*Taught it you in the water,*" cried out the Queen in astonishment, "*What does that mean?*" "*When he went to bathe*", answered the girl, &c. &c. "*In short,*" said Wolf, "*when I went*

to bathe, I took my little daughter with me, & made her sit behind a screen, & while bathing, I used to call out an English word which she wrote down & then another & another, till I had taught her all the sounds of the English in several succeeding lessons." I was quite taken with the good natured talkativeness of the old man, & the fondness with which he dwelt on his knowledge of English. The same daughter of Wolf made, when she was but 14, an abridgement of Walker, in order to become sure of the pronunciation of each word; a vast undertaking for a girl, & so young a girl, rivalled only by the zeal which induced Schlözer to copy a Russian dictionary of some hundred octavo pages, at a time when it was impossible to purchase one.

December 22. I dined today with the late minister, the Baron von Humboldt. I admire his genius. I am astonished at his erudition. In my company were Professor Bekker and Dr. Schleiermacher. He conversed with them on Greek literature, and was as much at home in the Greek poets as they were, nay better. The Baron is well versed even [in] the poets of the latest ages, and is perfectly acquainted with Tryphiodorus, Nonnus and the like. In his manner too I found him very kind and obliging. He understands the art of talking and converses with ease, dignity and spirit. In his house everything is neat and elegant; yet nothing of waste or prodigality is to be seen. Noble economy governs in his family.

A family letter must be given in part to record the young New Englander's impression of the unfamiliar German Christmas.

BERLIN, December 31, 1820.

. . . Christmas is kept in Germany as a most sacred and cheerful festival. On the eve preceding it, the general custom prevails of making presents to one another. All parents, be they poor or rich, have a Christmas gift for each of their children. The circumstances attending the evening donations are exceedingly moving. Mad. de Savigny had invited me to spend the evening at her house; and this gave me a chance of seeing the whole of this beautiful domestic scene. A little evergreen tree, the top or branch of fir, is always placed in the centre of the room, and hung full of little wax candles. This is done in every house—in the houses of the rich with great pro-

fusion of lights. The tree is generally loaded with sweetmeats and gilt apples which glitter charmingly among the candles. The children are long beforehand full of the joy that awaits them at Christmas, and are perfectly happy at receiving these pleasing tokens of parental affection. No festival is looked forward to with such longing expectation, & none celebrated with such sincerity of joy. On reaching the house of Baron Savigny, I found the children assembled in the antechamber, and awaiting with uncertain expectation, the presents destined for them. The Parents were busy in arranging the tables, kindling the lights, and preparing all things in the saloon. At length the signal was given. The Baron rang the merry bell, and the folding doors were thrown open. A bright blaze of light burst upon our eyes. In the centre of a large table a large branch of fir, and two smaller ones on the right and left were fill'd with little tapers, the splendor of which inspired gladness in the hearts of children and men. A Geranium, on each side the large fir, with its perpetual freshness and fragrance, was another emblem of immortality. We all hastened into the apartment. First came the infant son; he found his presents spread on a table so low that he could reach them. The other children followed & rejoiced loudly at finding the very books, clothes, play things they had been long wishing for. The Parents had their good things too which their elder relations had sent them. I, too, found a plate loaded with good things for me—apples, almonds and sweetmeats. At length curiosity was satisfied, each had found his own treasures, and examined those of his neighbors. The tapers on the "*Christ's tree*" were extinguished, and the halls lit up as usual, and while the younger part of the company still continued amusing themselves with their newly acquired playthings, the older ones withdrew to the tea-table, and began an interesting conversation on the wise and good men whom Germany has produced in later years. Young Miss de Savigny gave us tea and inspired us with good nature by her own amiable cheerfulness. She seemed to be about as old as Lucretia. Baron Savigny himself is one of the most distinguished men in the world. He is universally acknowledged to be the first lawyer on the continent, his erudition is immense, his manners plain

and agreeable. His sister-in-law, Mrs. de Arnheim, entertained us with her wit and cultivated understanding, while Mad. de Savigny tempered all things by her gentleness and good nature. . . .

A week later came another celebration, duly described in the diary.

Jan. 2, 1821. The Germans celebrate the last evening in the year. Sylvester evening the members of each family collect together, unless in large companies, & pass the time in the merriest manner possible. Mme. Schleiermacher assured me that 'tis the pleasantest & gayest night in the whole year. They always remain together till the midnight hour has struck, & the new year has fairly entered. Then they bid it welcome, & continue their mirth till nature calls for repose. . . .

I spent the evening at the Countess America Bernstorff's,* a lady whose virtues I so much admire. On entering, I found Sir George Rose† there & family. We had a charming evening, all were so pleasant & willing to be happy. First a little discourse with the Countess, then a little dance, then a few words with the Count, whom I now for the first time saw, entertained me at first. Bye- & bye I entered without knowing it into a most lively conversation with Sir George Rose on the state of religion & theological science in Germany. He had paid great attention to the subject. In our conclusions we united: namely, that the Germans united the most foolish credulity with the most audacious scepticism. Sir Geo. spoke to me of his own habits in his family. He assured [me] that after breakfast he assembles his household & the Chaplain reads the short prayers. Then he himself reads to them a chapter from the Old & a chapter from the New Testament. These he explains, too; & if any points need a learned commentary, he calls on the Chaplain for his exposition. "For", said he, "I think it the highest duty & it ought to be the greatest delight of parents to teach religion to their children. None but the parents should give a child its first ideas of God & of christianity." I was much delighted with Sir George's zeal & religious spirit, tho' grieved at his too strict attach-

ment to the peculiar tenets of the Church of England. Our dialogue continued for a long time, and we seemed to forget that dancing was going on all the while in the adjoining chamber. At last we were interrupted, & I joined the younger part of the company. Presently the musicians played a waltz. I felt a desire to dance & ventured to do so. I got through the waltz for the first time in my life in a correct & easy manner. Then followed the Cotillon, which is a very long but very amusing dance. This too I ventured to dance for the first time. All things went off pleasantly, & all seemed happy. The dance ended; the doors were thrown open, & behold the tables spread for supper. A frugal but excellent & even elegant repast crowned the pleasures of the evening.

To Dr. Kirkland.

BERLIN, February 1, 1821.

. . . The privy counsellor, Wolf, . . . is a genius of the first order; one of the few great men whom it has been my lot to meet with in Germany. Hated by his countrymen, he consoles himself with the consciousness of being the most learned man on the Continent. He has a fondness for the ancient languages, & is alive to the beauties of their literature. Indeed he lives in antiquity, & is in many respects a Roman & no Christian. His merits in illustrating ancient manners & authors, above all the Homeric songs, are universally [paper torn]. He is great in translating too; & where hundreds have contended for the prize, Wolf has excelled them all in turning the old bards into German. Voss had translated Homer in hexameters, giving line for line; Wolf made fragments of a version where he has given syllable for syllable, foot for foot, yea cesura for cesura. The whole herd of translators are defied & dared to attempt the like. Wolf's Latin style is purer than that of any living scholar; and his version of "The Clouds" in the measure of the original proves that no philologist can manage German so artfully as he. Therefore when I see Wolf, I know not which most to admire his high and uncommon mental powers or his vast erudition. But Wolf has neither dignity of character, nor purity of morals. He is stubbornly vain, childish, & licentious. He loves

*Daughter of Gen. Riedesel, commander of Brunswick troops in the American Revolution. She was born, 1780, in New York; hence the name America.

†British Minister at Berlin.

sweetmeats like an infant, & knows better almost than anybody else in Berlin where the best cake is to be had, & at what o'clock it comes warm from the oven. He is now the laziest man, whom I have ever seen; rising after daylight, & going to bed at nine. Even this does not content him; but in the evening he is to be found stretched out on his sofa in a dull, stupid, sleepy lethargy. He is more fond of talking about prostitutes, confectioners, cakes and good eating than of instructing by conversing seriously. Two hours before dinner are spent in walking to

get an appetite; sometimes three. Two hours again pass away at dinner. Who can study immediately after eating a great deal? As soon as the stomach is somewhat relieved 'tis time to go to bed. So passes the old age of a man, who might be one of the most honoured in the world. He makes often very excellent observations, but they are rather recollections of what he once thought, than new ideas, & he talks of his learning, as of something, that was, & the identity of which he no longer feels with his present self. . . .

(To be continued.)

LEFT BEHIND

By Arthur Ruhl

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WALTER APPLETON CLARK



EVERYBODY in the house—in all the world it seemed—was sleeping, but the Vandalia Miler sat up in bed, staring with dry, wide-open eyes at the wall. The dormer room, tucked up under the roof, was stuffy and close and smelled of heat and wall-paper and rag-carpet. Through the little window, from the trees and grass outside, came the steady whirring of the tree-toads and crickets. Suddenly the stillness was broken and the campus clock tolled two. As the harsh note grated on his nerves his heart gave a thump and he threw himself back and buried his face in the hot pillow. It seemed as though he must shut out the world and forget. But he couldn't forget, and you can shut out the world with a pillow—only so long as you can hold your breath. He slipped over the edge of the bed—that ridiculous, high, hot feather-bed—and with his chin in his hands and his elbows on his knees, blinked at the little windows and the patch of moonlight on the floor where the Other Man lay sleeping. And as he watched him, snoring there comfortably in his sleep, his own secret returned again and bit into him, as it had returned so many times that day and night, and all the disappointment and bitterness and despair

of it. And he felt that life had tricked him, cut him off in the flower of his youth and put him on the outside, and he was an outcast with his hand raised against the world.

When they had arrived that night, with a lot of the other teams that had come down for the interscholastics, and had been assigned to that one remaining vacant room, the Other Man had told him to go ahead and take the bed, because, as he explained, a miler needed all the sleep he could get, whereas a bit of wakefulness the night before the games only served to put an edge on a sprinter's nerves. "It'll make me start quicker," said he, spreading a blanket on the floor. That was just like the luck of the Other Man—to give up something and after all to get it back again. And the Vandalia Miler blinked at him, and thought and thought, and wondered whether the Other Man would make the 'varsity in his freshman year. For the Other Man was going away to college and the Vandalia Miler couldn't go. That was his secret, which had been his for only a day, and which he was somehow too proud to tell. That was why he believed that he was an outcast, a pariah—why a shivery abyss yawned between these two old friends, though you might have thought that it was but a yard or two of rag carpet that sepa-