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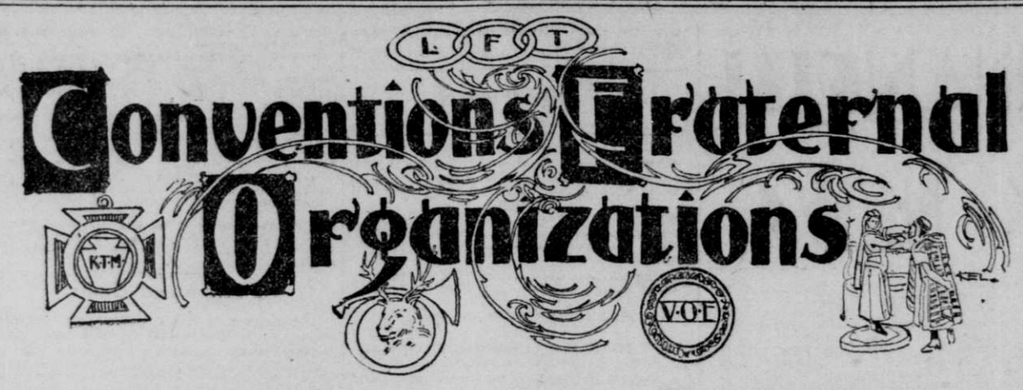

The fraternal organizations are in the midst of their convention season. Yesterday more than six big orders began their regular annual meetings for the election of officers and the transaction of important business. Hundreds of delegates filled the several halls, and several thousand interested members gathered at the various headquarters to listen to annual reports and discuss the welfare of their orders.

ANCIENT FORESTERS IN THE HIGH COURT

Proposition to Abolish Permanent Secretaryship Defeated — Sunday Law Sustained.

At the first session of the Subsidiary High Court of the Ancient Order of Foresters in Foresters' building yesterday there were present 130 delegates, eight members of the executive council and four past high chief rangers. The session was called to order by Subsidiary High Chief Ranger M. Boehm. The chair, after having received the report of the committee on credentials, appointed committees on laws and supervision, state of the order, grievances and appeals, finance and accounts, written and unwritten work, mileage and per diem, on distribution, on time and place of meeting, after which the report of the subsidiary high chief ranger was presented.

The report shows that there was a net gain of 200, despite the fact that sixteen courts had gone out of existence. The January report of 1898 gives the number of courts as 150, membership 7485. Report of March, 1900, shows number of courts 135, membership 7687. Funds of the subordinate courts January 1, 1898, $71,087 63; March 31, 1900, $85,682 74—an increase of $14,597 11 since January 1, 1898.

"Our jurisdiction covers a large territory," said Mr. Boehm, "and our members in the North and East complain of the disadvantages they are under, the order not being properly taken care of in that section by the Subsidiary High Court, that the entire attention is given to one portion only, namely, California, and for this reason have become disheartened. I would recommend that some provision be made at this session by which the entire jurisdiction be strengthened and our order become better known on the Pacific Coast.

A number of proposed amendments to the general laws were taken up and acted upon, one of these, having for its purpose abolishing the office of permanent secretary and creating the office of general secretary to be elected in the same manner as the other officers, was defeated by a vote of 111 noes to 16 ayes.

At the afternoon session the discussion of the proposed amendments was continued. The most important of these was a proposition to strike out from the constitution that section which declares that "no department of this order shall be allowed to transact any business on Sunday; nor shall any picnic, excursion or entertainment of any character be given on that day in the name of the Ancient Order of Foresters. This section shall not be construed to prevent the attendance of a court at the funeral of a member." That and five other amendments were defeated.

To-day the legislative body will be called upon to pass on a proposition to create a general relief fund to be raised by a tax of 5 cents a member quarterly and to be used to assist courts or members in distress. To transfer the management of the official organ to the order; to reduce the per capita tax to 75 cents; the report of the committee appointed to revise the general laws and to establish district courts under the jurisdiction of the Subsidiary High Court.

To-night the delegates, the grand officers and the members generally will be the guests of the Nineteen Hundred Club at a complimentary ball to be given in the Mechanics' Pavilion. To-morrow night there will be a banquet to the incoming and outgoing High Court officers.

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ODD FELLOWS IN THE GRAND LODGE

Report on the Condition of the Order—Grand Master on the Home at Thermalito.

The several hundred representatives, together with the sitting grand officers and the past grands who compose the Grand Lodge of Odd Fellows of California, assembled yesterday morning in the Assembly Hall of the Odd Fellows' building. Taken as a whole, it is one of the finest bodies of representative men that has ever assembled in the name of Odd Fellowship in this city.

The committee on credentials presented its report, after which the Grand Lodge degree was conferred on 250 past grands and the working committees for the session were appointed.

The time of the session until recess was taken up with the reading of the report of Grand Master W. A. Bonynge. In this he calls attention to the fact that four new subordinate lodges were instituted as follows: Westminster No. 72, at Westminster, Orange County; Colonia No. 89, at Oxnard, Ventura County; Commercial No. 387, at Los Angeles, and Boulder Creek No. 152, at Boulder Creek, Santa Cruz County. Also sixteen Rebekah lodges during the year. A great deal of the report refers to his official acts, which he sums up as follows:

During my official term I have instituted in person three subordinate lodges, dedicated two halls, wrote 1043 letters, visited 101 subordinate lodges, seven Rebekah lodges and the home at Thermalito; have traveled 16,227 miles as follows: By rail 10,609 miles, by water 749 miles, and by team 869 miles; have held two special sessions of the Grand Lodge.

Relative to the Odd Fellows' Home at Thermalito, he says, after giving a lengthy account of his observations on a visit to the place:

I am firmly of the belief that a new location for this institution should be sought immediately. If we have no consideration for the sufferings of those poor old people from chills and shaking and fever—from excessive heat in summer—from cold rooms in winter—if we are regardless of the miseries of an isolation such as they have to endure, if we care naught for the extra expense—then Thermalito is as good as any other location, but if we do care for those things and I believe the Odd Fellows of California have only to fully realize the situation in order to furnish the remedy—then let us move the home and let us do it now.

The question has been asked: How can a change be made without imposing too great a burden on the lodges? The answer is obvious; if this Grand Lodge should decide to change the location, let it delegate to some committee authority to receive proposals for a site and report thereon at its next session.

At the afternoon session the report of the grand master, so far as it relates to the Odd Fellows' Home, was made the special order for 10 o'clock this morning, when it will be discussed and it is thought that the discussion will be an exciting one.

The whole of the afternoon session was taken up in the discussion of the report of the Grand Lodge committee on appeals. There are twenty-one of these, and the judgment of the committee was sustained in every case. The appeals of Dunbar vs. Concordia Lodge, Dunlap vs. Sunset Rebekah Lodge, Cunning vs. Mound Lodge, Holbrook vs. San Lorenzo Lodge and Mitchell vs. Bloomfield Lodge were reversed. In the appeals of Petersen vs. California Lodge, Trout vs. San Lorenzo Lodge and Walton vs. Capay Lodge the judgment of each lodge was affirmed. In one case against California Lodge—action on sick benefits—the lodge was directed to investigate the claim, and the appeal of Gumbiner vs. Crockett Lodge was dismissed. The committee on appeals consists of Davis Louderback, S. G. Kellogg, M. G. Gill, J. F. Thompson and G. B. Dean.

The grand officers will be elected to-morrow.

The reports of the grand trustees and grand representatives were read and adopted.

The report of Grand Secretary George T. Shaw shows that at the close of the year the membership in this State was 30,772. The accession during the year was 2284 and the withdrawals from various causes 1885, leaving a net gain of 399. The disbursements during the year amounted to $485,008, of which $269,017 was paid for charity and relief. The average per member for relief was $8 74 and average disbursements per member for current expenses was $7 01. The receipts were $547,682 23, being an excess of $62,678 33 over disbursements. The assets of the order amount to $2,478,904 45.

RAILROAD EMPLOYES HOLD ANNUAL MEETING

Election of Officers of Benefit Association of the Southern Pacific and Other Business.

The Employes' Mutual Benefit Association of the Southern Pacific held its twentieth annual meeting yesterday, electing officers for the ensuing year and transacting some important business.

In view of the temporary abandonment of the Relief Bureau, the association, which had intended to merge into the new scheme, will not go out of existence.

The following officers and directors were elected: E. B. Ryan, president; C. J. Wilder, vice president; J. E. Foulds, W. G. Curtis, B. A. Worthington, E. E. Wade, G. J. Strong, J. N. Sherburne, G. A. Parkyns, directors; N. T. Smith, treasurer, and Miss Anna Cummings, secretary.

The report showed an enrollment of 905 members and paid up death benefits aggregating $120,000. The surplus on hand is $100,500. Three death benefits of $3000 each were ordered paid, one of which will go to the heirs of the late Frank S. Douty.

Sons of Veterans.

The second day's session of the annual encampment of the Sons of Veterans of the United States army, was devoted to but little business, for the officers and delegates were out sight-seeing, being the guests of the United States army. They were taken on the Grace Barton to all the fortifications in the harbor, where the delegates and the ladies who accompanied them were cordially welcomed. In the evening there was a session in the Red Men's building, when the officers elected and those appointed by the new division commander were installed by Frank R. Handley, assisted by A. L. Kneles and W. C. Howe. The appointees are: R. J. Butler of San Jose, aid; E. M. Selby, Jr., of Ventura, inspector; Dr. A. E. Aide of San Bernardino, surgeon; J. A. Stafford of Pasadena, mustering officer; C. W. Davison of San Jose, judge advocate, and Al J. Weinert of Oakland, chaplain. The installation was followed by the presentation of a gold cross of honor to the retiring division commander, Harry T. Moore, by Past Division Commander C. L. Pierce. Then followed a banquet, at which there were responses to toasts by Colonel J. Murray Bailey, Major James Kip, James Ashton, Harrold Ward, J. D. Gish, W. C. Howe, A. G. Bennett, Robert J. Butler and James N. Reynolds.

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REBEKAHS MEET IN STATE ASSEMBLY

Address by Past Grand Master—President Tells of Order and Orphans' Home.

The session of the California Assembly of the Rebekahs, I. O. O. F., opened yesterday morning in the Memorial Hall of the Odd Fellows' building. All the officers were present, as were also several of the past presidents and the delegates, whose names have already been published in The Call.

After the presentation of the report of the committee on credentials and the conferring of the assembly degree on about 200 past noble grands there was an eloquent and encouraging address by Past Grand Master Barnes, after which a recess was taken until 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

At the afternoon session there was a congratulatory address to the delegates by Past Grand Master J. H. Glasson, after which the report of the president, Mrs. Helen M. Carpenter, was read. This shows that during the year she visited 127 lodges and held one special session of the Assembly. It also shows that the total number of members is 17,172; net gain during the year, 700; new lodges instituted, 16; lodges surrendered charters, 2; total number of lodges, 237. On the subject of interest in the order by the members Mrs. Carpenter says:

It is very pleasing to note the increasing favor of white robes and white dresses. The staffs of more than one-half of the lodges visited were thus attired. Some tried it as an experiment and the fact that the lodge robes were utilized in making comforters for the orphans is conclusive evidence of their choice. White is destined to supplant the vari-colored robes manufactured for the market, as it possesses the double advantage of beauty and economy. And, again, what could be more fitting than the color which represents the base of all the grand principles of Odd Fellowship?

In relation to the Orphans' Home at Gilroy, which is under special care of the Rebekahs, she says:

The Orphans' Home is the pride of the Rebekahs, and the lodges generally are deeply interested in the work and are contributing most generously to the support of that institution. A few lodges that have suffered financial straits deplored their inability to gratify their generous inclinations; but such as these needed merely to be apprised of the need and means that are within the easy reach of the least prosperous, to give their hearty assistance. The sisters of Santa Monica furnish a worthy example in devoting one afternoon in each week to Orphans' Home work. Others have donated beyond our greatest expectations, and there seems to be an augmented interest proportionate to the increasing family and its responsibilities. The able management of the home by the board of trustees, down to the minutest details, is worthy the noble women who are giving their time and best thought unstintingly to the cause, wishing no greater reward than the consciousness of duty well performed.

The report shows that during her term the president did a great deal of official work.

The reports of the other officers were received and referred to appropriate committees.

The Assembly is to be presented a set of gavels at to-day's session.

The election of the officers for the ensuing term will be held on Thursday next.

In the evening there was present in the Assembly Hall of the Odd Fellows' building a large number of officers and delegates, before whom the ritualistic work was performed by a team from Templar Lodge. The work memorized, floor and dramatic, was with that degree of perfection for which this lodge's team is noted. A great deal of praise was given to Noble Grand Mrs. Dale Warford and her corps of efficient officers, who have been drilled to their present degree of perfection by Past Noble Grand R. C. Black, who a few evenings ago, as a recognition of his services, was presented by the lodge with a beautiful gold watch appropriately inscribed.

After the work there was an informal reception to the officers and delegates to the Assembly and a short programme of dancing.

PREPARATIONS FOR THEIR ANNUAL GAMES

The Caledonian Club Has Arranged an Excellent Programme for Decoration Day.

Elaborate preparations have been made by the games committee of the Caledonian Club for the thirty-fourth annual gathering and games at Shell Mound Park on Decoration day. The committee consists of the officers of the club and some of the leading members.

The programme consists of forty-one events, thirty of the number being open to all comers. The prizes are numerous and on the usual scale of liberality for which the club is noted. The committee is determined to make this year's games a great success in every respect. Time and money will not be spared to attain that object.

Buena Vista's Anniversary.

Buena Vista Parlor of Native Daughters gave its eighth aninversary ball last night at Native Sons' Hall. The hall was tastefully decorated in white and nile green. The grand march was led by the floor manager, Mrs. Lucia Neubarth, and her assistant, Miss Emma Bening. There were about two hundred couples in the march. The programme was made up of ten numbers with two extras and "only one more in remembrance of Buena Vista." The affair, one of the most select ever given by the parlor, was under the direction of the following committees:

Arrangements — Miss Emma Bening, Mrs. Nellie Dockery, Mrs. Charlotte Eggert, Mrs. Addie Levy, Mrs. Blanche Schmitt, Mrs. Eva Scheeline, Miss May Higgins, Miss Bertha Belau, Miss Emma Anderson, Miss Aggie Surrhyne, Miss Alice Ticoulet, Miss Mollie Long, Miss Adele Ligon, Miss Anna Betkowski, Miss Anna Worth; floor—Mrs. Blanche Schmitt, Mrs. Eva Scheeline, Mrs. Bertha Belau, Miss Alice Ticoulet, Miss Emma Anderson, Miss Adele Ligon, Miss Anna Betkowski, Miss Mollie Long; reception—Mrs. Nellie Dockery, Mrs. Charlotte Eggert, Mrs. Addie Levy, Mrs. Ella Wehe, Mrs. Nellie Rader, Mrs. Mary Bell, Mrs. Tillie Towle, Miss May Higgins, Miss Aggie Surrhyne, Miss Anna Worth.

Veteran Odd Fellows.

The Veteran Odd Fellows' Association of this city held its twenty-fourth annual reunion and annual banquet in a cafe on Powell street last evening. There were present about one hundred and sixty members of the association. President George H. Morrison made a few remarks in introducing the president-elect, F. A. Weck, who responded in a felicitous manner. Following is the programme:

"The Bible a Vital Force in Odd Fellowship," Past President L. L. Alexander, P. G. M.; "The Subordinate Lodge," John Glasson, P. G. M.; song, "The Holy City," Past President Robert Burns; "Woman—Her Influence," Dr. J. D. Kergan; "Veterans—Their Relation to the Order," Past President Charles N. Fox, P. G. M.; "Toleration—the Cement That Holds," John N. Young, P. G.; "Retrospection," Secretary William H. Barnes.

The United States sent $4,910,291 worth of silver direct to China during the fiscal year to February 28.

THE CALL'S HOME STUDY CIRCLE

GOLDEN AGE OF GERMAN LITERATURE.

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GOLDEN AGES OF LITERATURE.

XX—GOETHE AND THE GOLDEN AGE OF GERMAN LITERATURE.

BY ARTHUR H. PALMER, M. A.
(Professor of German literature, Yale University.)

Of the literatures of Europe the German was the last to have its golden age. The four other great European nations succeeded one the other, but all preceded Germany in making their finest contributions to modern culture. A vivid sketch of this general movement made some years ago by a notable German essayist, Karl Hillebrand, may be condensed in outline as follows:

During and immediately after the breaking up of the ideal unity of mediaeval life and thought Italy led the way by her rediscovery and use of the treasure of Greek art and literature; Spain followed, imposing herself upon and dominating literary Europe no less than religious and political Europe. Though now the reformation arose in Germany, it was England that shattered the rule of Spain and became the leader of European thought and letters. Bacon and Shakespeare taught men in defiance of all tradition and authority to observe and record as they are the facts of nature, physical or moral. Next, under the leadership of France, Europe went on to complete the work which the English had begun, of making human reason supreme in religion, politics, art.

Thus, then, in letters and thought we see in successive sway over Europe Italian humanism giving way to Spanish dogmatism, this enforcement of tradition and authority yielding to English empiricism, and the latter breaking down its practical limits and merging into French rationalism.

The turn of Germany to lead and to contribute came at last. The golden age of its primacy extends in its broader limits from the year 1748 to about 1850, or more narrowly from about 1760 to 1825. The golden gift of German literature, philosophy and science during this period to the modern world is the idea of organism. Synthesis, the individual, spontaneity, development, comparison—these are the terms wherein the Germans have led us to think—organism not mechanism.

If our rapid introductory survey has so far seemed philosophic, abstract, it has at least this justification, that during all the period we are now approaching philosophy flourished in Germany no less than poetry, and both were there and then interrelated and reciprocally influential to a degree unknown at any other time or in any other land.

That the great classical period of modern German letters came so late has its sufficient explanation in the thirty years' war—1618-1648. This set Germany back fully 200 years in comparison with France and England. The Germany of the sixteenth century was in material prosperity and social refinement probably superior to the England and the France of that age, and the nation was essentially one in its intellectual culture.

The work of repression and dissolution begun by the religious and political reaction of the second half of the sixteenth century was completed with disastrous thoroughness by the thirty years' war, which destroyed nearly all the national forces of Germany—material, social, intellectual, moral. It may here suffice to state that not until about the year 1850 did Germany again possess the actual, absolute amount of capital and of material prosperity which existed before 1618, and that the spiritual impoverishment of the second half of the seventeenth century was scarcely less in degree than the material exhaustion thus proved. German literature of the early sixteenth century had been essentially national, popular, original. A little more than a century later the thread of historical continuity had been severed, the widest possible gulf opened between the people and what there then was of literature, and this itself had come to be servilely imitative of foreign models.

In short, while the material and spiritual growth of England and France had been and continued to be steadily progressive, it was as if Germany right after 1648 had to recreate both nationality and literature. This was indeed a stupendous task, the accomplishment of which is not the least interesting part of modern history.

The details of the slow and unimpressive foundation-laying that lasted for more than a century we must here leave unconsidered, passing at once to the middle of the eighteenth century, when there appeared the immediate beginnings of modern German literature. Goethe has written: "The first real living content, true and high, came into German literature through Frederick the Great and the deeds of the seven years' war." That is to say, as the causes and results of the thirty years' war had drained and deadened national life and literature, so now the causes and results of the seven years' war (1756-63) brought vital energy in abounding measure to both, and the outcome in the latter was the golden age of German literature.

The characteristic writers of the age may be conveniently divided into three main groups, which follow one another at intervals of about twenty years. To the first group belong Klopstock, Wieland, Lessing, Winckelmann, Kant, Moses Mendelssohn. With the exception of Kant their influence was exerted by works published between the years 1750 and 1770. In the second group are Herder, Goethe, Schiller, Voss, Klinger, Bürger, most of whose work in creating and guiding was done between 1770 and 1800. The notable members of the third group, whose principal writings determined the romanticism of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, are the brothers Schlegel and Tieck, the brothers Humboldt, Niebuhr and Savigny. Of all the important later writings up to the middle of the nineteenth century it may be said that essentially they used only the great ideas, theories and art principles of the above described groups.

Of commanding preëminence among all those names are those of the six great poet minds whom a kind Providence equipped with transcendent creative genius and lavished within so short a time upon the German people. Most naturally do these six writers arrange themselves in three complementary pairs— Klopstock and Wieland, Lessing and Herder, Goethe and Schiller. After rather summary treatment of the first two pairs we shall attempt a pregnant characterization of him whom so many look upon as the greatest man of modern times, and reserve for a following brief article a discussion of his companion, the first dramatist of Germany.

Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock was born in 1724 at Quedlinburg. He studied theology—1745 to 1748—at the universities of Leipzig and Jena. In 1751 the art-loving King, Frederick V of Denmark, called him to Copenhagen, and there Klopstock remained twenty years. After the death of his patron he lived almost continuously in or near Hamburg, where in 1803 he died, honored as the patriarch of modern German literature. His fame rests upon his many lyric poems and mainly upon his masterpiece, "The Messiah," nominally a religious epic in twenty cantos, singing Christ's death, resurrection and ascension, the chief beauties of which, however, are also lyrics in their nature. Indeed, as regards the form and style of his great work Klopstock ought never to have been called the German Milton; he is rather a literary Bach or Händel, and his work a literary oratorio in its profuse blending of lyric arias and dramatic choruses with epic recitative.

Christoph Martin Wieland was born near Biberach, in Wurtemberg, in 1733, and died in 1813 at Weimar, whither he was called by Duchess Amalia in 1772 as tutor of her sons. His youthful writings, influenced by Klopstock and Plato, were followed by a period of revulsion from their pietistic strain to delight in the world and the pleasures of sense. Finding the golden mean, he was at the height of his power during the first decade of his residence in Weimar. His notable novels are "Agathon" (1766), "The Inhabitants of Abdera" (1774) and "Peregrinus Proteus" (1791). He wrote many comic tales in verse, an epic-didactic poem, "Musarion" (1768), and other shorter and longer epics in verse. He first naturalized Shakespeare in Germany by translating in prose a large portion of his plays. Wieland's masterpiece is the romantic epic, "Oberon" (1780), in which chivalry, the Orient and fairy lore are charmingly interwoven.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE.

By his own writings and his long editorship of a popular literary journal Wieland made German style more fluent and elegant, won over the higher classes from French to German literature and popularized English and French philosophy. The mature Klopstock was more national, religious, idealistic and withal English in his literary sympathies. Wieland was healthily cosmopolitan, rationalistic, realistic and appreciative of French excellence.

Through the labors of the German writers prior to the time at which we have now arrived Germany had been brought into the movement of the best European culture and was rapidly assimilating that culture. It was, however, necessary for the German spirit independently to react upon this foreign stimulus. The leaders of this reaction were Lessing and Herder.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, born in 1729, at Kamenz, in Upper Lusatia, died in 1781 at Braunschweig, is one of the great critics of modern times in literature and art, and the founder of the modern German drama. He freed not Germany alone but the entire modern world from the conventional classicism of the French, while on the positive side he created a small number of literary masterpieces, uniting Wieland's realism and Klopstock's idealism.

The chief critical writings of Lessing were "Letters on the Latest Literature" (1759-60), "Laokoon" (1766), "Hamburg Dramaturgy" (1767). Of the "Laokoon" Goethe declared: "It transported us from the region of petty observation into the free fields of thought. * * * The difference between plastic art and poetry was made clear. * * * All previous criticism was thrown away like a worn-out coat."

The epoch-making dramas of Lessing were "Miss Sara Sampson" (1755), the first German tragedy of common life; "Minna von Barnhelm" (1767), the first classic German comedy; "Emilia Galotti" (1772), the first classic German tragedy, and "Nathan the Wise" (1779), a dramatic poem, his chief production in pure literature, a beautiful poetic presentation of his best thought and feeling in the domain of religion.

To this thought and feeling he gave more systematic statement in the short prose work, "The Education of the Human Race" (1780), in which is clearly set forth the previously foreshadowed idea of organic growth in religion. It was of this brief treatise that the philosopher and theologian, James Martineau, wrote the words: "Nor shall we ever forget the wonder and delight, the awful sense of intellectual space, brought to us by the Grand essay." To the very end, then, Lessing's influence was most powerful for the throwing off of spiritual fetters and for positive construction.

As Lessing's complement on the side of emotion and intuition came the younger Johann Gottfried Herder, born in 1744 near Konigsberg, died 1803 at Weimar. When a student of philosophy and theology at Konigsberg he was profoundly influenced by the great Kant, by Hamann, by the works of Rousseau and Lessing. After successive teaching, preaching and traveling he became in 1776 the head of the ecclesiastical affairs of the duchy of Weimar. His purely original poetic productions are not important. It is in his prose works of criticism and history and in his translations that his power lay.

The remarkable critical writings of Herder were "Fragments on Modern German Literature" (1766) and "Critical Collections" (1769). The "Fragments" have been called by high authority "the most suggestive book perhaps ever written," which "ran through Germany with the quickness of a train of gunpowder." Herder's great work relative to history was his "Ideas on a Philosophy of the History of Mankind" (1784-91), a "memorable book, which has been father to all the histories of poetry, religion, language and law of our (nineteenth) century."

Herder was a great personality and a mighty prophet of the two all-pervasive ideas of organic growth, or evolution, and of genius, so that "No one, Kant perhaps alone excepted, has contributed more to the stock of German thought, or has exercised greater or more lasting influence over an age, a nation or of the world at large, than Herder. Directly or indirectly, he revolutionized learning, history and literature, as Kant reconstructed philosophy."

Note—This study will be concluded tomorrow.