It was a short Essay on the different Schools of Greek Poe­try, which appeared in the *Berlinn Monatsehrift,* displaying not only an erudition of considerable depth and extent, but an elegance of style and a clearness of classification less fre­quently to be found among his countrymen. Two little treatises followed, composed in 1795 and 1796; the Dio- tema, a view of the condition of the female sex in Greece ; and a parallel between Cæsar and Alexander, which, how­ever, was not published till twenty-six years afterwards. In this work we trace the first indications of that talent which was afterwards so conspicuously displayed in the field of philosophical and critical history.

A more important work, entitled the Greeks and Romans, appeared in 1797. which was highly praised by Heine. It was followed two or three years afterwards by a His­tory of Greek Poetry, in which, taking Winkelmann’s His­tory of Art as his model, he has thrown into criticism an imaginative and poetical tone, which, combining as it did with profound learning and breadth of philosophical views, succeeded in bringing before the mind the true spirit of antiquity, with a freshness and distinctness of portraiture which mere erudition could not have effected. The work, however, is incomplete. In the portion which is finished, but which was afterwards considerably modified, and in­corporated with another work, Frederick Schlegel reviews the Orpheic poetry, which he considers to be of the age of Hesiod ; the Homeric poems, his criticism on which forms indeed the most important and the best executed part of the work ; the Hesiodic epos ; the middle epos, or the works of the Cydic poets ; and, lastly, the productions of the Ionic, Æolic, and Doric schools of lyric poetry. The portion of the work which treats of the lyric poets is un­finished ; nothing indeed but a few fragments, full of pro­mise, affording an imperfect idea of the style in which it would have been executed. The strong hold, in fact, which the literary scepticism of Wolff had taken of the German mind, and the ardent application of his principles, not merely to the Homeric poems, but to all compositions claiming a re­mote antiquity, appear to have discouraged Schlegel from persevering, and the work accordingly was dropt.

In 1799 he published his Lucinde, a work, as Mrs Austin describes it, “ of fancy, sentiment, and reflection,” in which, however, the very anti-platonic character of his descriptions of love occasioned not a little scandal and censure. What the precise object of the author in this equivocal novel was, may admit of question, though, perhaps, it is not unaptly characterized by a German critic as a fantastic and dreamy attempt to exalt and sublimate sensual love. Certain it is, that the public in general conceived, and not without some reason, that, like Hemse’s Ardinghello, it was an elaborate effort to invest sensuality with grace, and to lavish a poetical colouring on scenes and incidents of a very questionable character. Frederick Schlegel appears to have felt that the cold reception of this philosophical experiment was not without foundation ; for though he threatened the public in the *Europa* with a continuation, the work remained a frag­ment. In the year 1800 he established himself as a private teacher in Jena, where he delivered a course of philosophi­cal lectures with success. His first poetical compositions, which appeared in the Athenæum, seem to have been the productions of this period. In 1801 he published, in con­junction with his brother Augustus W. Schlegel, two vo­lumes, entitled *Characteristiken und Critiken,* one of the most popular and pleasing of his works. The second vo­lume includes his Hercules Musagetes, an elegiac poem of some length ; and in 1802 he published a tragedy, Alarcos, in which he has tried, with no remarkable success, to im­part the severe and gloomy simplicity of Æschylus to a le­

gend of the middle ages. In fact, it is neither as a lyric nor as a dramatic poet that the name of Frederick Schlegel is likely to be remembered. Goethe, at least, always appeared to estimate the poetical talent of Schlegel at a low standard.@@1 Still he may fairly be admitted to possess a chaste classical diction, great harmony and flexibility of diction, with con­siderable tenderness, while in the poetical compositions which he wrote on patriotic subjects there appears real feeling and enthusiasm. In boldness and originality of con­ception his poetry is unquestionably deficient ; and, on the whole, it may be said that the philosophical element pre­ponderates in the character of Frederick Schlegel, nearly as much as the poetical does in that of his brother.

But the study of the poetry and literature of the west was near about to be exchanged for that of the eastern na­tions. Following in the footsteps of Sir William Jones, and filled with the idea of the important additions which might be made to Europe by naturalizing in Germany the results of Indian research, and of the still greater benefits which he conceived might be derived from the pursuit of Indian li­terature, philosophy, and antiquities, in an enlarged, philo­sophical, and at the same time religious spirit, he resolved to devote himself to the study of Sanscrit. He probably overrated, on the whole, both the importance of the labour in which he was about to engage, and its probable interest to the public mind. With a view, however, to his intended investigations, he repaired to Paris in 1802, accompanied by his wife, the daughter of the celebrated Moses Mendel­sohn, and, with the assistance afforded by the valuable stores of the National Library, and the hints derived from those distinguished orientalists, MM. de Langlès and Chézy, he is said to have made considerable progress in the study of Persian and Sanscrit poetry.

But he was by no means so entirely absorbed in his new task as not to find time for other studies, having contrived during his residence in France, which continued till 1805, to deliver a course of lectures on metaphysics, which appear to have met with but partial success ; a result by no means surprising, w hen the lofty and Platonic character of Schlegel’s philosophy is contrasted with the strong material tendencies which had long encumbered the metaphysical views of the French. During the same period he wrote a variety of articles on the early Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Pro­vençal poetry ; and published, in 1804, a collection of the ro­mantic poems of the middle ages, and a series of letters on the different schools and epochs of Christian painting and Gothic architecture, a work for which the temporary con­centration of the various treasures of modem art in the Pa­risian capital afforded ample materials. These letters, which he afterwards revised and enlarged, form one of the most pleasing of his compositions. He takes up the subject nearly where Winkelmann had left it, and performs, in the same spirit of love, the same service for the arts of the middle ages, which that critic had done for those of antiquity.

It was at this period of Frederick Schlegel’s life (1805) that he took the step which occasioned so much surprise in some quarters, and such bitter hostility and censure in others, namely, his forsaking the tenets of the Protestant church, in which he had been brought up, and embracing Catholicism, as Count Stolberg had done a few years be­fore. His conversion was ascribed by Voss, who, in ad­dition to the rancour of religious opposition, was probably influenced by the jealousy of literary rivalry, to the most unworthy and interested motives, as resulting entirely from a time-serving spirit, and the prospect of honours and pro­motion in the service of Austria, which Protestant Ger­many was less likely to supply. Now that personal ani­mosity is at an end, it seems to be conceded that there is

**@@@, Characteristics of Goethe, vol. i. p. 120.**