

"Bei aller verschmähten Liebe, beim höllischen Elemente!

Ich wollt', ich wüsst' was ärger's, das ich fluchen könnte!"

It is in truth no hyperbole on the part of a lover when he calls his beloved's coldness, or the joy of her vanity, which delights in his suffering, _cruelty_. For he has come under the influence of an impulse which, akin to the instinct of animals, compels him in spite of all reason to unconditionally pursue his end and discard every other; he cannot give it up. There has not been one but many a Petrarch, who, failing to have his love requited, has been obliged to drag through life as if his feet were either fettered or carried a leaden weight, and give vent to his sighs in a lonely forest; nevertheless there was only one Petrarch who possessed the true poetic instinct, so that Goethe's beautiful lines are true of him:

"Und wenn der Mensch in seiner Quaal verstummt,

Gab mir ein Gott, zu sagen, wie ich leide."