

By March 1817 he had completed the preparatory work of his system, and began to put the whole thing together; a year later *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*: vier Bücher, nebst einem Anhange, der die Kritik der Kantischen Philosophie enthält ("The World as Will and Idea; four books, with an appendix containing a criticism on the philosophy of Kant"). Some delay occurring in the publication, Schopenhauer wrote one of his characteristically abusive letters to Brockhaus, his publisher, who retorted "that he must decline all further correspondence with one whose letters, in their divine coarseness and rusticity, savoured more of the cabman than of the philosopher," and concluded with a hope that his fears that the work he was printing would be good for nothing but waste paper, might not be realised.[2] The work appeared about the end of December 1818 with 1819 on the title-page. Schopenhauer had meanwhile proceeded in September to Italy, where he revised the final proofs. So far as the reception of the work was concerned there was reason to believe that the fears of Brockhaus would be realised, as, in fact, they came practically to be. But in the face of this general want of appreciation, Schopenhauer had some crumbs of consolation. His sister wrote to him in March (he was then staying at Naples) that Goethe "had received it with great joy, immediately cut the thick book, and began *instantly* to read it. An hour later he sent me a note to say that he thanked you very much and thought that the whole book was good. He pointed out the most important passages, read them to us, and was greatly delighted.... You are the only author whom Goethe has ever read seriously, it seems to me, and I rejoice." Nevertheless the book did not sell. Sixteen years later Brockhaus informed Schopenhauer that a large

number of copies had been sold at waste paper price, and that he had even then a few in stock. Still, during the years 1842-43, Schopenhauer was contemplating the issue of a second edition and making revisions for that purpose; when he had completed the work he took it to Brockhaus, and agreed to leave the question of remuneration open. In the following year the second edition was issued (500 copies of the first volume, and 750 of the second), and for this the author was to receive no remuneration. "Not to my contemporaries," says Schopenhauer with fine conviction in his preface to this edition, "not to my compatriots--to mankind I commit my now completed work, in the confidence that it will not be without value for them, even if this should be late recognised, as is commonly the lot of what is good. For it cannot have been for the passing generation, engrossed with the delusion of the moment, that my mind, almost against my will, has uninterruptedly stuck to its work through the course of a long life. And while the lapse of time has not been able to make me doubt the worth of my work, neither has the lack of sympathy; for I constantly saw the false and the bad, and finally the absurd and senseless, stand in universal admiration and honour, and I bethought myself that if it were not the case, those who are capable of recognising the genuine and right are so rare that we may look for them in vain for some twenty years, then those who are capable of producing it could not be so few that their works afterwards form an exception to the perishableness of earthly things; and thus would be lost the reviving prospect of posterity which every one who sets before himself a high aim requires to strengthen him." [3]