

THE YOUNG NIETZSCHE.

Friedrich Nietzsche is most widely known as the originator of the philosophy of the superman who, by virtue of his superiority to the rest of the world, is not bound by the ordinary rules of morality and duty which are imposed upon his less distinguished fellows. This is a convenient doctrine for those who claim to be supermen, and, as Nietzsche has provided no test, such a claim is open to anyone who has sufficient impudence to make it. Naturally, this doctrine has aroused considerable opposition, and we have come to think of it as Nietzsche's sole work. This is quite an erroneous impression, and in "The Young Nietzsche" Frau Forster-Nietzsche, his sister, seeks to correct it. "The Young Nietzsche," she says, "and his works seem to have been buried and forgotten. All the fuss has been made in connection with the older solitary Nietzsche. The latter, however, can be properly understood only on condition that the image of the younger man is already impressed in sharp outline on the mind of the reader."

The author begins the biography of her subject with his birth at Rocken in 1844, and gives a detailed account of his ancestry, birth, and adolescence. These do not show any marked differences from those of any intelligent child, and even in his university days, which he commenced at Bonn at the age of 20, he is far from showing signs of becoming the intellectual hermit of a later period. He entered into all the amusements of the German student, reluctantly, says his sister, but his own letters seem to imply that he managed to extract a good deal of pleasure from their convivialities. However, at Leipzig, where he next proceeded, he took a more serious view of life, and his proficiency in his studies won him at 25 the appointment of Professor of Classical Philology at Basle University. Here he came under the influence of Schopenhauer, and gradually evolved his own distinctive philosophy.

The author closes her story with his thirty-second year, which marked his life into two divisions. Hitherto he had been "the young, hopeful, and trustful Nietzsche, who, with a colossal faith in his ideals and friends, marched courageously towards the future, the graduate who, in the early seventies, felt himself to be in possession of his greatest powers, and who seemed full of fire, buoyancy, and self-reliance." After that date he gradually became the "solitary Nietzsche," intellectually aloof from the world, and the author of a subversive philosophy.

Frau Forster-Nietzsche proposes to treat of this later period in a subsequent volume, which, if the present one be a criterion, will be an exceedingly interesting account of his life history. "This life history is important that it presents us with one great problem; for it is a problem that Friedrich Nietzsche, who derided our present moral values, or, at least, traced them to sources absolutely unsuspected hitherto—this transvaluer of all values—should himself have fulfilled all the loftiest and most subtle demands made by the morality now preached among us, and he did not do

now preached among us, and he did not do this because of any moral imperative, but from a perfectly cheerful inability to act otherwise."—(Heinemann.)