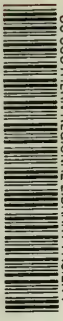


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SOCIAL FORCES
IN
GERMAN LITERATURE,
A Study in the History of Civilisation.

BY
KUNO FRANCKE, PH. D.,
Professor of German Literature, in Harvard
University.

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Glimpses of
Modern German Culture

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Professor at Harvard University

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TO MY WIFE

R. F. 28

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INTRODUCTORY.

THE CONFLICTS OF MODERN GERMANY.

GERMANY is at present the classic land of moral contrasts. Nowhere is the conflict between the powers temporal and spiritual, between traditional creeds and personal convictions, between autocracy and freedom being waged with greater intensity or deeper rooted bitterness. Nowhere is there such a variety of parties bent on mutual annihilation.

The strife between church and state which in the seventies flamed up with such a sinister glare, is at present smouldering under the ashes. But it would be a mistake to think that the passions which at that time seemed to set the whole nation on fire had spent their force. As long as

there is on the one hand a centralised empire claiming absolute control over the intellectual and moral training of all its subjects, on the other an infallible papacy claiming superhuman authority and demanding unconditional submission to its divine laws, there can be no real and enduring public peace, there can be at best a temporary cessation of hostilities, and at any moment the perennial dispute between king and pontiff may break out again.

Even less veiled than this war between the powers temporal and spiritual is the conflict between monarchy and democracy. There can be no doubt that this is the real point at issue between the Socialist labour party and the imperial Government. On the surface it is a question of labour organisation, of the distribution of wealth, of strikes and wages; at bottom it is a question of life and death between the divine right of kings and popular autonomy. Well

enough do the upholders of the monarchy know that the Socialist state of the future is a harmless utopia, a humanitarian dream which would vanish into air at the first real attempt to put it into practice. This is not what they fear. What they do fear and what they resist with the grim ardour of men attacked in the very stronghold of their innermost convictions is the undermining of military authority, the shattering of the belief in the royalist legend, the spread of republican ideas—the real dangers to the monarchy which the Socialist propaganda of the last twenty-five years has conjured up. Hence the wholesale prosecution of Socialist editors, the endless trials for lese majesty, the organised efforts to suppress free thought by means of an approved theology, the ever repeated attempts to curtail the political franchise,—measures of war which, of course, have no other effect but to strengthen and ce-

ment the ranks of the opposition and to inspire them with a determined devotion to a cause which is glorified by martyrdom.

And the same thorough-going, one might say exalted, fierceness characterises the third great struggle that disturbs the public peace of Germany: the struggle between industrial bondage and industrial freedom. Nowhere are the lines between employer and employed more sharply drawn than in Germany, nowhere is there more of class feeling. But this very fact has given to the German labour movement a compactness and solidarity superior to that of most other countries; it has imbued it with a firm belief in the final victory of right that has something of a religious fervour; it has made it a movement of an eminently educational character; and I am inclined to think that the Socialist workingmen of Germany stand higher than the workingmen of most other countries in

intellectual drill, in political discipline, and in respect for the ideal concerns of life.

These are the contradictions of public life in contemporary Germany. But there are contradictions also in the individual life of the cultivated German of to-day: above all the contradiction between the materialistic tendencies of our own, predominantly scientific age and the ideal cravings bequeathed to us by a past excelling in literary and aesthetic refinement. In no single individual has this contrast received a more striking embodiment than in that strangely paradoxical poet-philosopher, whose rhapsodic, half inspired, half crazy utterances have had such a dazzling, though stimulating, influence on the present generation of German writers and artists: I mean, of course, in Friedrich Nietzsche. Here we see on the one hand a most delicate perception of the finest operations of the mind, a penetrating analysis of the most tender instincts and longings of the human soul,

a revelling in artistic enjoyment, a glorification of the most sublimated culture—and on the other hand, a savage delight in the underlying selfishness and brutality of all life, a ruthless exaltation of might over right, a diabolical contempt for spiritual endeavour, an hysterical apotheosis of the “blond beast,” of the “Ueberschensch,” and of cavalier morality. No wonder that Nietzsche himself in this whirlpool of conflicting emotions should have lost his balance, that the night of insanity should have closed in upon him and extinguished the lights of that exultant life which he loved so much.

I have laid emphasis on the multitude of moral conflicts that beset contemporary Germany, not from any desire to paint gloom, but on the contrary, because I think that from the very friction of these opposing tendencies there has arisen the new life in art and literature which is characterised by such names as Wildenbruch,

Sudermann, Hauptmann, Boecklin. Novalis has defined individual genius as a plurality of personalities combined in one. Similarly, one might say that the German people is at present giving signs of genius because of the variety of opposing ideals which are struggling for supremacy in the national heart. He would be of little faith, indeed, who would deplore this struggle as a sign of national disintegration.

The following sketches (nine of which have previously appeared in *The Nation*, four in *The Bookman*, one in *The Atlantic*) are a slight attempt to describe some of the symptoms of the eager activity indicated in the preceding remarks. Written partly in Berlin, partly in Cambridge, under the immediate impression of the moment, they disclaim explicitly the sober impartiality of second thought; although readers familiar with my "Social Forces in German Literature" will find here the same basis of fundamental convictions.

I.—THE LEIBNIZ DAY OF THE
BERLIN ACADEMY OF
SCIENCES

JULY, 1895.

It is eminently fitting that the Berlin Academy should annually celebrate the memory of Leibniz—not only because Leibniz was the virtual founder of this, the foremost of Germany's learned institutions, but chiefly because he was the first great representative among the Germans of what is implied in the somewhat unfortunate term, modern culture. Leibniz stands midway between Luther and Goethe. He first reduced to philosophic reasoning the individualistic view of the universe which had been at the bottom of the Reformation movement, and which was to find its fullest artistic expres-

sion in the classic epoch of eighteenth-century literature. At a time when the Thirty Years' War and its disastrous consequences had crushed all national hopes, his philosophy formed a rallying-point for higher-striving minds, and opened up the prospect of an ultimate, though distant, resurrection of the German people.

If Descartes, Locke, and even Spinoza look at the world as a huge mechanism in which there is little room left for spontaneous activity and self-assertion, Leibniz considers it as an aggregate of an infinite multitude of independent intellectual forces. There is mind in everything. The body is nothing but mind contracted into form: "Omne corpus est mens momentanea." Between plant, animal, and man there is a difference of degree only, not of quality. The whole world is engaged in a process of continual change, transition, perfection. There is an unbroken line of

development from the sleeping life of a seed-corn to the free consciousness of a full-grown man; from the gloomy egotism of the savage to the broad, enlightened charity of the sage. God is the supreme wisdom and the supreme love. From an infinite number of possible worlds he has chosen the actual world as the best. He has created it, and is therefore outside of it: but he has constituted it in such a manner, that it needs no guidance except through its own intrinsic laws. He has so arranged it that all individual forces work together harmoniously and for a common end. Evil itself is only a less perfect good. An admiring insight into this harmony of the universe is man's highest happiness and virtue. It is happiness, because it gives us trust in the reasonableness of things and makes us accept all that may befall us, pain no less than pleasure, as the dispensation of a divine providence. It is

virtue, because it helps us to overcome all littleness, puts before us the ideal of a complete existence, and teaches us through self-perfection to take part in the betterment of the race.

Strange and enigmatic as this curious mixture of scientific ideas and mythological images must appear to an age which has accustomed itself to approach all questions without the bias of the supernatural, it is none the less clear that the leading thought of the nineteenth century, the idea of organic evolution, is here at least foreshadowed. And however well deserved the fame of Leibniz the antiquarian, the linguist, the mathematician, the exact investigator, may be, his true significance lies in this divinatorial conception of the world as a living whole.

Both the environment and the spirit of the assemblage which, the day before yesterday, gathered in the modest hall of the

Berlin Academy of Sciences to do homage to this great man, were thoroughly characteristic of the prevailing tendencies—patent or hidden—in modern German life. Perhaps the most conspicuous thing about it was the complete absence of anything even approaching public interest in the matter. Suppose there were some stated day on which the memory of Locke or Hume was celebrated at Harvard University—a day on which men like William James, John Fiske, Brinton, Gildersleeve, Child (to take at random a few names suggested by the thought of a possible American Academy) could be heard or seen—a day, moreover, which would lend itself naturally to the most delightful afternoon teas and receptions—a day on which the latest spring gown could be worn to the best advantage; then all the elements necessary for a most emphatically social time in the electric cars between Boston and

Cambridge would be given. The Berlin public evidently are so saturated with intelligence and culture that they are above the vulgar desire to see and hear distinguished men. And thus it happened that the Leibniz day of the Royal Academy, an occasion in which men of world-wide fame, like Mommsen, Curtius, Virchow, Harnack, Du Bois-Reymond, were sure to participate, attracted, apart from the friends and guests of the Academicians themselves, not more than a little group of students and foreign visitors—all told, an audience of some three hundred people; while in the daily press it was hardly mentioned, either before or after.

Another characteristic feature of the meeting—and a most agreeable one—was its absolute simplicity and freedom from formality. The only official representative of the Government present was Dr. Bosse, the Minister of Public Instruction, and he

was a few minutes late. That Mommsen, the presiding officer, did not wait for him in opening the proceedings, seemed to me an accident of almost symbolical significance. Bureaucracy and militarism have not yet penetrated into the sanctuary of science, thank God! Not a single uniform was to be seen in the audience; not a single lady whom one would have felt tempted to address with "Gnädige Frau." The predominant types were earnest, unpretentious, and determined-looking men, and simple and benevolent-looking housewives. Even boys and girls were there, sitting quietly and modestly with their parents. It was altogether a family affair of Berlin's best men.

To me the most interesting figure was Mommsen. He sat by the side of Curtius, and the two together appeared an almost perfect embodiment of the ideal scholar. Curtius, though he has rallied from his re-

cent accident with wonderful elasticity, yet gives the impression of one whose thoughts do not dwell any longer on this earth. The far-away look of his eye and the melancholy smile that plays around his lips—these characteristic expressions of his essentially lyric temper—have been accentuated by the approach of the end, and surround him more than ever with a curious dreamy charm. Mommsen, on the other hand, seems to have been only steeled and invigorated by old age. His voice is as keen and penetrating as ever, his eye has still the same inexorable, sibylline glance as of old; and the sarcastic lines that run from nose to chin are perhaps even more marked than they used to be. But, at the same time, there is spread over his face a certain softness which was formerly absent, and the nervousness of his manner has entirely disappeared.

The exercises of the day consisted in an

opening address by Mommsen, in the intiation, also by Mommsen, of some newly elected members, among them Erich Schmidt and Adolf Erman; and in a memorial address on Helmholtz by Du Bois-Reymond. While the latter was in the main biographical, and offered little that was either new or of universal interest, there was a terseness, a poignancy, a freedom in all that Mommsen said, which was simply irresistible. The central subject of his remarks was the relation of the specialist to the whole system of human knowledge. "Are we truly assembled here in the spirit of Leibniz?" he asked. "Can we truly call ourselves his disciples?" The answer to this question seems at first sight to be a negative one. To Leibniz the individual fact had no significance except as a link in the whole of a well-rounded and complete view of the world; and he himself mastered all the details of a systematic

view of the world which was the fruit of his own thought and his own researches in nearly every domain of science. To us the isolated fact is only too often the final goal of investigation; and as for mastering the system of knowledge as a whole, none of us is a master, we are all journeymen. "*Unser Werk lobt keinen Meister; nicht wir beherrschen die Wissenschaft, die Wissenschaft beherrscht uns.*" If, then, through specialisation of work we have lost the universal culture and true humanity which for Leibniz was still attainable, it would yet be a grave mistake to condemn on that account the tendency of specialisation. On the contrary, it is the specialist—i. e., the specialist who looks beyond the isolated fact—who is to lead us back to culture and humanity. Only from him can we expect the elucidation of the organic unity of all knowledge; only he can penetrate to the one source of all life. It is, therefore, he,

and not the compiler, who truly represents the conception of science as an organic whole; and of him more truly than of any one else can it be said that he walks in the footsteps of Leibniz.

While this was the general trend of Mommsen's discourse, it was perfectly apparent that through it all there ran an undercurrent of protest against recent political developments, against the autocratic rule of the present Emperor and the constantly growing overbearance of Prussian officialdom. It was undoubtedly intended for the ears of the Minister of Public Instruction, who, by the way, sat directly opposite him, when Mommsen remarked that the time seemed forever gone when a distinguished scholar like Wilhelm von Humboldt could at the same time be a Prussian Minister of State. It was an unmistakable reproof of the Emperor's extraordinary treatment of the venerable Von Sybel

when Mommsen spoke of the relation of Frederick the Great—"Friedrichs des *Einzigigen*"—to the members of the Academy as something which would be simply impossible at present. It was a direct condemnation of contemporary Byzantinism and a plea for a freer and nobler view of life than that held by modern worshipers of might, when in the words of welcome addressed to Erich Schmidt, he called it the task of the historian of German literature "to lead the age of William back to the age of Schiller and Goethe." And thus there was heard even in this peaceful gathering an echo of the conflict which is dividing modern Germany into two hostile camps—a conflict of which we thus far have witnessed only the beginning.

II.—THE SOCIALIST SITUATION

AUGUST, 1895.

THE little town of Kolberg in Pomerania, so famous for the bravery displayed by its citizens during the Napoleonic invasion, was recently the scene of a somewhat remarkable incident. As is not unusual in German watering-places, the bathing establishments of Kolberg are under the supervision of the municipal government, and the principal hotel of the town, the so-called Strandschloss, is city property. As the dining-hall of this hotel is the largest hall in the town, it has come to be the customary meeting-place for political parties of every description. Some weeks ago Bebel, the Socialist leader, was to give an address in Kolberg. The local committee

of the Socialist party applied to the mayor for the use of the Strandschloss hall on this occasion, and the mayor, himself a Liberal of long standing and a man without any Socialistic affiliations, granted the request. The meeting took place, and is universally reported to have been perfectly orderly and well behaved.

So far so good. But now the matter begins to be interesting. No sooner have the state authorities, the Landrat of the district of Kolberg and the Regierungs-Präsident of the province of Pomerania, been informed of the mayor's compliance with the Socialist petition than they divine treason. The Landrat endeavours to induce the commander of the Kolberg garrison to withdraw the regimental band from the daily concerts in the Strandschloss Park; the Regierungs-Präsident countermands an official dinner which was to be held in the Strandschloss, and, at

the same time, requests from the mayor a prompt justification of the motives that have led him to an act calculated to endanger the commercial interests as well as the good repute of the city of Kolberg. And when the mayor, in his reply, declares his conduct to have been actuated by the demands of simple, common justice, he is fined to the amount of ninety marks for misbehaviour and neglect of duty.

Extraordinary as these facts are, they receive their proper relief only through the correspondence between *Regierungs-Präsident* and mayor occasioned by them. The *Regierungs-Präsident* distinctly affirms it to be incompatible with good morals and public decency to have any relations whatsoever with "a party which has written the overthrow of the existing social order, of the monarchy, and the Christian religion on its banner." The mayor asserts with equal directness that to deprive the Social-

ists of the rights granted to all other political parties is simply shutting one's eyes to the fact that of all German parties they are, numerically at least, the strongest:

“He who does not want to sit where Socialists have sat, will nowadays be somewhat embarrassed to find a seat anywhere in Germany; at least he cannot any longer travel in railway carriages. What we eat and drink is for the most part made by Socialists. Our clothes have been manufactured by Socialist workingmen. You cannot live in a new house in the building of which Socialists have not been engaged. In short, to avoid Socialists or to stigmatise them as a class outside of the pale of respectable society is an absolutely futile task. Only by acknowledging them as a public factor on an equality with all other public factors can the social peace be furthered.”

In this Kolberg incident we have in a nutshell the whole of the political situation

in Germany with regard to Socialism. The Government, on the one hand, since the defeat of the famous anti-revolution bill, is more eagerly than ever resorting to a policy of small advantages and petty persecutions. Hardly a day passes without the conviction of some obscure enemy of society, or without the dissolution of some Socialistic organisation. Since the courts in all cases of lese-majesty—one of the most common forms of Socialistic crimes—adopt secret sessions, it is impossible to get anything like full knowledge of this part of the anti-Socialist warfare. But there can be little doubt that the majority of cases is not very different from one which was tried before a Berlin court a few days ago and of which there was given out the following official report: “A butcher, Franz Rautenberg, having made some contemptuous remarks about the Emperor, was convicted of lese-majesty.

Although the incriminating utterances were not of an out-and-out insulting nature, the court fixed the sentence at six months' imprisonment, since the defendant had already served a previous term of two months for blasphemy, and consequently must be considered as predisposed to criminal acts of this kind."

In cases like this it is only an individual, and perhaps a worthless one, who is hurled by the defenders of morality into utter moral ruin. But it is not individuals only, it is above all the party organisations against which the saviours of society direct their hollow weapons. That in Hamburg a few weeks ago one hundred and fifty working-women were fined fifteen marks each for belonging to a club in which political matters were discussed (the privilege of forming political organisations being reserved to men), may have been reported even in American newspapers.

Less striking, but none the less significant, is a case which recently happened in Cöpenick, a little town near Berlin. There exists in Cöpenick a Socialist Wahlverein, comprising some twelve to sixteen members, who meet as a rule every two weeks. At one of their last meetings they were surprised to see a policeman enter at ten o'clock and demand an adjournment, on account of the "Polizeistunde" having struck. The members of the club naturally protested against this action, pleading that their club as a closed society was not subject to the ordinary police regulations. But the Oberverwaltungs-Gericht, before which, as the highest tribunal, this protest, in the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, was carried, decided that, inasmuch as the club in question had not a fixed membership, but could be joined on payment of a small fee by any sympathiser with the Socialist cause, it was *not* a closed

society; that its meetings were not private meetings, but public gatherings, and therefore subject to all the regulations which are in force for public gatherings; that, in short, every one of its meetings must be announced beforehand to the police authorities and must be attended by a police officer.

It is clear that this decision of the *Oberverwaltungs-Gericht*, if carried out consistently, will put a speedy end in Prussia to all political clubs which, for one reason or another, are inconvenient to the Government. For it would be hard to find a political club of any description the membership of which was not equally elastic with that of the *Cöpenick Wahlverein*, and would not consequently come under the same kind of police supervision. And it is not surprising that already the larger Socialist organisations, as, for instance, the *Berlin Freie Volksbühne*, which at present

is a body of some 8,000 members admitted by the payment of a small fee, are preparing for voluntary dissolution, of course only in order to carry on their work unmolested by official interference, under the disguise of some other less compact and palpable form.

While the Government is thus wasting its strength in the futile attempt to fight the Socialist propaganda with petty police annoyances, the country seems to be resistlessly drifting into the arms of this very propaganda.

It is a sad fact, but it is none the less a fact, that, twenty-five years after the foundation of the German Empire, German party life has reached a degree of confusion hardly less obnoxious than was the absence of all parliamentary institutions under the old Bundestag régime. There is actually not a single German party, except the Social Democratic, which, either on account

of its size or the consistency of its programme, seems destined to be a controlling power in national affairs. The Conservatives, naturally the allies of a government which for generations has been accustomed to rely principally on the unwavering support of the landed gentry, have been forced into a perfectly untenable position through their exclusively agrarian policy and their consequent opposition to the governmental policy of a tentative free trade. The Centre party, since the death of Windthorst, the only man who was able to control its centrifugal tendencies, is more and more tending towards an open rupture between its feudal and its radical elements. And, what is most momentous of all, the very class which, after all, has had the largest share in securing to Germany her present position as a leading power among the nations of the world in intellectual, industrial, and com-

mercial progress—the “ bourgeoisie ”—is politically reduced to absolute impotence: whatever there is left of the old Liberal party is a mere name and shadow.

It is only natural that this condition of things—a condition unquestionably brought about through the Bismarckian policy of playing off one party against another without allowing either to obtain a share in the government—should have led to a general discontent and uneasiness throughout the German land, the intensity of which it would be hard to overestimate. The farmer declaims against the commercial treaties with Russia and Austria, which are ruining his wheat trade; the manufacturer rebels against the burden imposed upon him through the accident- and old-age insurance laws, the bureaucratic provisions of which seem to make the larger part of the contributions intended for the benefit of the labourer go to maintain an

army of petty administrative officers; the small tradesman and artisan clamour against the ruthless monopoly of trusts, and demand the restitution of the old-time guilds; and everybody is disgusted with a government on which it is impossible to place any reliance, a government which will undo to-morrow what it has done to-day, a government which is nothing but a tool in the hands of a restless, impetuous, and eccentric sovereign of the Stuart order.

Is it surprising that, under these circumstances, the only party which is unwilling to make any compromise with the ruling system, which stands unwaveringly by the programme of a radical democracy, should rapidly increase its ranks? Is it, in other words, surprising that the Socialist party is fast developing into the only formidable opposition party, so that the time may be foreseen when the Socialist leaders will at the same time be among the foremost leaders of Parliament?

That, on the other hand, this very party is more and more losing its exclusively socialistic character, that it is more and more converting itself into a party of peaceful, though radical reform, that it looks to a final absorption of all the liberal elements of the country, is a fact which only the blindest fanaticism can deny. The time is long past when the Socialist meetings were gatherings of the mob. To-day the Socialist organisations which devote themselves to the elevation of the masses, to the spreading of moral and political enlightenment, to the cultivation of science, literature, music, and other forms of intellectual refinement, are legion. To-day, it is a principle adopted by the rank and file as well as by the leaders of the party, that the only way to combat successfully the ruling system of militarism and officialdom is the peaceful revolutionising of minds, not a violent convulsion of the social order.

And if the present development is allowed to go on unchecked by international conflicts or other complications, we may look forward to the formation of a party resting on the broad masses of the working population and the small trades people, but reaching out into the sphere of the well-to-do burgherdom and yeomanry; and this party will control the majority of the Reichstag. When this moment arrives, the real struggle for civic freedom in Germany will begin.

III. — WILDENBRUCH'S "KING
HENRY" AND HAUPT-
MANN'S "FLORIAN
GEYER"

MAY, 1896.

ERNST VON WILDENBRUCH and Gerhart Hauptmann are, in a way, representatives of two extremes in contemporary German literature. Wildenbruch, fiery, passionate, rhetorical; Hauptmann, dreamy, brooding, visionary. Wildenbruch, an ardent monarchist, a zealous supporter of the present régime, seeing the salvation of Germany in a continued supremacy of Bismarckian principles; Hauptmann, a Democrat if not a Socialist, in deepest sympathy with the sufferings of the "disinherited," hoping for the millennium of

universal brotherhood. Wildenbruch, an idealist of the straightforward, unreflective type, sunny, serene, somewhat inclined toward melodramatic effects; Hauptmann, a strange mixture of a pessimistic realism and of a mystic faith in the glory of the unseen, disdaining all that is not absolutely genuine and true. Wildenbruch the greater playwright; Hauptmann the greater poet. This contrast of artistic temper, while it marks the whole literary career of the two men, has never been brought out more conspicuously than in the two great historical dramas which have been the event of the year on the Berlin stage: Hauptmann's "Florian Geyer" and Wildenbruch's "Heinrich und Heinrichs Geschlecht."

That Wildenbruch's "Heinrich" should have easily carried off the crown of popular success, is not surprising. As a stage show it is simply overwhelming. Here

we have all the brilliancy of diction, the intensity of action, the irresistible surging up to a grand climax which give eternal youth to Schiller's dramas; and, added thereto, we have the lifelikeness, the palpability, the breadth of detail, in which modern realism revels. Here we see, indeed, the gigantic figure of History herself striding over the stage, but we also see our own feelings, longings, and aspirations embodied in human forms, and recognise them as the real movers and makers of national destinies. The subject of the drama is a struggle which, as Bismark has said, dates back to the days when Agamemnon quarrelled with Calchas, the struggle between king and priest. The principal combatants in this struggle are Henry IV and Gregory VII; the prize for which it is fought out is Germany. With true dramatic instinct Wildenbruch throughout the play—which is intended

for two successive evenings—maintains himself on the very height of his subject; he leaps, as it were, from catastrophe to catastrophe, leaving it to the imagination of his hearers to make its way after him through the dark glens and ravines that lead up to these shining mountain peaks.

In the beginning we see Henry as a boy, an impetuous, imperious youth, smarting under the discipline of a fanatically religious mother, burning with the desire to equal the fame of his heroic father, at last thrust into the prison walls of monastic asceticism under the tutorship of Anno, Archbishop of Cologne. Next he appears as King, in the acme of his power. He has subdued the rebellious Saxons; he enters triumphantly his faithful Worms; he is received by the citizens as the protector of civil freedom against princely tyranny and clerical arrogance; all Germany seems to rise in a grand ovation to her beloved lead-

er. Intoxicated by his success, he resents all the more deeply the paternal admonitions of Pope Gregory about the looseness of his private life which are just then conveyed to him; he insists on being crowned Emperor at once; and, when this request is not complied with, he allows himself to be carried away by his indomitable wrath, he forces his bishops into that insulting letter by which Gregory is declared a usurper, a felon, a blasphemer, to be driven out from the sanctuary of the Church which he pollutes by his presence.

And now we are introduced to the other great character of the drama, to the opposite of this fiery, unmanageable young ruler, to Gregory, the self-possessed and self-abasing priest, the man in whose soul there seems to be no room for any passion except the passion for the cause of the Church, for the triumph of the spirit over the flesh, and who nevertheless harbours in

his breast, unknown to himself, the most consuming ambition and the most colossal egotism. We see him sitting *in cathedra* in the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. Suppliants and criminals are brought before him. A Flemish count, who has committed murder, and who has in vain fled throughout the length and breadth of Europe in quest of delivery from the anguish of his tormented conscience, beseeches the Pope to put an end to his wretched life; Gregory, instead, holds out to him the hope of salvation through joining a crusade. A Roman noble, who in robber knight fashion has made an assault upon the Pope, and who by the clergy and the people has been condemned to death for this crime, is pardoned by Gregory—"for he has sinned, not against the Church, the holy one, but against Gregory, a poor, feeble mortal." A lay brother of St. Peter's who, disguised

as priest, has taken money from foreign pilgrims for reading mass to them, and who by the clergy and the people has been sentenced to a fine and exile, is ordered by Gregory to be thrown into the Tiber—"for he has sinned against the Church, he has cheated human souls of their salvation."

These scenes have just passed before our eyes when the messengers of King Henry, bearing the letter of libel and vilification, are admitted. Gregory is the only one who in the tumult that follows its reading remains absolutely calm; he protects the messenger himself against the rage of the Romans; he forgives Henry, the man, for what he has said against Gregory, the man.

"For what he has said against the head of the Holy Church, for that let Henry be cursed! I forbid all Christians to serve thee as a King, I release them from the oath that they have sworn thee. Thou, darkness revolting against light, return to

chaos! Thou, wave revolting against the ocean, return to naught! No bell shall be sounded in the city where Henry dwells, no church be opened, no sacrament be administered. Where Henry dwells, death shall dwell! Let my legates go forth and announce my message to the world!"

The climax of the whole drama is, as it should be, the Canossa catastrophe. It is here that Gregory, the victor in the political game, succumbs morally; that Henry, the vanquished, rises in his native greatness. It is here that Gregory, with all his soaring idealism, reveals himself as an inhuman monster; that Henry, with all his faults and frailties, arouses to the full the sympathy which we cannot help feeling for a bravely struggling man.

The excommunication of Henry has plunged Germany into civil war. A rival king, Rudolf of Swabia, has been proclaimed. He and the chiefs of his party have

come to Canossa to obtain the papal sanction for their revolt. Gregory clearly sees that Rudolf is nothing but a figure-head, a mere tool in the hands of fanatic conspirators, totally unfit to rule an empire. He clearly feels it his duty to discountenance this revolt, to restore peace to Germany by making his peace with Henry. But the demon of ambition lurking in his breast beguiles him with a vision of world dominion; he, the servant of the servants of God, shall be the arbiter of Europe; he, the plebeian, shall see the crowns of kings roll before him in the dust. He does *not* discountenance Rudolf and his party; and when Henry appears before the castle, broken and humiliated, asking for absolution from the ban, Gregory remains unmoved. For three days and nights the King stands before the gate in ice and snow; for three days and nights the Pope sits in his chair, speechless, sleepless, refusing to

eat or drink. At last, the intercession of Henry's mother, who, herself in the shadow of death, has come to pray for her son's salvation, softens Gregory's heart: he admits Henry to his presence. Henry appears, a king even in his misery. He bends his knee before the Pope, he confesses his guilt, he acknowledges the justice of his punishment. The reconciliation is brought about. Just then Henry's glance falls upon Rudolf and his followers standing in the background. He greets them as friends, thinking that they have come to renew their allegiance to him. But they rudely repulse him, and boast of the Pope's intention to acknowledge Rudolf as King. And Gregory does *not* contradict them. With fearful suddenness Henry sees what a shameful game has been played with him; and yet he masters himself, he makes one last appeal to whatever there is of true feeling in his opponent:

“God, help me against myself! Christ, Saviour, who wast thyself a king among the heavenly host and didst bow thy neck under the scourge, help me against myself! (*He turns abruptly toward Gregory.*) Once before I knelt before thee—I did it for myself. (*He falls down on his knees.*) Here, a second time, I lie before thee, for Germany lie I here! Break thy silence! Thy silence is the coffin in which the happiness of Germany is entombed! If thou didst know how unhappy this Germany is thou wouldst speak—speak! Thou, ordained by God to bring peace to the world, let me take peace with me on my way to Germany, not war, not howling civil war!”

And Gregory remains silent!—From here on to the end of the drama there is nothing but revenge, and revenge on revenge. And this work of destruction does not stop until both Gregory and Henry have breathed their last. Both men die in de-

feat and desolation—Gregory hearing from his death-bed the jubilant shouts of the faithless Romans as they greet the triumphant entry of a rival pope, Henry driven into exile and hunted down by the minions of his rebellious son. Both die inwardly unbroken—Gregory trusting in the future triumph of the Church, Henry trusting in the indestructible vitality of the German people.

A few words may be added about Hauptmann's "Florian Geyer," although it is impossible to do justice to this work except by reading and analysing it scene by scene. The defects of Hauptmann's dramatic style are here, perhaps, more clearly visible than in any previous production of his. The lack of unity, the absence of a true hero, which were seen in "Die Weber," characterise this drama also. And, in addition to this, there is a slowness and diffuseness of movement which must be fatal to its

effect as a theatrical piece. And yet it is impossible to resist the impression that here we are face to face with the creation of a great artist. Hauptmann sees things not as they appear on the stage, but as they are in life. He seems to have no thought of how his figures may affect his hearers. He simply tells what he sees, and he tells it with that wonderful directness which is the privilege of children and poets. Not a phrase which could not thus have been spoken; not an event which could not thus have taken place; not a character which would not probably have taken just this turn; and beneath all this realism, that strange belief in a hidden life which makes us feel that all these outward happenings are only feeble manifestations of some grand mysterious central force working under their surface. This is the manner in which Hauptmann in this drama makes us live through the great German peasant re-

volt of the sixteenth century, its glorious beginning and its miserable end; its hopes, triumphs, excesses, massacres, failures; its noble enthusiasm, its dark fanaticism, its savageness and greed, its egotism and pettiness. And it is not too much to say that in order to understand what is implied by the word "Revolution," one could do no better than to study the details of this strangely monotonous and strangely fascinating picture of popular wrath and popular delusion.

That German literature during the last decade has entered upon a new era of genuine productivity must have been clear for some time past to every intelligent observer. That this new movement should have acquired sufficient strength to produce, only a year or two after the triumphs achieved by "Heimat" and "Die Weber," two dramas of such heroic dimensions and such extraordinary power as Hauptmann's

“Florian Geyer” and Wildenbruch’s “Heinrich,” is nevertheless a surprise, and seems to justify the hopes of those who see in the present revolt against conventions the dawn of another epoch of classic perfection of form.

IV.—JOHANNA AMBROSIUS

AUGUST, 1896.

UNTIL within a year and a half ago the name of Johanna Ambrosius was not known outside of the little East Prussian village where she herself, as the wife of a poor peasant, led a humble and monotonous existence. To-day her poems have passed through the twenty-seventh edition, and she is hailed throughout Germany as a lyric genius destined to play an important part in the literary revival which has been so brilliantly initiated by the dramatic achievements of Sudermann and his associates. What is it that has given this simple peasant woman, whose intellectual resources until very recently were confined to a few back volumes of the "Garten-

laube," such an extraordinary hold on the national heart? What is it that has raised her at one stroke far above the host of clever and refined singers who, during the last thirty years, have re-echoed the melodies of the great masters?

The secret, I think, lies in this, that in Johanna Ambrosius there has arisen a new voice in the struggle for the emancipation of the German woman. Whatever one may think of this movement, it would be folly to deny either its volume or its strength. It is naturally strongest in socialistic circles; indeed, the Social-Democratic party is thus far the only political organisation which has allowed women a considerable share in its meetings and deliberations. But the influence of the woman movement is by no means confined to Socialist gatherings. It pervades the air, it is felt in the family, it agitates the universities, it has entered the drawing-rooms, it

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has deeply affected the novel and the drama; everywhere we notice as one of the leading forces of the day the striving of woman for a fuller and more complete individuality. If this were not so, such a figure as Sudermann's Magda could not have been created.

There is a good deal of family likeness between the heroine of "Heimat" and Johanna Ambrosius. The circumstances are different, the abiding traits of character are the same: in Sudermann's drama, an impetuous, unruly girl, who, craving for a fuller life than that afforded by "respectable" society, falls a prey to sin, and through sin rises to the level of her true self; in the East-Prussian peasant home which has been and still is the scene of Johanna Ambrosius's life, the agonies and struggles of a woman who, harbouring in herself a world of passion, longing, and ideal striving, is smothered by the hard

facts of actual starvation, degrading toil, and absolute intellectual loneliness—until at last the long repressed despair breaks forth with volcanic power, shakes the very foundations of this life, and lifts it into a higher sphere.

Of Johanna's mental development her sister, who, it seems, has been the only one to stand faithfully by her in all these gloomy struggles, has given a sympathetic sketch, from which a passage relating to the years of girlish maturity and early married life may here be quoted:

“Even in those early days,” she says, “we both felt how alone we stood in our village surroundings. Our souls began to retire within themselves; the longing for freedom, for light, for life became irresistible. Johanna had outgrown the obedience demanded by her parents, but oppressive to body and soul; her own will often manifested itself; and, half following her

will, half submitting to the force of circumstances, she entered service in the house of strangers. Perhaps she hoped to find outside of her family what her soul craved. She soon returned home, and, in order to find freedom, as she thought, she accepted the hand of a simple, but good and honest peasant lad. By the side of the man of her choice Johanna went with eyes open into poverty and hardest toil. Proud and uncomplaining, she bore the self-chosen fate until she lay broken on the ground. The whole misery of a life wrestling in vain for food had seized upon her. Out of the night of these boundless sufferings there rose—the poet.”

It would be indelicate to pry into the details of the family tragedy which these words half disclose and half conceal. Some German literary periodicals have already given too much publicity to them. From the merely personal point of view, it might

even seem as though too much sympathy had been accorded to Johanna herself, and too little to the "simple, but good and honest peasant" whose fate, by the side of this fiery, soaring idealist, appears pathetic in the extreme. What makes Johanna Ambrosius such a remarkable, nay, inspiring figure in the modern woman movement, is the fact that her own sufferings, instead of embittering her, have opened her heart to the woe of all her fellow-sufferers, that her own struggles have made her a leader in the universal struggle for a fuller humanity.

The most striking note of her poetry, to be sure, is one of passionate longing for a happiness which she knows can never be hers. She fairly revels in the maddening consciousness of being forever shut out from life's best gifts—peace of soul and intellectual companionship. She consumes herself in the thought of what might have

been. There was a time when her heart swelled with hope, when the *fata morgana* of love conjured up before her a world of bliss and beauty. But all that is now forever destroyed, and all is dark. "Ah, bind my hands with iron chains, lest they draw a beloved head to my bosom! Wall in my heart and close it fast, lest the flames of love blaze forth from its windows! Make me deaf, make me blind, lest I see happiness! Oh miserable, God-forsaken child that I am!" She sits at dusk by the hearth, and gazes into the flickering fire as it dances 'up and down before her eyes, for a moment bringing back the colour of youth to her cheeks, awakening in her the glow of long-suppressed passion and desire, and then quickly dying away—oh, that the raging fire within might consume itself as quickly! She consecrates her songs to Pain, her best and inseparable friend. He stands before her threshold

with drawn sword, and wards off whoever might disturb them; only his sister Sorrow he at times invites to keep them company:

“Nur manchmal ladet er zu Gaste
Sich seine Schwester Leid,
Die bleibt dann lang bei uns zu Raste,
Und näht für mich ein Kleid.”

She cries out to God to make an end of it; to deliver her at last from ever pressing the wounded breast against the rocks, from lying bound without being allowed to rest her head; to take from her the glowing chains which with hellish fire are burning deep into her heart.

Whatever she sees about her assumes the melancholy hue of her own darkened existence. She tells of how “Mariechen, süßes Mariechen mein,” the fairest girl in the village, is plunged into misery by the old witch Care; how the happiness of her young married life is poisoned by want; how the same man who had loved her so fervently, embittered and hardened by his

and his children's hunger, turns away from her, and at last raises his arm to strike her:

“Der Schlag traf gut, nun noch ein Hieb:
Ade, Du Glück, gebaut auf Lieb!
Die alte Hex' Sorg' in die Faust sich lacht,
Und schleicht sich weiter durch Nebel und Nacht.
Was wimmert so schmerzlich im Sternenschein?
Ach Mariechen, süßes Mariechen mein!”

She describes a peaceful farmhouse enclosed by wheat-fields. Its white gable blinks cheerfully through a cluster of hemlocks; like a column of frankincense, the smoke rises from the thatched roof and loses itself in the evening red; the spring water gently trickles over the mossy stones of the well; the doves are cooing in their cotes, swallows are chasing through the air, a cat lies sleepy on the threshold. But where is the housewife, where the farm hands? From the fields she comes, with her child. Cold as marble is her face, her forehead overshadowed with grief. Shyly she gathers the broken pots and glasses

strewn about in the yard. Has a storm raged here? Has some evil spirit entered? In the arbour lies the husband by the side of his bottle.

With all this gloom, the poetry of Johanna Ambrosius as a whole is far from having a discouraging or depressing effect. There is nothing enervating, nothing disintegrating in it. While often reminding us of Heine's truthfulness and simplicity, this woman has nothing of Heine's scepticism. Even in her saddest moods we recognise a bravely struggling soul, a character faithful to itself, a heart embracing all mankind. Her woes have sanctified her; they have strengthened her trust in the final victory of goodness and right; they have fanned in her a burning desire to help, to comfort, to inspire. And although the range of her thought is narrow, she compensates us for this by a freshness of feeling which gives even the oldest

truths the stamp of a new acquisition. It is indeed touching to hear this daughter of the people speak of the exalted mission of the poet: "Through sleepless nights in the throes of creation he moans for the lost Paradise; he weeps for all men, he bears the burden of all mankind; he dyes the roses with his heart's blood, he bleaches the lilies with his tears; his poems are sighs, they are prayers offered up to God from the depth of his soul for the sake of a suffering world.—Oh bear them lovingly in your hearts, like your own children! You know not from what pains they have been born." And who could help being moved by that "Last Song" which this peasant woman would fain sing, a song which shall be wafted through the world like a gentle breeze of May, which shall bring refreshment to the dying, which shall calm all pain and encourage all good fighters, and which at last shall swell into a

raging gale and drive the serpent Sin back into the sea? When this song shall be accomplished, the singer herself will break her lyre and sing no more; in the forest would she be buried, and none should know who conceived the song:

“Im Wald müsst ihr verscharren
Mich heimlich unterm Tann,
Und Niemand sollt' erfahren
Wer dieses Lied ersann.”

It will be of interest to see how Johanna Ambrosius will bear the popularity which has so suddenly come to her and the honours which have been so profusely showered upon her. She seems great enough to justify the hope that recognition will bring out in her the joyous rather than the commonplace.

V.—KAROLINE VON GÜNDERODE
AND FRIEDRICH CREUZER

SEPTEMBER, 1896.

PROF. ERWIN ROHDE, the distinguished classical philologist, has done a good service to students of German civilisation by recently publishing, from manuscripts preserved in the Heidelberg University Library, the letters relating to one of the strangest and saddest episodes in the history of Romanticism—the love tragedy which ended in the suicide of Karoline von Günderode. This is a tragedy not only full of historical import, but also of direct significance for our own time. For it reveals moods and passions which the extreme individualism of modern Romantics such as Nietzsche and Ibsen has made once more a force in social life.

Karoline von Günderode was a worthy representative of that brilliant activity displayed by women in the higher concerns of life which gave to German culture of the beginning of the nineteenth century such a decidedly feminine tinge. If she lacked the vivacity of her friend Bettina Brentano, she also lacked her coquettishness and theatrical mannerism. If she did not have the keenness of analysis possessed by Rahel Varnhagen, she was also free from Rahel's bent for fantastic and hair-splitting speculation. And to both Bettina and Rahel she was superior in sincerity of feeling, depth of passion, and true womanly charm. She was a genuine poet, not so much in what she wrote for the public ear (although her poems were admired even by Goethe) as in her every-day thoughts, her letters to friends, her whole manner of life. It is not surprising that her refined beauty and aristocratic bearing should have attracted the

best men of her time. Savigny, the great jurist, devoted to her years of chivalric friendship. Clemens Brentano, editor of the "Wunderhorn," went into raptures over her. No man, however, understood her so well or stirred her so deeply as the one who was to lead her to her own destruction, namely Friedrich Creuzer, the famous author of the "Symbolik."

Creuzer, also, is a typical figure of the period preceding the national catastrophe of 1806, a period which was as devoid of moral vigour as it was rich in æsthetic cultivation. As we see him in his public activity, in his far-reaching studies on the religion of the ancient Greeks, in his petty quarrels with scientific opponents, he appears as both a pathfinder and a perverter of sound methods of historical investigation; as a strange mixture of noble inspirations and selfish conduct, of mystic intuition and scholastic pedantry; as a priest of

humanity and at the same time as a vain professor. One must keep all these conflicting qualities of his in mind in order to understand how his relations to Karoline von Günderode came to be what they were.

When Creuzer, in the spring of 1804, entered upon his Heidelberg professorship, he was thirty-three years old; for half a decade he had been united in childless marriage to a widow, thirteen years his senior. Is it surprising that when, on a beautiful August day of the same year, on the terrace of Heidelberg castle, he met Karoline von Günderode for the first time, he should have experienced an inner revolution such as Werther underwent when he for the first time saw Lotte? He feels at once that from now on there are only two possibilities: "Heaven or death; there is no mean between the two." He flies into the solitude of the forests in order to read her letters, and when he looks up to the sky from

her pages, it seems to him as though he were looking into the eyes of his beloved. He hides her poems on his shelves in order to enjoy them alone in the stillness of the night. And at last—two months after the first meeting—he informs his wife “that he can no longer consider her as his wife, in fact, has never considered her as such, but that he will forever cherish grateful feelings towards her;” whereupon the wife, in a fit of sudden magnanimity, declares that she approves of his sentiment, renounces her claims on him, and desires to be in future nothing but an older sister to him. In short, it seems as though the whole affair were to end in happy romantic fashion: husband and wife will peacefully separate and another union be established. Or, to adopt Creuzer’s own inimitable phraseology, the wife will stay in the house “as mother, as the manager of the household,” while the loved one will bring “freedom and poetry”

into the husband's life—exactly the same situation, by the way, which forms the basis of the tragic conflict in one of the most remarkable realistic dramas of our own time, Gerhart Hauptmann's "Einsame Menschen."

In Creuzer's and Karoline's case, as in the modern drama, the serenity of those paradisiac dreams soon gives way to gloomy forebodings. Sophie, the wife, retracts her resignation; she is ready to leave the house, but in despair only, not in good part; she is not willing to tolerate Karoline by her side. And Creuzer, impulsive as always, and, theoretically at least, of a chivalrous frame of mind, realises at once that he must not force his wife's actions; he is unwilling, in his own words, "to demand a human sacrifice." Recognising his duty towards his wife so clearly, one would think that he must see with equal clearness his duty towards Karoline: a speedy and

complete rupture of their relations seems imperative. But, far from feeling this, Creuzer is now all the more eager to retain Karoline's love. He speaks with the utmost disdain of the "abyss of *Bürgerlichkeit*" which forbids a married man to think of other women. He talks of dying with Karoline. He beseeches her not to abandon his "beautiful soul." "I am like one of those wooden Silenus figures in Plato's 'Symposium' which, mean in themselves, serve as cases for beautiful images of gods enclosed in them. The divine image encased in my poor body is my soul, which was capable of feeling your worth." He compares Karoline to Raphael's "Poesy"; he glorifies her as the Virgin Mary hovering in eternal youth and freedom above the clouds:

"I often appear to myself criminal in wishing to draw you down into this domestic world, when I see how you, a Vir-

gin, hover gloriously in the splendour of the stars, untouched by the burdens of life. And yet, when I think how once it was your own will to descend into this world of mine, then I rejoice again in the consciousness of my courage to die with you."

The result of all this reckless playing with fire is another meeting of the lovers at Frankfort, Karoline's residence. And this meeting, of course, gives added violence to the flame of passion. Karoline appears from now on in Creuzer's letters mostly under symbolic names, "The Friend," "The Saint," "Poesy," while his wife, to denote the hopeless philistinism of her character, receives the nickname "The Good-Natured One"; and a separation from her, or rather lamentations over the impossibility of a separation from her, become again the burden of Creuzer's talk:

"Is it right, or is it cruel, that a woman

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who has lived through the natural course of her history in the love of her first husband, in children who adore her, in children's children whom she is looking forward to—that this woman should insist that a young man is to find the aim of his life in brightening and warming a little, like a wintry sun, the late autumn and November days of her existence? It is right! He might have known it in advance. Still, my heart, still! It is right! Oh, if she only could be a little large-minded—or thoroughly bad! But this agonising good-nature!”

It is not quite clear what ripened in Sophie for a second time the decision to give way to her favoured rival. Enough that, in September, 1805, she took this decision: she wrote to Karoline sanctioning her relation with Creuzer, and expressing the hope that he soon might be entirely hers. Creuzer on his part even goes so far as to

address Karoline as his "beloved wife"; he speaks of the formal dissolution of his marriage as soon to be brought about; he reports a plan to accept a professorship at the University of Moscow so as to spare his young bride the difficulties of living with him in the old surroundings: all the clouds seem to be chased away, the happiness of the lovers seems assured. All of a sudden there is a change in the tone of Creuzer's letters. He begins to feel that Karoline is too good for him, that he does not deserve her; he mentions financial difficulties that stand in the way of a speedy marriage; he seems to think that Karoline has no natural taste for the duties of a housewife; he has heard a rumour that Karoline does not intend to live with him as a wife, but plans to accompany him to Russia in men's clothes as a student friend; he has talked with his friend Savigny about the matter, who has convinced him that a

separation from Sophie would be a moral wrong. In brief, only two months after his wife has expressed her willingness to release him, he has practically broken off with Karoline; and it is Karoline, not Sophie, who sends him the following letter of resignation:

“ My whole life remains forever consecrated to thee, beloved sweet friend. Nor time nor circumstances shall step between us. The loss of thy love I should not be able to bear. Promise me never to leave me. O life of my life, do not leave my soul.—See, I feel freer and purer since I have renounced all earthly hope. Into hallowed melancholy has the violent grief been dissolved. Fate is conquered. Thou art mine, above all fate. Nothing can take thee from me, since I have won thee in such a manner.—Try to gain Sophie’s confidence. Tell her that we have resigned. I, too shall write her, in order that peace

may be restored to the household and she not disturb our relation, which has no longer any danger for her."

It seems incredible that Creuzer's sense of honour should not have been sufficient to make him respect the obligations laid upon him by such an appeal as this. Instead of helping Karoline to live up to her noble renunciation, instead of silencing once for all his own unruly longings, he now more than ever relapses into his habitual wavering between sentimental lamentations and passionate protestations of love. On Christmas eve he feels in the midst of his family "like a pilgrim who, on his way to the Holy Land, has been captured by a people that worships other gods." In the Christmas vacation he goes on with his "Symbolik" in constant thought of the fair friend to whom, he hopes, this book will be something of a compensation for all the pain he has given

her. In the following April (1806) he visits her in Frankfort, and after his departure he revels in ecstatic memories of their meeting and in mournful complaints about his present loneliness: "Ah, nothing will ever satisfy me but this dear, palpable nearness, from which I now have been torn away. The present stares blankly at me: back into the joys of the past my spirit longs to turn. *O sanctissima virgo, tecum moriar libens.*" In June he is in Mannheim and is taken by a friend to the point where the Neckar River flows into the Rhine. "It is a beautiful place, and I saw with deep emotion how the two rivers embrace each other. The impatient longing with which they hasten towards one another was to me a symbol of our life. Ah, the fortunate ones, I thought, to attain thus to the goal of their desires! Sadly I went away." And when, after all these appeals to the emotion, Karoline indeed

seems to lose her self-control and to respond in the same passionate vein, how does he receive this?

“For heaven’s sake, Lina, do not abandon yourself to such storms of passion! I have burnt all that you wrote to-day, praying for your tranquility of mind while the flames were consuming your pages.—Beloved, I owe you a large debt, a debt equal to the value of my own life; but quiet you owe to me, and you will give me quiet when you see that you owe it to yourself.”

We hasten to the end. On June 29 or 30 a last meeting of the lovers took place. With what feelings they saw each other, in what a frame of mind they separated, we are unable to tell. Immediately after it Creuzer fell into a violent fever. During his sickness his friends prevailed upon him to make a solemn declaration that he would completely and irrevocably break off his relations with Karoline. One of these

friends took it upon himself to inform Karoline of this decision. In order to break the cruel news to her in as gentle a manner as possible, the letter containing it was addressed to a friend of Karoline's with whom she was at the time sojourning. These measures of precaution were frustrated. Karoline, who for weeks had been waiting for a letter from Creuzer, hastened to meet the messenger, took the letter, opened it in her room, and read—her death-warrant. She soon came back from her room, apparently undisturbed, took leave of her friend for a short evening walk such as she was in the habit of taking, but did not return. On the next morning her body was found on the banks of the Rhine. She had stabbed herself with the dagger which for some time previous she had been carrying about her.

Two months after the death of Karoline von Günderode the battle of Jena was

fought. Little as these events seem to have in common with each other, it is yet true that the battle of Jena exerted a profound influence on the whole moral and intellectual atmosphere which determined the tragic fate of the romantic poetess. In the national breakdown, in the utter ruin of its political existence, the German people recovered its sense of moral dignity and discipline which had been obscured by the flighty conceptions of an exclusively æsthetic culture; and the Creuzers and Günderoles were superseded by the Steins and the Fichtes.

VI.—HAUPTMANN'S "THE SUNK-
EN BELL"

APRIL, 1897.

RARELY has the mysterious affinity between the extremes of realism and romanticism been illustrated as strikingly as now in the gradual unfolding of Gerhart Hauptmann's poetic genius. Hauptmann is one of those fascinating men whose character seems to baffle all attempts at rational analysis. He is at the same time the most modern of the moderns and the most devout worshipper of the traditions of the past, an iconoclast and a dreamer, a pantheist and an inspired interpreter of mediæval Christianity, a socialist and an upholder of personal freedom, an impressionist painter of the most uncompromising

kind and a lyric poet of the deepest feeling and the most delicate sensibility. At times he speaks as though he saw before him a new age of exalted humanity, as though he would lead his people forward on the path of liberty and spiritual progress; and then again he seems like a child lost in the wilderness of an outworn civilisation, he flees from the shallow brilliancy of modern society to the primitive sturdiness of the fairy tale, and, in the midst of a career full of restless striving and ambition, he dreams himself back to the sombre seclusion of his Silesian mountain home. He is crude and refined, heavy and graceful, pessimistic and buoyant, flippant and sublime; and in all these changes he is always and unfailingly true to himself.

He began with lurid scenes from contemporary life, in which it was easy to detect the influence of Ibsen and Zola. But even in the atrocious vulgarity of "Vor

Sonnenaufgang" and in the hopeless gloom of "Das Friedensfest" there appeared a strain quite foreign alike to the cynic bitterness of the Norwegian and to the proletarian ferociousness of the Frenchman: a deep, silent craving for purity and childlike innocence. Next, there followed "Einsame Menschen," a masterpiece of psychological analysis, vibrating with the profoundest chords of modern thought, bringing out in figures of wonderful lifelikeness the tragedy of moral emancipation unaided by moral greatness. Then came "Die Weber," a modern Dance of Death, a cry of sympathy with suffering humanity as genuine and heart-stirring as any word of lamentation or scorn uttered by the prophets of old. Then a strange pair of unlike brothers: "Der Biberpelz," a gross satire of the Prussian police officer in search for crimes of lese-majesty, and "Hannele," a glorification of the spiritual-

istic elements of the Christian belief. Then the historical drama, "Florian Geyer," a work both grand and ordinary, irresistible and intolerable, a most faithful—perhaps too faithful—reproduction of the sixteenth century, with its democratic aspirations, its reformatory zeal, its popular heroism, fanaticism, and savagery, but somehow lacking in the finer human emotions. And now, finally, "Die versunkene Glocke," a fantastic vision, transporting us into lonely forests haunted by elves and water-sprites, and strangely illumined by the flicker of swarming glow-worms.

It is almost impossible to give an adequate conception of this "fairy drama" which now for months has been delighting Berlin audiences. The time of the action is somewhere in the Middle Ages. The principal character is a figure belonging to the race of Faust, Manfred, and Brand: Meister Heinrich, a bellfounder in a lonely

village of the Riesengebirge. It is evidently not long since Christianity made its way into these remote regions, for we hear that the mountain elves are disgusted with the unaccustomed sight of church-building going on in the midst of their retreats, and still more with the unaccustomed sound of the church bells ringing through the peace of the forests. Just now one of these malicious spirits has seized the opportunity of venting his spite. He has lain in wait when a bell wrought by Master Henry and destined for a chapel on the mountain summit was being carted up the hill; he has broken the wheel of the truck, and has hurled the bell and its maker down into the lake. Here is the beginning of the action. Henry, rallying, but as yet hardly conscious of his steps, gropes his way upward again, and wanders about in aimless despair through the rocky wilderness. Finally he sinks down exhausted. His cries of agony

have been overheard by Rautendelein, a strange mixture of elf and maiden; and for the first time there has been awakened in her breast the dim feeling of a higher life and the blind desire to win it. So, when the villagers come to carry Henry's nearly lifeless body back to the valley, Rautendelein follows them, determined to see and to know "the land of men." Disguised as a servant, she enters the house where Henry, attended by his faithful wife, lies at the point of death. He is delirious. His life seems to him a failure; the comforting words of his wife sound to him like mockery; he persuades himself that she has no conception of what it is to feel the creative impulse and to have it checked by brutal fate; he is sure that she does not understand him, that nobody understands him; he curses his work; he wishes to die. At this moment Rautendelein appears, and the sight of this unbroken youthful life

brings back to him his own youthful aspirations. It is as though Nature herself had touched him and renewed his strength, as though she beckoned him to throw away the commonplace cares and duties of ordinary social existence and to follow her to the heights of a free, unfettered, creative activity. He cannot resist. The supreme desire for unhampered exercise of his faculties restores his health; the delirious despondency leaves him; he is himself again.

When the scene changes, Rautendelein has led him back into the mountains. She now appears as his inspiring genius. He is in the fulness of his powers; he is raised above the petty conflict of good and evil. He has won control over the spirits that dwell in rock and cavern; with their help he is creating a wonder work of art, a temple structure on highest mountain peak whose melodious chime is to call free humanity to the festival of universal broth-

erhood. Wrapt up in these estatic visions he has entirely lost sight of his former life. He seems not to know that once he had a loving wife and children. He scorns the friendly warning of the village priest, who ventures into his enchanted wilderness in order to save his soul. He defies the onslaught of the peasants who attempt to storm his fastness in order to annihilate the godless blasphemer. He quiets occasional pangs of conscience by renewed feverish work; only at night he lies restless and is visited by fearful dreams. More and more, however, these evil forebodings get the better of him. Again and again he hears a strange sound that seems to draw him downward, he recognises in it the tolling of the bell that lies at the bottom of the mountain lake. What causes the bell to give the sound? Who is that pale, ghastly figure floating toward it and striking its tongue? And who are these shadowy

forms of little children, coming slowly and sadly toward him, and carrying with great effort a heavily filled urn? Breathless with horror, he addresses them. "What carry ye?" "Father, we carry an urn." "What is in the urn?" "Father, something bitter." "What is the something bitter?" "Father, our mother's tears." "Where is your mother?" "Where the water-lilies grow."

Now, at last, Henry sees that he has overstepped the bounds set to man. The whole wretchedness of his imagined grandeur is revealed to him with terrible clearness. He drives Rautendelein away with calumny and cursing. He destroys with his own hand the work which had been to him the symbol of a perfect humanity. He resolves to descend again to the fellowship of mortals. But it is too late. The super-human striving has consumed his strength. In his last moment Rautendelein appears

to him once more; she has returned into her own realm, she has become the wife of an ugly old water-sprite who had wooed her for years. But she is still longing for human affections, and she presses a fervent kiss upon the lips of the dying one.

The drama thus hastily outlined is to us a messenger of good tidings. It is a fresh evidence of a fact which has recently become manifest in more ways than one: the fact that Germany is preparing again to take a leading part in the literature of the world. Especially the German realistic drama of the last decade has shown a fertility of motives and a constructive energy far superior to that of recent dramatic productions in England or France. But most of these realistic dramas are in too pronounced a manner children of the age to have a long life before them; they are clever dramatic essays rather on social, religious, or philosophical questions of imme-

diate and acute interest than works of art which permanently satisfy. In "Die versunkene Glocke" for the first time we hear once more the unmistakable ring of the universally human. Here we are made to feel once more the eternal longing of the human heart for a happiness that lies beyond the things seen or heard. Here we are brought face to face once more with an ideal striving far transcending all interest in so-called questions of the day. Here we are indeed reminded of the artistic temper which created the type of Faust.

To be sure, the form of this drama is too fantastic to appeal to all persons or to all times. It needs a special frame of mind to find out the instinctive striving after nature which underlies even its grotesque artificialities. German critics have with good reason pointed out the affinity between this drama and the paintings of Boecklin. Hauptmann and Boecklin belong, indeed,

together. Both are endowed with an extraordinary sensibility, both feel an irrepressible desire to reproduce the sounds and sights of nature exactly as they hear and see them. But both hear and see not only the sounds and sights of nature, they are equally strongly affected by the discordant impressions of their social environment; and in order not to be disturbed by these, they strain their receptive organs to such an extent that the water looks bluer to them than it does to the normal eye, and the wind roars more wildly to them than it does to the normal ear. This is especially true of "Die versunkene Glocke." There is a note of exaggeration in it which takes away from its sincerity. And delightful as this company of roving, rollicking, swaggering, half malicious, half good-natured earth-spirits is which forms the elemental background of the dramatic action, we are hardly more than amused by it.

The true simplicity of the fairy tale is for the most part absent.

But this objection does not touch the central conception of the drama. Hauptmann has created a work which treats the old Faust theme of man's superhuman aspirations in a new and fascinating manner. We may confidently hope that his youthful genius, which has given us so much already that is fine and true, will give us something still finer and truer. He is now approaching his full maturity. May he live himself out completely and harmoniously. May he go on, undisturbed by fame or slander, unmoved by the wrangle between literary cliques, unmindful of the meaningless war-cries of romanticism and classicism, to bring forth what is in him. If he does this, he seems destined to accomplish what his Meister Heinrich strove for in vain: to build a temple of art in which all ages and all nations may worship.

VII.—HERMAN GRIMM

MAY, 1897.

SINCE the days of Tieck and the brothers Schlegel, Germany has produced no man of letters who in universality of interests and refinement of taste can be compared to Herman Grimm. There is no dearth of critics who within the limits of their special studies have accomplished as much or perhaps even more than he. In philosophic grasp of abstract intellectual problems, men like Kuno Fischer or Rudolf Haym are his superiors. In questions touching the technical workmanship displayed in works of painting or sculpture, his judgments have not infrequently been overridden by the verdict of more thoroughly trained experts. In the sphere of philo-

logical text criticism, the chosen province of nearly all the younger literary historians, he has never felt quite at home. What distinguishes Herman Grimm from all other German scholars of to-day, what gives him his unique position in modern life, is the fact that he is philosopher, art critic, and literary historian in one, that he is an interpreter of the spiritual ideals of mankind, whatever form they may have assumed or to whatever age they may belong. He is, among living Germans, the most eminent advocate of æsthetic culture; the principal, if not sole, upholder of the classic tradition of Weimar and Jena; the chosen apostle of that striving for completeness of personality without which all special activity must of necessity fail to reach out into the highest sphere of human aspirations.

When men of marked originality delineate the character of other men, they at the same time bring before us their own fea-

tures. Herman Grimm's writings, therefore, although they are almost wholly devoted to the study of the works and lives of other writers and artists, at the same time give us a remarkably striking picture of himself. And it would be difficult to state more truthfully and simply the very essence of his individuality than by repeating what he has said of two men whose intellectual kinship with his own nature he has often acknowledged: Ralph Waldo Emerson and Ernst Curtius. This is his characterisation of the American thinker:

“Emerson nowhere lays down a system. It seems as though he were simply acting under the impulse of the moment to speak out what happens to be uppermost in his mind. But if one takes together all that he has thus said in the course of a long life, the numerous individual parts are seen to group themselves into a well rounded, harmonious whole. He is imbued with a

wonderful divination of the relationship of all moral phenomena. From the very first he feels what place belongs to each. Confusion becomes order before his glance. He expresses himself without any special exertion. Effortless and gently, as Nature herself seems to work even where the most terrible happens, his sentences chain themselves to each other, link by link. He never is out of breath; step by step he leads us from one thought to another. Always he simply speaks his mind, and utterances which at first seem strange soon come to sound natural and necessary, if one confidently tries to enter into their meaning."

And these are the words which less than a year ago the death of his friend Ernst Curtius wrung from his lips:

"Curtius had something inward in his manner. In speaking with him, you often remained so long without an answer that you might think he had not heard you or

not even listened. Then, as if awakening, he would give the answer. In general, there was something silent in him, and yet he found the greatest enjoyment and recreation in conversing and talking. He had seen and experienced much, and he spoke of it as though he were gathering old recollections for himself. He gladly pointed things out and explained, and always in a tone as though it was self-evident that his opinion was the only true one, that his insight was the higher one. There was something festal in his words and his bearing. He walked quick and free and joyful, as though encompassed by great thoughts. If one spoke to him on the street, he would seem surprised, and at his friends even he would look as though he recognised them only just now and were just seeing them again after a long separation. The youthfulness of his nature was indestructible. Even in his last days he walked about like

one of the Olympians who know nothing of death."

Here we have both the intellectual and the emotional side of Herman Grimm's own character clearly brought before us. Like Emerson, he disdains to bind himself to a strict philosophical system; he never attempts to formulate a general law of artistic or literary development; and yet, in analysing and interpreting the great works of the world's literature and art, he always makes us feel that they are necessary manifestations of a deep, mysterious force which regulates all human life. Like Curtius, he is essentially a lyric nature; what appeals to him in a statue or a poem is the inner vision rather than the outward form; what attracts him in an artist or a poet is what they have to say rather than how they say it. Like both Emerson and Curtius, he feels truly at home only in the calm world of ideas. With the present age and its

noisy, breathless activity he has little in common. He would flee away from what he has called "the deep, inward unrest of the moderns, which, at its climax to-day, drives us to despair."

With all this Herman Grimm is not a Romanticist of the Ruskinian type. His abhorrence of commonplace reality does not make him flee into the region of the fantastic. From nothing is he further removed than from the worship of the abnormal. On the contrary, if there is anything that stands out as the central thought of his writings, it is the conviction that the true leaders of mankind are only those men who have given expression to the universally human, who are intelligible to all ages and all races, who appeal to the simplest and most fundamental of feelings. And although the range of his vision is well-nigh limitless, although he is able to sympathise with the most different types of

character, with Erasmus and Dürer, with Saraceni and Carstens, with Shakspeare and Voltaire, with Overbeck and Boecklin, yet the true object of his whole literary activity is to rivet the eyes of the modern world upon those eternal heights where stand the ideal figures of a harmonious humanity—a Homer, a Dante, a Raphael, a Goethe.

What is Grimm's attitude toward these greatest of men?

Until the middle of the eighteenth century all literature and art was looked upon merely as the creation of a few isolated individuals. Herder, Winckelmann, and the Romanticists have taught us to understand these few great individuals as products of the physical, social, and mental conditions of the masses from whom they sprang, as spokesmen of their time, as representatives of wide-spread intellectual movements; and the works of these men

they have taught us to view less as proceeding from the conscious effort of private individuals than as born from the instinctive longings of the national spirit. Herman Grimm has by no means thrown away the invaluable insight gained by Herder and his followers. He would not have been a faithful keeper of the inheritance bequeathed to him by his father and his uncle, Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm, if he had not adhered to their belief in the inseparable union of national instincts and social currents with individual endeavour. Indeed, whatever may be said from the merely technical point of view against his first great book, the "Life of Michael Angelo," it would be preposterous to deny that here we have one of the few biographies of the world's literature which show us a man in the very centre of the conflicting tendencies of his time, or which bring out the very essence of a given age in the experiences

and aspirations of an individual life. And not even Taine could have expressed more tersely the overwhelming influence which the *milieu* exerts upon personality than these words from Grimm's essay on Carlo Saraceni:

“It would be a mistake to speak of the inevitable decline of Italian art after the death of Leonardo, Raphael, Correggio, Michael Angelo, and Titian, in the sense as though in these five men Art had exhausted herself. Who will say that the creative power of nature is limited to the production of a certain number of great men? If we nevertheless speak of the inevitable decline of Italian art at that time, we mean by it that, if in those days a genius had been born, as it well might have been, it would not have been able to unfold itself, because the force of circumstances would not have permitted it.”

Yet this very affinity between Grimm and

Taine in philosophic doctrine brings out all the more clearly the contrast between Grimm and Taine in philosophic temper. Taine thinks as a scientist; Grimm thinks as an artist. For Taine the general movement is of prime importance; Grimm lays the chief emphasis upon the individual who represents the general movement. Taine is greater in analysing men who seem to have been nothing but tools of the intellectual or moral development of mankind, whose strength seems to have been absorbed by living out a certain phase of the world's history; Grimm is greater in depicting men who seem to stand by themselves, who seem to have taken rescue from the whirlpool of circumstance and fate into the serene regions of personal freedom.

Two types of these greatest of men are Grimm's particular favourites. The first type is represented by Michael Angelo and Goethe. Men like them take hold of life

in all its varied relations; they are of the world; they try themselves in the most different fields of activity; they might equally well be statesmen, conquerors, artists, or philosophers; they show the impress of a continual grappling with new problems; it is impossible to understand their works without a full knowledge of their lives; the artist in them, however great, is yet of less significance to us than the man. The second type is that of men who, however stormy their existence in reality may be, as artists seem to be wholly independent of earthly vicissitudes. They are men who "aspire to belong to themselves in order to give form to what fills their imagination." They hardly seem to touch the ground; their spirits dwell above the earth, and their works, having been conceived in those higher regions "where the pure forms live," have something impersonal, one might say angelic, in them. Such men were Schiller and Raphael.

Which of these types Herman Grimm values most it would be hard to say. Although he has treated most fully the two men belonging to the former class, Michael Angelo and Goethe, one might almost feel inclined to infer from the peculiarly deep and mellow tone which pervades his "Life of Raphael," that his heart beats still more strongly for men of the latter stamp. And it seems as though we had a right to hope that he will be spared to give us an equally fine characterisation, and one as deeply felt, of the great German idealist, of Schiller. More than any other living man does Grimm seem predestined to bring the artist Schiller within the reach of modern feeling. For no other living man has the same wonderful faculty of creating *Stimmung* which he himself ascribes to Emerson:

"As the night-wind passing through the woods and over the meadows comes to us

laden with the sweet breath of trees and grasses and flowers which we have not seen, so he surrounds us with the atmosphere of things as if they were in reality near us."

Herman Grimm is something vastly more than a mere analyser and interpreter of other men's works. He is a creative artist; he is a portrait painter of consummate skill and refinement. And he is more than a portrait painter; he is equally exquisite in the landscape, in still life, even in heroic scenes. He possesses that delicate receptivity which enables the true artist to hear and see where other men are blind. He has the magic gift of making all things seem animate. By a word, by a mere interjection he transports his reader to the remotest times and lands; the strangest sights he makes familiar; he gives us a sense of being at home with the mighty shades of history. He is, in short, a reproductive genius such as there have been very

few in any age and among any people; and his writings will be reckoned in times to come with the finest productions of that wonderful epoch of poetry of which he and Paul Heyse are perhaps the last afterglow.

VIII.—IMPRESSIONS OF INDUSTRIAL AND PATRIARCHAL GERMANY

AUGUST, 1897.

WHAT in contemporary Germany most forcibly strikes one who has been out of its reach for some time is its intense modernness. It seems as though within twenty-five years the country had completely changed its moral complexion, as though it had leaped at a bound from a comparatively patriarchal condition into the very midst of modern capitalism and industrialism. That the very rapidity of this development has destroyed a good deal of what constituted the principal charm of German life in the time of our fathers, it would be idle to deny. The average German of to-

day, at least if he be selected from the higher classes, is not any more the youthful enthusiast and idealist of the old liberal type; he is rather a shrewd observer and a cool-headed manager of affairs, who despises the Greeks for having gone to war without having provided themselves with the necessary wherewithal. And the average German home of the same stratum of society, far from being distinguished for its simplicity and frugality, is rather marked by a degree of high living and display that would have astounded the contemporaries of Freiligrath and Platen. Whatever one may think of the present Emperor, he certainly is an adequate representative of an age full of restless ambition, overflowing with vitality, seeking new avenues of activity in every direction, luxurious, reveling in success and enjoyment, but somehow lacking in the finer aspirations and feelings. And no truer artistic index of

this newest phase of German life could have been found than the gorgeous monument which, by his Majesty's decree, has been erected in front of the austere old Hohenzollern castle in memory of Emperor William I—the “Wilhelm in der Löwengrube,” as Berlin popular humour has dubbed it, on account of the roaring lions that surround the equestrian statue of the Emperor himself—a work so pompous and supercilious that one rubs one's eyes to realise that *this* is meant to be the simple, good old man whose sole ambition it was to perform his daily duty well.

Fortunately signs are not lacking that all this outward display has not yet deeply affected the nation as a whole, so that, as it has been the result of the sudden accumulation of wealth it will pass away with the gradual absorption of this wealth by the masses. For alongside of the great industrial and commercial prosperity there has

come an intellectual awakening also which, although it has not had the same outward effect thus far, cannot fail to exert its influence on the future. I refer to the educating and humanising work done by the Socialist workmen clubs; to the extraordinary advances made by the woman movement; to the realistic wave in educational methods that set in with the school legislation of 1892; to the new public activity of the Church, as shown on the one hand in the great philanthropic undertakings of the conservative Pastor von Bodelschwingh, and on the other in the efforts of the liberal Pastor Naumann to create a national workingmen's party; and, above all, to the new literary movement.

It is, indeed, a matter for national rejoicing that just at this time two men of such profound earnestness of purpose and of such signal ability to grasp the one thing needful have come to the front as Haupt-

mann and Sudermann. Both men are now approaching the zenith of their power; both may look back upon a career of constantly ascending achievements. Hauptmann has risen from the hopelessness of "Vor Sonnenaufgang" to the *vita nuova* of the "Versunkene Glocke"; Sudermann, from the bitter sarcasm of "Sodoms Ende" to the Messianic forebodings of his "Johannes." Both seem predestined to conciliate the ideals of the old patriarchal Germany with the unruly claims and strivings of the new industrial Germany. And even now they seem to be nearer that harmonious view of life which is the indispensable condition for the creation of truly great works of art than their master Ibsen, who, by his uncompromising radicalism, is prevented from ever fully gratifying that most natural and most human demand of the ordinary man, the desire to be elevated and edified.

The literary career of both Hauptmann

and Sudermann has from the very first been distinguished by a deep moral fervour, by a holy zeal for truth, by a passionate longing for purity of thought and life; and even their darkest and seemingly hopeless pictures of social distress and rottenness have a glow of that enthusiasm which makes us see a new heaven and a new earth.

What could be gloomier or more depressing than the awful scenes of popular misery and degradation that are rolled up before us in Hauptmann's "Die Weber"? Yet never has there been produced a work of art which appealed more strongly to our moral instincts. Never has Poetry lifted her voice more solemnly for justice and humanity; never has she appeared more truly as a messenger from above, as an angel of divine wrath, as a prophetess of eternal judgments. What could be more oppressive and excruciating than the mental agonies portrayed in the same author's

“Einsame Menschen”—agonies of souls blindly struggling for freedom and light, craving for a life in the spirit, for completeness of existence, revelling in the thought of a new, all-embracing religion, but totally unable to cope with existing conditions, and therefore ground down under the wheels of inexorable reality? Yet I doubt whether there are many works of literature that preach more forcibly the necessity of self-discipline, that impress us more deeply with the beauty of simple right-mindedness, or that glorify more truthfully a brave aggressive idealism.

Sudermann's artistic temper is diametrically opposed to that of Hauptmann. Hauptmann is lyrical, Sudermann is rhetorical; Hauptmann is a strange combination of sublime visions and cruel disenchantments, of fantastic mysticism and impressionist realism, of pantheistic ideals and a hidden longing for the lost belief of

childhood; Sudermann is absolutely straightforward, there are no mysterious recesses in him, he is a single-minded champion of intellectual freedom and unhampered individuality. Yet in spite of these differences in the artistic temper of the two men, the moral effect of Sudermann's dramas is very similar to that of Hauptmann's. Take such a play as "Die Ehre" with its lurid descriptions of baseness and debauchery. The effect of this drama is not debasing or enervating. On the contrary, it is stimulating and stirring in the highest degree. It affects us as a formidable arraignment of social conditions which it is for us to set right; like Schiller's youthful dramas, it fills us with moral indignation; it inspires us with a solemn determination to put our hand to the plough which is to rake up the barren field of humanity and open it to the wholesome influx of light and air. Or take the most widely

known of Sudermann's earlier works, "Heimat." What gives to this drama its distinguishing feature and its abiding value is that here we have not merely a domestic tragedy of the order of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," not merely a breaking loose from family ties that have become intolerable, not merely a revolt against a paternal authority which stifles individual life, but beside and above all this an ever-present sense of the sacredness of personal obligations and a recognition of the supreme duty of faithfulness to one's higher self.

Indeed, it is not surprising that these two men, Hauptmann and Sudermann, should have come to be acknowledged as the real leaders in the new literary movement of Germany. From the very first they have given a voice to the hopes, longings, and perplexities bound up with the essentially modern problems of modern life; and nearly every new work of theirs has marked

a step forward, has brought them nearer to that comprehensiveness of view from which the conflicts of existence appear not any more as irreconcilable and permanent, but as fleeting discords dissolving into the strains of the world's universal symphony, thereby increasing its volume and heightening its beauty.

While youngest Germany is thus working out its destiny under auspices upon the whole encouraging, old Germany is by no means dead. Some days ago I had a glimpse of it, when Herman Grimm gave me a drama written by his wife, Giesela von Arnim, the daughter of Bettina, which he himself, since her death some eight years ago, has edited with loving care. Herman Grimm himself is a noble representative of that golden age of letters at the beginning of this century, when it was still possible for the man of culture to develop all his faculties into a harmonious whole;

and as he sat opposite me in his study, talking in his fascinating manner—a combination of frankness, melancholy, gracefulness, benignity, and humour—about his hopes for America, about the formalism of modern philological learning, about his uncle Jacob, his father, Bettina, and other noble shades of the past, it seemed to me that I had never seen a man who was so perfect an embodiment of mental and moral refinement, or such a living protest against the materialism of the day. Giesela must have been a woman in every way worthy of a man like Herman Grimm and in every way worthy of the noble traditions implied by the name of Arnim. And we probably do not go astray in thinking that it is partly the inherited longings and aspirations of the Arnim family which in this posthumous drama of hers (the work of decades, as her husband tells us) have found a supreme poetic expression.

Its title is "Alt Schottland"; its plot centres around the futile efforts of Charles Edward, the last Stuart pretender, to reconquer the throne of his fathers. The conflict which pervades the action is similar to that now being waged between the old Germany and the new: on the one hand, chivalrous old Scotland, with its mountains and lakes, its legends and songs, its secluded country homes, its faithfulness and devotion; on the other, commercial England, with its highly developed city life, its party struggles, its popular freedom, its selfishness and greed. In the midst of this conflict there stands a figure of wonderful impressiveness and pathos: Lord Jacob Mac Orn, an old Scotch nobleman whose house is drawn into the ruin of the luckless dynasty with which all his best feelings are associated. Herman Grimm makes it probable that this Scottish lord is a composite portrait, as it were, of Giesela's father,

Achim von Arnim, and of Jacob Grimm. Like Jacob Grimm, he is a silver-haired patriarch, revelling in the traditions of the past and feeling nowhere happier than in the quiet realm of his library. Like Achim von Arnim, he is an uncrowned king, undisputed lord of his estate and his family, with every fibre of his being bound to his native soil, but his face turned toward the regions of the infinite and the eternal. A cousin of his, instigated by his English wife, intrigues against him, seeking to put himself in possession of his estate. The lawsuit about the ownership of this estate, which has been going on for some time, would undoubtedly have been decided in Lord Jacob's favour if the perfidious English woman had not managed to destroy the documentary evidence; so that the case cannot be settled by the courts, but has to be submitted to the good pleasure of the King. And since Lord Jacob is reported

to have given shelter in his castle to the fugitive Charles Edward, the King decides against him.

The scene where the old nobleman, upon receipt of the fatal news, takes leave of the home of his ancestors, and, surrounded by his family and his servants, goes out into the world, is the climax of the play and one of the most affecting in dramatic literature. The faithless cousin and his wife are staying as guests in the house, for it is the old patriarch's birthday and a gay festival has been planned by the household. But now the guests have suddenly become the owners, and the festival is changed to a funeral. It seems as though the old squire could not tear himself away from the spot where his whole life has been spent so honourably and fruitfully. He stops at every nook and corner of the ancestral hall; he addresses the chairs, the tables hallowed by sacred memories; he lingers over the

thought of the beloved ones that have passed beyond from out these walls. At last, when he comes to the place where, years ago, he pressed the last kiss upon the lips of his wife, he faints away. He is thought to be dead. The children and the household burst into cries of mingled grief and wrath. Only Elinor, his heroic daughter, feels it cannot be the last. She kneels down at his side; she throws her arms around him; she calls up before him the form, the voice of her mother; she strikes on the harp the tune of "Old Scotland," an ancient national hymn which seems to voice the feelings of this family in all great crises. And now the old man rises as in a trance; he grasps the harp himself and fingers it mightily; the whole household breaks out with fervent passion in the beloved hymn, and thus, supported by his sons, and followed by his faithful folk, he strides away, a Cæsar, a conquerer of worlds invisible!

Truly, the whole Ibsenite company of cynics, modern prophets, and would-be reformers seem to sink into nothingness if brought face to face with characters of such genuine grandeur as this simple-minded country nobleman of the old school; and it is devoutly to be hoped that the rapid modernisation of her social conditions through which Germany is at present passing, will not lead her away from the ideals of life which this man so superbly represents.

IX.—MAX HALBE'S "MOTHER
EARTH"

JANUARY, 1898.

THE rapidity with which things have been moving in Germany since the final establishment of political unity, in 1870, is truly astonishing. Thirty years ago no one would have dreamed of the possibility of English commerce ever being seriously threatened by Germany; to-day the German flag is the principal rival of the Union Jack in nearly every quarter of the globe. At the Centennial Exposition of 1876 the German industrial exhibit was characterised by the German commissioner himself as "cheap and worthless"; at Chicago, in 1894, German manufactures formed in quality as well as bulk perhaps the most

noteworthy part of the whole exposition. Twenty years ago hardly a woman student was to be found at the German universities; during the current semester there are two hundred women hearers at the University of Berlin alone. Fifteen years ago the répertoire of the German stage depended, apart from Shakspeare and the German classics of the eighteenth century, largely on Norwegian and French importations; to-day Sudermann and Hauptmann are being brought out in London and Paris, and in Germany itself there has rallied around their names a new dramatic school, thoroughly German, thoroughly realistic, and thoroughly alive to the vital questions of the day.

One of the latest productions of this new school—"Mother Earth," a tragedy by Max Halbe—has recently been received with such general approval, both by the critics and the public of the great centres

of German culture, that it may fairly be accepted as representative of the prevailing literary drift of the present generation. Halbe is not a novice in dramatic art. Among his earlier dramas there are at least three of decided individuality and power: "The Upstart" (1889), a fearful picture of elemental passions burying a German peasant home in wreck and ruin; "Icedriftings" (1892), a merciless exposition of the moral rottenness which, according to Halbe, has undermined the very breastworks of modern society, so that they will surely crumble away when the autumnal floods of popular revolt are coming; "Youth" (1893), a fascinating though depressing tale of a boyish love heedlessly rushing into sin and disaster. But only with "Mother Earth" has Halbe struck a theme which leads into the very midst of the great struggle that divides modern Germany into two hostile camps, the struggle between the traditions of the past and the ideals of the future.

The particular form which this struggle assumes in the present case is the conflict between love pure and simple, based upon instinct and the emotions, and the sublimated love of intellectual companionship.

Paul Warkentin, the son of an East Elbian country gentleman (all these modernest Germans are East Elbians), became acquainted, while studying at Berlin, with a young woman of superior intellect and will-power, Hella Bernhardt by name. The daughter of a university professor, she had from childhood on led a city life, and being of an almost masculine bent of mind, had early become absorbed in the problems of the day, particularly in the woman movement. To Paul, the dreamy, undeveloped country boy, she opened a new world of ideas; and the natural consequence was their engagement and subsequent marriage. The latter, however, was not accomplished without a violent catastrophe. For Paul's

father, who naturally wished his son to be his successor in the management of the estate, insisted on his marrying one of the girls of the neighborhood, Antoinette, a playmate of Paul's in his country school-days, to whom he had been as much as engaged when he left for the university. And when Paul refused both to marry Antoinette and to assume the management of the estate, the irascible old gentleman forbade him his house.

All this has happened some ten years ago. Since then Paul and his wife have plunged into the exciting life of Berlin journalism, they have been editing a paper bearing the suggestive name of *Women's Rights*, and, if we may trust Hella's own statements, have played a considerable part in radical politics. Now the father has suddenly died; and, for the first time since his marriage, Paul re-enters the house of his ancestors to pay the last homage to the de-

parted one. Hella accompanies him, although she hates to leave the city, and begrudges the delay which this trip will cause in the printing of her next editorial in *Women's Rights*. However, to recompense herself for this intellectual sacrifice, she has brought with her a young admirer of hers, who will help her reading proof while Paul is busy with the funeral arrangements or receives visits of condolence! Paul, on the other hand, with the first step over the threshold of his old home, feels himself drawn back into the spell of the long-neglected but ever-precious recollections of his youth. And so it is not surprising that husband and wife do not harmonise as well in these new, quiet surroundings as they seemed to do in the bustling stir of the capital. In fact, they are at odds in small things as well as great. Paul is deeply touched at the sight of the parlour chandelier lit in his honour by the old maiden aunt,

his foster-mother;—Hella thinks such sentimentality ridiculous. Paul comes in, covered with snow and glowing with delight over a ride he has taken on horseback through the wintry landscape, the first one for ten years: “Ah, you don’t know what it is to be a man until you feel a horse under you!”—Hella wishes herself to be back at her desk in the editor’s office. And when Hella reminds her husband of the days when they were still battling shoulder to shoulder in the good fight for the betterment of the race, he breaks out: “Fight for the betterment of the race? You had better speak of the dissipation of my energies, the benumbing of my natural instincts, the bankruptcy of my moral life—that is what has been the result of this artificial existence of ours, this continual restlessness, this bookishness, these airy abstractions, this cutting loose from the soil where our true strength is rooted.”

It is after one of these scenes (needless to say!) that Antoinette, the love of Paul's boyhood, appears. After having been jilted by Paul, the impetuous girl, out of sheer despair, had thrown herself away on the first man that asked for her hand, a worthless, rollicking, dissipated Junker of the neighbourhood; and since then she has been leading a wretched and ignominious life, hating herself, her husband, the world. Now she sees Paul again, and his face at once reveals to her his history. "One consolation is left me," she tells him; "you have made me unhappy, but you are unhappy too! And to enjoy that I am here!" Paul, on his part, is transfixed. All his ideals of an active and useful life, all the traditions of his home, with its friendly human intercourse, its naturalness, its honesty and soundness, seem to him to have taken form in this daughter of his own native soil, this superb, beautiful woman, all the more beau-

tiful to him for her grief. For she is grieving for him! She might have been his! And he has thrown her away to attach himself to a mere shadow, to a sexless being in whose veins there flows no blood, and whose brain is thinking thoughts that have no meaning for him!

Up to this point the action of the play is perfectly consistent, in a way even fascinating; for Halbe is a master of those little illuminating touches which bring out with lifelike energy the great contrast that pervades the whole drama. But now we have arrived at the crucial point of the plot. What is Paul to do? Is he to leave Hella and return to his first love, or is he to remain faithful to his marital vow and suppress his instinctive longings? Either solution, it seems to me, would have been artistically possible, and to a degree even satisfactory. For Hella appears from the very first so entirely devoid not only of womanly

grace, but of womanly feeling also, so utterly incapable of even understanding her wifely duties, that one would greet Paul's deserting her for Antoinette almost with joy, savage though this joy might be. It would be a return to nature—to undefiled, sensuous, exuberant nature; it would be violence, but it would be violence that overturns a false, a vicious order of things, that sets things into their right relations. On the other hand, if Paul and Antoinette were to renounce each other, this, too, would be in a way a satisfactory ending. It would be a moral victory—a victory of duty over instinct. Both Paul and Antoinette would return to their daily tasks, enriched and strengthened by the rapturous feelings which the assurance of their spiritual inseparableness has brought them. And both would find ample opportunity for making humanity reap the fruits of their bitter experience—Paul by devoting him-

self with a higher heart and a nobler purpose to the cause for which he has been working these last ten years; Antoinette by giving herself to that most womanly of occupations, the healing of wounds and the relieving of distress.

Halbe has chosen to follow neither of these two lines of thought. Instead, he makes the two lovers go hand in hand into death, "return to Mother Earth," as they say themselves. This seems to me, even apart from the melodramatic manner in which it is brought about, an utterly indefensible ending of the play, for it is in vain that Halbe tries to justify it by Hella's unwillingness to relieve her husband from his vows. Its true reason (not justification) lies in the fact that Halbe, like nearly all the other representatives of youngest Germany, is given over to a hopeless fatalism which makes him shrink from any kind of free moral

decision. And here, too, is to be sought the reason for the inexpressible gloom which nearly all the productions of this latest literary school exert upon us. No one would deny the power and brilliancy of these young writers, no one could help feeling grateful for the new life which they have infused into the drama. Works like Hartleben's "Hanna Jagert," like Hirschfeld's "Die Mütter," like Halbe's "Jugend" and "Mutter Erde" are symptoms of a literary activity that promises much. But these promises will not be fully realised until the Germans have, once for all, cast the pessimism of Ibsen and Tolstoi behind them, until they have learned once more to believe in moral freedom, until they once more shall dare to defy reality. This it is that gives to works like Hauptmann's "Versunkene Glocke," and Sudermann's "Johannes," such a great symptomatic significance. For here we

feel indeed the pulse of a new time, here we see clearly the beginnings of a new idealism.

X.—SUDERMANN'S "JOHN THE BAPTIST"

FEBRUARY, 1898.

THE cable has informed us that Sudermann's "Johannes," on its first production, on January 16, in the Deutsches Theater of Berlin, in spite of the elaborate stage setting, and in spite of the superb acting of Josef Kainz and Agnes Sorma, was at least a partial failure. If this be true, one cannot help thinking that the failure was due chiefly to the fact that the audience, through the attempted prohibition of the performance by the police, had been led to expect something like a Biblical extravaganza, and was naturally loath to be put off with a religious drama of deep poetic feeling. The lover of literature, and the

lover of German literature in particular, will judge this play differently; he will carry away from its reading a sense of profound gratitude to Sudermann for having once more (and this time more emphatically than ever) stepped forward as a leader in the upward, idealistic movement which, in various ways, had made itself felt for some time past until last year it broke forth with an overpowering wealth of poetry in Hauptmann's "The Sunken Bell."

Sudermann's John the Baptist is indeed a counterpart to Hauptmann's Henry, the bell-founder. The fate of both is genuinely tragic. The mediæval mystic succumbs in striving for an artistic ideal too grand and too shadowy for human imagination. The Jewish prophet succumbs in striving for a moral ideal too visionary and too austere for human happiness. Both lose faith in themselves and in their mission, and both rise through their very failure to the height

of true humanity. Nothing is more impressive in Sudermann's drama than the way in which this disenchantment of the prophet with himself, this gradual awakening to the sense of his fundamental error, and the final bursting forth of the true light from doubt and despair, are brought before us.

In the beginning we see the preacher in the wilderness. He has gathered about himself the laden and the lowly. With burning words he speaks to them of the woe of the time, of the misery of the people trodden into the dust both by the foreign conqueror and by its own rulers, tormented by its traditional obedience to a heartless, inexorable law. And he holds out to them the vision of the deliverer and avenger that is to come: the Messiah, clad in splendour, like the King of the heavenly host, the cherubim around him on armoured steeds and with flaming swords, ready to crush

and to slaughter. Yet, irresistible and intoxicating as his harangues are, an occasional look, an occasional word betrays even here that his faith is not born of a free and joyous surrender to the divine, but of a dark, brooding fanaticism, and we feel instinctively that it will not stand the test of self-scrutiny.

Next he appears in the streets of Jerusalem, inciting the populace to revolt against Herod and his lustful house, especially against the scandalous marriage into which the tetrarch has just entered with Herodias, the divorced wife of his own brother, and which he wishes to have sanctioned by the synagogue. But here again it is the blind fanatic rather than the inspired leader whom we hear in John's language. Having led the infuriated mob to the King's palace, he is at a loss what to do, he feels lonely in the midst of the surging crowd, he longs for his rocks in the

wilderness; and when the Pharisees take this opportunity to embarrass him by mocking questions about the new Law the advent of which he has been holding out to his hearers, he has no answer. Just then there is heard out of the midst of the populace the voice of a Galilean pilgrim: "Higher than Law and Sacrifice is Love!" It is the message of him whose coming John has been preaching without divining his true call. This word strikes deep into his soul, all the deeper since he evidently himself has all along been dimly groping for a similar thought. For the first time he doubts his own mission, for the first time there looms up before him the vision of something more exalted than his own dream of the Messiah.

Again he rises to his full power as a hero of asceticism in his interview with Herodias and her wanton daughter Salome. Salome has been fascinated by the weird, fan-

tastic appearance of this man with the lion's mane and the far-away look in his eyes; she wishes to flirt with him, to tame him, to possess him. When he enters the palace, she receives him with a shower of roses and the voluptuous songs of her maidens. But he remains unmoved. "Gird thy loins," he says to her, "and turn away from me in sackcloth and ashes. For I have been sent as a wrath over thee and as a curse to destroy thee." And he does not seem to notice that this very curse affects the infatuated girl like a magic love potion.

Herodias, too, wishes to win him—she wishes to make him a tool of her political designs, to stifle through him the popular opposition to the clerical sanction of her marriage; and she attempts to bribe him by offering him the charms of her daughter. But again his only answer is: "Adulteress!" And yet even this victory over sensual temptation leaves a sting in his

soul; for again he hears that mysterious word, Love, and he must remain silent when Herodias calls out to him: "What right have you to judge the guilty, you who flee from human life into the loneliness of the desert? What do you know of those who live and die for love's sake?"

And now he comes to see that he does not understand even those nearest to him. The wife of his favourite disciple comes to him and beseeches him to give back to her the heart of her husband; for since he has joined the band of the Baptist's followers he has forsaken his home and forgotten his kindred. And John never knew anything of this man's inner life, he knew nothing of the love that he is accused of having stifled! Who, then, is he to teach others—he who is constantly confronted with his own limitations, who must confess to himself that he is without a guiding principle of his own conduct! Where is there an

outlook for him? Where is the path toward his salvation? Is it this Love that is thrust upon him from all sides? No, no; it cannot be. Love is littleness, is weakness, is selfishness, is sin! No, the only salvation lies in the Messiah, in him who is to come in heavenly splendour, surrounded by the rainbow, the King of Kings, the great fulfiller and judge! Thus he tries to assure himself, thus he strains every nerve to maintain his tottering belief in his mission, to keep awake the hope of his poor downtrodden people. And from this very people, from the mouth of an old wretched beggar-woman, he now hears for the first time the full, the cruel truth: "We do not want your Messiah! We do not want your King! Kings come only to kings; they have nothing in common with us, the poor. Go away; let us alone, you false prophet!"

Immediately after this scene the climax

is reached. Ever since the Baptist for the first time heard that mysterious message of Love, he has been endeavouring to discover whence it came. In a vague manner he has associated it with the noble youth whom years ago he baptised in the Jordan, and from whom he has in some way hoped for the fulfilment of his Messianic dreams. Now he learns from some Galilean fishermen that this Jesus of Nazareth has indeed brought a new gospel—not the gospel of a superhuman Messiah, but of human brotherhood and kindness, of the love of one's enemies, the very gospel of which John, through the bitter disenchantment, has gradually become the worthiest prophet. Just after this meeting with the Galileans he is drawn into the surging throng of the populace, who have streamed together to make a forcible attack upon Herod and his wife as they, in solemn procession, repair to the temple. Torn with

conflicting feelings as he is, unable to collect his thoughts, he is pushed along to the steps of the temple. A stone is forced into his hand: he is to execute the judgment of the people against the vicious King himself. Mechanically he lifts the stone; he calls out to Herod: "In the name of him who—"; but the stone glides from his hand, and he stammers—"of him who bade me love you!"

The rest of the drama brings little new of inner experience. Once more John rises to the full grandeur of the Old Testament prophet. Imprisoned, and led before the love-infatuated Salome, he once more defies her raging passion. He dies with words of peace and hope upon his lips. Immediately after his execution there is heard from the street the hosannah of the jubilant masses greeting the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

It may be that here and there in this

drama there is an overdose of staginess; staginess is undoubtedly the danger of Sudermann's talent. It may be that the realistic touches are here and there a little forced, and seem like effects borrowed from the religious paintings of Múnkacsy. It may be that the talk of the Roman soldiery smacks a little too much of the jargon of the Prussian officers of the guard. And there can be no doubt that the figure of Salome, this self-conscious, calculating Berlin coquette, falls far behind that ravishing creation of Heine's fancy after which she has been modelled:

“ In den Händen trägt sie immer
Jene Schüssel mit dem Haupte
Des Johannes, und sie küsst es,
Ja sie küsst das Haupt mit Inbrunst.

“ War vielleicht ein Bischen böse
Auf den Liebsten, liess ihn köpfen;
Aber als sie auf der Schüssel
Das geliebte Haupt erblickte,

“ Weinte sie und ward verrückt,
Und sie starb in Liebeswahnsinn.
(Liebeswahnsinn! Pleonasmus!
Liebe ist ja schon ein Wahnsinn!)”

But what does all this mean beside the fact that in the Baptist himself Sudermann has created a character worthy of Schiller's genius; a character which arouses in us emotions such as our forefathers must have felt when they saw the first performance of a "Jungfrau von Orleans" or a "Wilhelm Tell"; a character which, we may confidently hope, will be a source of inspiration and delight to our children and our children's children.

XI.—ARNOLD BÖCKLIN

JULY, 1898.

IT is surprising how indifferent the majority of American art students and cultivated Americans in general are towards whatever Germany has accomplished in the Fine Arts. While the Gothic architecture of France and England, Italian painting and sculpture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the Renaissance architecture of Italy and France, and modern French and English painting have engaged both the careful attention of specialists and the devoted interest of the wider circle of art-lovers, it would be in vain to search among us for a single prominent advocate or exponent of German achievements in these three sister arts. Where is there in this country an opportunity to study adequately the wonder-

ful development of German church-building during the Romanesque period? How much is known, even by professional art critics, of the superb thirteenth-century sculptures, in Naumburg, Wechselburg, Bamberg, or Freiburg; how much of the extraordinary wood-carvings of the fifteenth century, such as the altar-works of Michael Pacher and Hans Brüggemann? What American contribution has there been made—if we except the admirable work done by S. R. Koehler—towards a fuller knowledge even of such men as Dürer and Holbein? And how many Americans are there to whom the names of Karl Rottmann, Ludwig Richter, Moritz von Schwind, and Anselm Feuerbach are more than mere names?

It looks as though the same fate was about to overtake the life-work of Arnold Böcklin; and yet it is safe to say not only that the paintings of Böcklin are filling the

imagination of cultivated Germans of the present day to a degree rarely equalled by artists of former ages, but that they are entitled to the earnest consideration of all those—whether they be Europeans or Americans—to whom art is still a chosen interpreter of the deepest mysteries of life.

There is probably no artist of modern times in whom elemental instinct has burst forth with such tempestuous power as in Böcklin. There may be painters who, like Turner, surpass him in glow and brilliancy of colour; others, such as Puvis de Chavannes, may be his superiors in delicacy of tint and outline; still others, as for instance Verestchagin, may have a surer grasp in reproducing actual happening. But not since the days of the Renaissance has there been his like in exultant sense of creative vitality. Most artists are copyists. They merely tell, in one way or another, what they find in real life; they derive all

their conceptions from what they see or hear. Only the greatest create their own world. It is to these that Böcklin belongs. Whether we like his conceptions or not, it would never occur to us to deny them their right of existence, as little as we should think of disputing the legitimacy of the manifold forms and types of Nature herself. This alone would be sufficient to give Böcklin a place among the chosen few. What gives him an added significance for our own time, what makes him a representative of modern life, is that he, more intensely than any other artist, seems to have felt in himself the two contrasting passions of the modern world: its feverish striving, its indomitable thirst for boundless activity, and, at the same time, its deep, inarticulate craving for spiritual peace.

Perhaps the most striking example of the Titanic impetuosity of Böcklin's art is his "Prometheus." Not even the masters of

the frieze of Pergamon entered more fully into the spirit of fierce revolt that characterises the ancient story of the fight of the giants against the gods. But to this spirit of defiance there is added in Böcklin a sublime touch of mysticism. This colossal but shadowy figure that we see chained to the summit of the mountain, stretching out over its whole ridge, half mingling with the clouds that surround it, we feel to be a part of the universal yearning and struggling of creation for a higher existence. Indeed, it seems as though dumb nature had found a voice in this suffering man. He, rather than the rocks upon which he lies, seems to form the real summit of the mountain; and as we see the waves of purple Okeanos dashing against its base, as we see the forests on its slope bending down before the raging gale, we cannot help imagining that all this together—sea, rocks, forests, clouds, and man—is one

gigantic being, throbbing with passionate life, brimming over, even in defeat, with indomitable energy and desire. How insipid and sentimental do most of the modern representations of Prometheus appear by the side of this truly Æschylean conception!

It is, however, not only in such intrinsically heroic situations that Böcklin's extraordinary sense for the elemental forces of nature and their restless weaving and working asserts itself. Indeed, one might describe most of his pictures as illustrations to the words of the Earth-Spirit in "Faust":

"In Lebensfluten, im Thatensturm
 Wall ich auf und ab,
 Wehe hin und her.
 Geburt und Grab,
 Ein ewiges Meer,
 Ein wechselnd Weben,
 Ein glühend Leben—
 So schaff ich am sausenden Webstuhl der Zeit
 Und wirke der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid."

Or rather, most of his paintings seem to quiver with that intense, eager, ceaseless emotion by which such an activity as the Earth-Spirit's must be accompanied.

What an irrepressible animal exuberance, for instance, breathes in his pictures of the sea! To him every wave is a living being. As they dance and glitter in the sunshine, as they roll and heave in the storm, as they break over each other and spread into foamy whirls, as they glide gently upon the sand, every one of them seems to feel, to sing, to wail, to long, or to rejoice. And at the same time the sea as a whole seems to be a huge, many-headed, mysterious monster, of insatiable appetites, of unfathomable power, and of endlessly changing forms. So that we are not in the least surprised to see all sorts of fantastic shapes and faces, mermaids, sea-dragons, centaurs, and fabulous serpents, lurking in the water and on the shore, riding on the crests of waves or diving into the deep.

One of these pictures shows a valley between two gigantic rollers, evidently in mid-ocean; no distant view; nothing but this enormous mass of surging water. But on the top of one of the waves there comes riding along a shaggy ocean monster, a fat, brown, rollicking, sea-captain-like fellow, and his sudden appearance frightens some mermaids that are sporting below, so that they plunge headforemost into the protecting element. Another picture shows the breakers dashing over some barren rocks in the sea; on one of the rocks there sits a grizzly Triton blowing lustily into a tortuous shell which serves him for a trumpet; at his side, stretched out on her back, there lies a naked woman, letting the waves wash over her voluptuously, one of her hands lazily bent backward to her neck, the other playing with a gorgeous snake that has raised its luring head and part of its glittering body from under the water. In still

another picture of this kind we see the towering cliffs of a desolate coast; the surf is just receding, in rapid eddies, through the crevices of the rocks and boulders. In the middle of the cliffs there is a cavern-like chasm, and here there stands, leaning against the bare wall, a strange, super-humanly beautiful woman, her dark hair flowing upon her shining shoulders, her eye rapturously following the receding floods, while at the same time she drinks in the sound of an Æolian harp that is suspended at the opening of the ravine.

In all this, what a wonderful fascination, what an irresistible passion, what a glowing, daring, bewildering life! Is it a wonder that Böcklin touches the heart of modern men? Is not this the way in which modern men live—feverishly working, feverishly enjoying, crowding eternities into a brief, hasty moment? Is not this an age of giants and of demigods? And do we not

even in nature see our own selves, do we not even from nature derive excitement and intensified energy rather than edification and calm? I believe that, in spite of the classical form of many of his conceptions, there is, in this respect at least, no more intensely modern artist than Böcklin.

Herman Grimm, to whom we owe an admirable analysis of Böcklin's character, finds in him a lack of spirituality. He notices an underlying sadness in his work, and thinks its effect disquieting rather than uplifting. That here a real limitation of Böcklin's genius is touched upon is made perfectly apparent if we compare his sensuous and decidedly earthy creations with the soaring conceptions of a man with whom in artistic power he has a good deal in common: the unswerving idealist Watts. And yet I cannot help thinking that, if Böcklin lacks spirituality, he certainly does not lack the desire for spirituality. No man

could have created such works as "The Silence of the Forest," or "The Palace by the Sea," or "The Playing Hermit" who had not a deep-rooted craving for redemption from this busy show world, who did not feel the awe of the Infinite. And does there exist a more perfect symbol of the longing of modern humanity for transfiguration and peace than Böcklin's "Isle of the Dead"? Again we are in the middle of the sea. Out of the endless glassy calm there rises a rocky island. It seems a burnt-out volcano; on its sides we see, hewn into the rock, openings that remind one of the Christian catacombs. Waterfalls float like veils over the surface of the rocks and lose themselves gently in the sea. In the middle of the island there is a labyrinth of cypresses. Their tops rise above the surrounding cliffs and are being lashed by a storm that sweeps along in the higher regions. But in the forest itself there

reigns absolute stillness and a mysterious dusk. In the foreground, on the water, there drifts a boat towards the island—no sail, no rudder, no oarsmen; a figure, shrouded in a white garment, stands in it, erect, but with bowed head. Soon it will have reached its goal.

XII.—HEINRICH SEIDEL

AUGUST 1898.

WHAT a pleasure it is (and what a rare one) to meet a man who, in the midst of an active and busy career, surrounded by humdrum cares and duties, struggling with the stern realities of existence, has still preserved all the joyfulness, receptivity, and fancifulness of his childhood, and who, above the noise and din of his work-a-day world, leads a life of gay and sunny visions! Such a man is Heinrich Seidel. In reading him we are made to forget that there is a threatening social question, that there is an imperious popular demand for sweeping political reforms; or rather, we are made to feel that these social and political reforms will be

of no avail, if they do not involve the maintenance and strengthening of those virtues of individual character which are the foundation of all society: faith, purity, discipline, cheerfulness, loyalty, love.

Seidel is the poet of the commonplace, more especially of the commonplace in modern city life. He has the pure and unclouded eye which detects joy and inspiration even in the monotonous drudgery of the factory and the counting-room, and which finds a reflex of the divine even in back alleys and tenement houses. He has that reverence for the humble and the unpretentious which makes him discover worlds of feelings, longings, and aspirations where others would see nothing but anonymous philistinism. He is the Ludwig Richter of modern German burgherdom.

To what extent Seidel even now, as a man of over fifty, is dominated by the im-

pressions of his youth, we see in his recently published autobiography. It is a touching sight to see this strong, martial-looking man, this hardy Mecklenburger who made his way from his father's country parsonage to a leading position in the engineering department of one of the foremost German railway systems, who may justly claim the honour of having achieved one of the most remarkable feats of modern iron architecture: the huge iron frame roof that overarches the Anhalter Bahnhof at Berlin—to see such a man revelling in the simplest odds and ends of family recollections, and taking an infinite delight in the most harmless kind of friendly jokes.

I select a few scenes which will give an idea of the poetic charm that surrounds the matter-of-fact experiences of this honest German burgher. Speaking of the fine sense of justice which surprises us so often in children with regard to the kind of pun-

ishment meted out to their offences, Seidel recalls an occasion where the fact that he received less of a retribution than he knew he deserved tormented him more deeply than any chastisement that had ever been inflicted on him.

“I had teased my little brother Werner by bending a piece of whalebone back and letting it snap against his hand—as every boy knows, a very painful device. He cried for mother. She came, and as a punishment simply struck me with the slender whalebone a few times on the palm of my hand, which of course I hardly felt. But in my heart I feel it deeply, and a boundless admiration seized me for the goodness and magnanimity of my mother, who thus misjudged me *in meliorem partem*. I stole into a corner and my tears flowed freely. Even in after-years I could not get over the feeling of contrition that took hold of me, whenever I thought of this little incident.

Had my mother punished me in the same painful way in which I had sinned, we should have been quits, and never would she have appeared to me in such an angelic light as was now the case."

The father appears to have entered much less deeply into young Seidel's life than the mother. He seems to have been a man entirely absorbed in his clerical duties and occasional poetic musings, and one cannot help thinking that the son often longed in vain for closer intimacy with him. There is, then, a peculiar pathos in the fact that after his death the thought of him seems to have been for years so constantly in Seidel's mind that it took the form of an ever and ever recurring dream. Seidel describes this dream in the following manner:

"My father had not really been buried, but in his place a coffin laden with stones; while he himself had gone far away and was

now living as a wanderer in distant mountains. He had regained his health, and though he looked very emaciated, he had a brown, healthy complexion and an elastic step. The longing to see his family again would from time to time draw him back to us; but it was a deep secret that he was still alive, and nobody was to know it. After a short sojourn with us, he would wander away again. Once I had this dream again, this time with the variation that people were on his track and we had to conceal him. We took him into a large subterranean wareroom, where one vault led to another, and sought for a hiding-place among the innumerable boxes and bales that were stored there. All the while we heard the talking and walking about of the people who were in search of him. Finally the danger was past and we took him to the sea and bade him farewell. Over the sea a wooden bridge had been built, which to-

ward the horizon lost itself in the distance. He took his long walking staff, which was higher than himself, seized it about two-thirds of its length, and went out on the bridge, putting down the staff for support at every step. We stood on the shore looking after him, and he became smaller and smaller and finally disappeared at a little point in the distance. Since then this dream has not come again."

Even if we did not hear from Seidel himself that he is a great admirer of Amadeus Hoffmann, the Romanticist of Romanticists, in conceptions like these—and there are many similar ones—we should detect the romantic element as an important part in Seidel's literary make-up. Fortunately, his romanticism has not a trace of Hoffmann's morbidness; it is inwardly sound; it is tempered by common sense and humour; and the result is that, far from leading us into a world of incongruous hallucinations, it

gives us an enlarged view of reality, because it shows us reality in the glamour of an inner light which has its origin in regions inaccessible to the intellect.

None of Seidel's creations shows this two-fold character of his fancy more strikingly than that figure by which his name will probably longest be remembered: the inimitable Leberecht Hühnchen and his circle.

Here again we observe the intimate connection between Seidel's literary activity and the impressions of his own life; for the prototype of Leberecht Hühnchen was a fellow-student of Seidel's at the Polytechnikum of Hanover whom in his autobiography he characterises thus:

“ Being of extremely slender means, he had to peg along through all sorts of hardships. But all the time something like sunshine emanated from him, and he knew how to find a serene side in everything. He

could take infinite glee in grotesque conceptions and inventions. Once I found him sitting at his window and looking out upon the square in front with an expression of intense amusement. I asked him what entertained him so much. 'Oh,' said he, 'I am only imagining that I could suddenly dart out my nose way off into the square and quickly draw it in again, so that I could tip with it the people yonder on the shoulder; and then, when they looked round, frightened and surprised, nobody would be there.'

Here is the germ of that harmless, contented, moderately fantastic, and withal so thoroughly sound and useful life of which the good Leberecht forms the centre. But how this life has expanded under Seidel's hands, how its meaning has deepened!

The very opening scene suggests the charm of all that is to follow. For years the poet has lost all trace of his old college

friend, when by accident he learns that he has obtained a subordinate position in one of the large Berlin iron foundries and is living somewhere in the outlying districts of the city. All the dear old recollections of their student days are revived by this news in Seidel's mind, and he starts out at once in quest of the long-lost companion. Sauntering about in the quarter of the town to which he has been directed, he sees a little boy and girl playing on the front steps of an apartment house and deriving an immense amount of delight from turning their heads backward and letting it rain into their wide-open mouths. At once the thought crosses Seidel's mind: these cannot but be Leberecht Hühnchen's children! He speaks to them, and forsooth! Hühnchen is their father! Merrily they run upstairs, three stories high, to announce the stranger, and soon the two friends have clasped hands once more.

From this scene to the last ones, depicting the joys and sorrows of Hühnchen's old age, his domestic comfort, the merry-making and holiday pleasures of the circle of friends that has gathered about him, the engagement and wedding of his daughter, the birth of the first grandson, and later on the death of a dear little granddaughter—what a world of tender feeling, of genuine poetry, of deep religious faith, and of sturdy honesty there is revealed to us! It is not too much to say that not since Jean Paul's "Quintus Fixlein" has there been drawn a lovelier picture of what is most charming, most wholesome, and most German in German family life. And I doubt whether parental feelings have ever been described more truthfully and more poetically than in the following account of a night spent by a father at the sick-bed of his little boy:

"The crisis of the illness had come, and when I had just lain down a little on the

bed in my clothes, the boy began to be delirious. Suddenly he was on his knees and played eagerly with imaginary things. Something that could not be seen he would put constantly now here, now there, and then he would quickly grope with the hand after it, as though it were running away from him. 'Wolfgang, what are you doing?' I asked. 'Oh, I am playing with my store,' he said, 'but don't you see, it is all running away from me, all the time, there—there—there.' 'My boy, you are dreaming,' I said, and pressed him gently back on his pillow. 'Ah, yes,' said he then and lay patiently down on his side. But after a while he began again playing in the same manner. Then there seized me a nameless fright, and I began softly walking up and down, up and down through the room. And once as I stepped to the window and was staring out into the misty night, I saw something or believed to see something. Was it a vision with which my excited

imagination deluded me? There, between the bushes of the garden it stood, like a long, lean, closely buttoned figure, shadowy but discernible. It was as though it were waiting for some one. And now it seemed as though this shadowy being took out a watch and looked at it searchingly, and then turned its dark, hollow eyes to the window where I was standing. And then it nodded its head, as if to say: 'It is time.' Then there spoke something in me, imploringly, although I could not bring a sound to my lips: 'Go, go! thou frightful, cruel, pitiless one, go, go! and leave him to me, I beseech you from the depths of my soul. There are so many who long for thee, to whom thou comest as a redeemer, as a messenger of peace. Turn thy steps yonder, and leave him to me, leave my child to me!'

"And it seemed to me as though he was hesitating, the frightful shadow. Did he not stoop down and pick a poor little

flower that stood there between some thin stalks, and did not he then vanish away in the mist? From the bed of my son I heard the sound of quiet breathing, for the first time this night. He was asleep. The next morning the doctor came, and his eyes shone when he saw the child. 'Thank God!' he exclaimed, 'now we are through!'

Although Heinrich Seidel is not a young man any more (he was born in 1842), there is no sign of waning power in his recent writings. Indeed, his latest volume, "The Eyes of Memory and other Sketches," has all the charm of sentiment and droll humour that pervades his early work. But even if his task were in the main done now, it would have been a task than which no man could wish for a worthier one. For what cannot be said of very many literary productions of our time, can be said of his: they have helped to make men happier and healthier.

XIII.—PETER ROSEGGER

SEPTEMBER, 1898.

PROBABLY NO territory inhabited by German-speaking people is as crowded with picturesque sights and scenes as are the Bavarian and Austrian Highlands. The mountains themselves offer a wonderful variety of scenery, from the gentle charm of smiling lakes bordered by gay villages, of crystal streams flowing through luxuriant meadows, to the solemn grandeur of Alpine wilderness with its primeval forests, impassable chasms, and silent summits. And in this land there dwells a people worthy of its soil, sturdy and joyous, full of merriment and song, clinging to old traditions, of native beauty of speech and bearing. Here, centuries ago, the legend of the Nibelungs was welded into the lays in which it has

come down to us. Here Walther von der Vogelweide learned the art of chivalric song. Here was the home of Haydn and Mozart. Here the Catholic Church is still in living contact with the people, and Passion Plays and rustic sculpture and painting testify to its ennobling influence upon popular art.

No living writer is a truer representative of this hardy people than Peter Rosegger; none could in as full a sense of the word be called a son of the Alps. He was born fifty-five years ago in an out-of-the-way nook of the Styrian mountains, the paternal homestead being separated by miles and miles of forest and glen from the nearest village, Krieglach by name. His father belonged to a family of peasants; the grandfather on his mother's side was a charcoal-burner. From early childhood the boy shared in the incessant toil and drudgery by which the family eked out their scanty

living, but he also imbibed that sense of freedom and that intense love of home so characteristic of his race. His earliest instruction he received, in a desultory way, from an itinerant schoolmaster who on account of liberal opinions had been forced out of office by the village priest and who thereupon, taking up the life of a vagrant, dispensed for food and shelter the rudiments of wisdom in the lonely mountain settlements. Since the parents wished to have the delicate boy study for the clergy, they placed him when about fifteen years of age in charge of a priest in a neighbouring village; but the love for his mountain home was too strong in him: after three days he ran away from his tutor, and wandered back into the ancestral wilderness.

Instead of the clerical profession the parents now decided on another branch of learning for their son, to wit, the tailor's craft; and it was as a tailor's apprentice that

young Rosegger made his first study of the world. He himself has called the five years of this apprenticeship the college period of his literary career. Like his first instructor in the rudiments of school learning, so his master in the tailoring trade also belonged to the itinerant sort. He would travel with his journeymen and apprentices from farm to farm all over their native mountains, stay in each house as long as there was work for them to do, and then pass on to another, where they would be received into the same household intimacy. In this manner young Rosegger during those five years came into the closest relationship with nearly seventy different households—an opportunity for character study probably unparalleled in literary history. It was during this time that he gathered that rich store of popular tradition and wisdom which makes his works a veritable mine of information for the student of

primitive folk life; and even the imaginative part of his writings can be traced in a good many instances to the talk and the incidents that formed the romance of this ambulant tailorshop.

Some poems of his in Styrian dialect which would now and then find their way into local newspapers attracted the attention of litterateurs in Graz, the Styrian capital, and through the efforts of these men—among whom Rosegger mentions with particular affection and gratitude Dr. Svoboda, Robert Hamerling, and Rudolf Falb—the young poet was released from the narrow bonds of handicraft and given an opportunity for liberal studies and further literary work. From here on his career was assured. From the very first his descriptions of Alpine life found a full measure of applause from those for whom no doubt they were in the first place written—the Alpine folk themselves. But

soon their reputation spread beyond the range of the Austrian mountains; and at present there is, apart from the modern realistic dramatists, hardly a writer in all Germany who commands such universal attention and respect as this artless storyteller of the wilderness. He himself is fully aware of the limitations of his fancy and his philosophy of life. With few exceptions, he has eschewed subjects which lie outside of "the small great world" which he knows so well. And although he has not infrequently given readings from his works in the great centres of modern German culture, from Vienna to Hamburg, it always drew him back into his mountains, and even now he spends at least part of the year in an Alpine cottage near the old peasant homestead.

The two most conspicuous traits of Rossegger's literary character are a rare power of grasping the picturesque aspect of

things, and a sublime simplicity and depth of sentiment.

It is indeed a mistake to think of Franz Defregger as the foremost painter of German Highland life. Who would not be grateful to the jovial master for having introduced us into the holiday frolic of his mountaineers? Who would not take delight in those superb lads and lasses of his as they dance in the village inn or engage in harmless raillery and merrymaking at the lonely Alpine home? Who would not feel the thrill of genuine love of country when looking at such heroic scenes as "The Last Muster" or "Hofer Going to His Execution"? But, after all, how limited Defregger's sphere is in comparison with the well-nigh universal range of Rosegger's observation; how much fuller and richer a picture of life the painter in words unfolds before us than the painter on canvas!

Rosegger seems to see with more than his own eyes and to hear with more than his own ears. Nothing seems to escape him, and everything seems to turn before him into a picture. His own youth, as he narrates it in his "Forest Home," appears to us as an almost endless chain of picturesque incidents, the very chapter headings often suggesting fanciful or humorous situations: "Of the great-grandfather as he sat on the hemlock tree," "When I presented the dear Lord God with my Sunday jacket," "Stories under the changing moon," "The Advent of the Holy Ghost," "When I was a grist miller," "When the nights were bright," "When I was building a world in the sky," "When I went to see the Emperor," "When I sat for the first time in a steam car." And every one of these situations seems a world in itself, as far removed from the dusty prose of ordinary life as the mountain peaks themselves

are from the smoke of the factories. But Rosegger's real subject is the mountain folk in its totality, every shade of its character, every side of its varied activities and enjoyments, its superstitions as well as its faith, its humdrum toil no less than its gay eccentricities and fierce passions.

There is the priest of the outlying forest settlements, humble and devoted, a worker among workers, a helper in distress, a father of the fatherless; there is the jovial village priest, both a ruler and a friend of his people, shrewd and good-natured, bigoted, but full of sturdy wisdom. There is the domestic life of the peasants: the father given over to the hard struggle for existence, superintending his hired men almost more carefully than his family, conservative, stubborn, chary of words, but easily inflammable; the mother, undisputed ruler of the house, provident, sagacious, incessantly at work, a tower of strength to

her husband, an inexhaustible source of comfort and joy to the children. There is the floating population of the mountains with its adventurous and doubtful characters: the travelling traders and craftsmen, the woodcutters, the military conscripts, the fiddlers, the pilgrims, the vagrant beggars, the fortune-tellers, the orphans, the village idiots. There are the popular rites and festivals, half Catholic and half pagan: the driving out of winter, the summer solstice fire, the charming of thunderstorms and eclipses of the moon, the Corpus Christi processions, the Christmas and Passion plays. And back of it all there lies the solemn world of the Alps in its unapproachable grandeur, with its towering cliffs and peaks untrod by man, with its ravines and cañons, unillumined by the rays of the sun, with its torrents and its tornadoes, its silent lakes and its mighty avalanches. Truly, one might say of Rosegger's descriptions

of Alpine life what he himself has said of his people: a huge treasure of moral power is stored in them, an inexhaustible reserve of primitive fancy, which cannot fail to be a source of rejuvenation to the over-cultivated minds of the present age, which will help to restore to their rightful place demands which in the feverish struggle for intellectual progress so often are lost sight of—the demands of the human heart.

Rosegger is by no means indifferent to the all-absorbing conflicts of the day. In the great questions of political and religious organisation he is altogether on the side of freedom. Nothing is more foreign to him than the desire to stem the tide of social emancipation which is now forcing its way even into the Highland valleys. He is as far from being a fantastic dreamer as from being a reactionary fanatic. He is essentially a modern man. But his liberalism does not keep him from lingering tenderly

and lovingly over the precious traditions of the past; indeed he finds the mission of his life in carrying over into the new time whatever he can rescue from the ruin of the old. This it is that gives to his stories that indescribable charm of gentle melancholy, of reverent veracity, of fairy-tale sincerity and uprightness which is so strikingly absent in most of our modern realists. Is it not as though one heard the voice of an Uhland or a Wilhelm Grimm in such a scene as the following:

“Once my mother and I went through the forest in the middle of the night. The little daughter of a charcoal-burner had died, and we went to pray at her bier and to help the parents keep watch over the dead. We walked slowly over the moss, the forest was dark. But high above the tree-tops stood the full moon, and where it could penetrate through the thicket of boughs, it scattered stars and milk-white dots before us on the ground.

“As we came to a little clearing, my mother stood still, turned her face to the sky, put her hand over her eyes and said: ‘Ah, there you can see it nicely, the spinning wheel of our dear Lady.’ She meant the moon, which was spinning its soft, delicate threads between the tree-tops and branches. Then my mother turned to me: ‘Look into the moon, boy. There sits our dear Lady and spins. She is spinning a heavenly garment for the dear little girl that to-day lies on the bier. And look a little more. Your great-grandmother sits there too.’ Forsooth, there I saw it, yonder in the moon there sat two women wondrous fair at the wheel.

“We went on, and the moon went with us apace, and spun its heavenly silk down into our wide forest. When we came to the hut where the charcoal-burner’s daughter lay, the door was wide open, and the moon was shining upon her body, and

her face was sweet and dear and mild, like snow-white wax. 'We are out of oil,' said the charcoal-burner, 'and we cannot have a lamp here; so we opened the door, that the moon might be the light for the dead.' At once I thought of our dear Lady; now she was surely spinning the heavenly garment for the little girl.

"We watched at the body until the morning-red began to shimmer upon the tops of the forest, and until the moon, pale and almost lustreless, sank down behind the distant rocks of the Highlands. Then they took up the lovely child and carried her away. And when the moon rose once more, it found a fresh mound in the churchyard and a little wooden cross upon it, and it shed its lustre over the grave, sweet and calm."

Besides his sketches of a more or less autobiographical nature and besides his character studies depicting popular life in

its various phases and types, Rosegger has written several novels—such as *Heidpeter's Gabriel* and *The God-Seeker*—which in an equally striking manner prove his extraordinary power of creating what the Germans call a *Stimmungsbild*. But it seems as though his very gift of transforming every sight into a picture fraught with sentiment prevented him from attaining the highest goal in blending this infinitude of impressions and emotions into the architectural structure of a novel. One might say that he lives rather than produces his poetry. It is their lyric quality that will make his works endure.

XIV.—BISMARCK AS A NATIONAL
TYPE

OCTOBER, 1898.

IT was a spring day in 1883. The crafts and trades of Berlin were celebrating the anniversary of the founding of one of their guilds some four or five centuries ago. In good German fashion, there was an abundance of solemn and sonorous jollification throughout the day, but the climax of the exercises was reached in an historical pageant representing the growth of Berlin commerce and manufactures from the Middle Ages down to the present time.

It had been given out that this pageant was to be reviewed by the old Emperor from his familiar corner window, and it was rumoured that it would also pass by the Imperial Chancellery, and that Prince Bis-

marck would probably be there to see it pass. In anticipation of this event, a dense multitude had taken possession of the square in front of Bismarck's official residence—the Wilhelmsplatz—hours before the procession had even begun to move. An eager, nervous expectation seemed to hover over the surging masses. Will the procession really come this way? And if it does, will he appear—he who is so indifferent to pompous demonstrations, so averse to appeals to the crowd? As yet there was no sign of life in the Bismarck mansion: the windows were closed; most of the curtains were drawn. Perhaps the Prince is not even at home, or is too engrossed in public business to have given any attention to this local holiday. In spite of such misgivings, the populace held out unfalteringly; every minute swelled its numbers. Now, not only the square, but the adjoining streets also were literally

packed. Presently there was heard from the direction of Unter den Linden the low thunder of tumultuous cheering, interspersed now and then with some distant strains of martial music; evidently the procession was passing the Emperor's palace. Nearer and nearer the sounds came, and higher and higher ran our feverish excitement.

Presently in a wing of the Chancellery nearest to the Wilhelmstrasse a window was thrown open: the Princess Bismarck and Count Herbert leaned out, and far back in the darkness of the room there loomed up a shadowy form, from which a mighty head seemed to be shining forth with something like electric energy. To describe the frenzy which seized the thousands in the street at this sight would be a futile task. It was as though we had had a vision, as though something superhuman had suddenly flashed down upon us and ex-

tinguished every other feeling except the impulse to worship. How long we had been cheering before he came forward to the window I cannot tell, but I venture to say that even an American football enthusiast would have been pleased with our efforts.

At last, however, he *did* come forward, and, putting on a pair of immense spectacles which his wife handed to him, looked down upon us with an expression of grave satisfaction. Meanwhile, the procession of the guilds had swung into the Wilhelmstrasse, and now passed by the Chancellery in seemingly endless array, every band striking up *The Watch on the Rhine* just before it reached his window, every banner being dipped as long as his eye was upon it, and every man straightening himself up and feeling raised above his own narrow self while looking up to that stern and awe-inspiring face.

What was it that moved the multitude so profoundly during those hours, that gave to that impromptu demonstration the significance and dignity of a national event? Was it the consciousness of standing in the presence of the greatest diplomat of modern times, the maker and un-maker of kings and emperors, the founder of German unity, the arbiter of Europe? Undoubtedly this was a large part of it. But political achievements alone are not sufficient to stir the people's heart. What called forth this extraordinary outburst of enthusiasm, what gave to every one in that crowd the sense of a heightened existence, was, after all, the man, not his work; it was the instinctive feeling that in this one man yonder there were contained the lives of many millions of Germans, their dreams and struggles, their eccentricities and yearnings, their mistakes and triumphs, their prejudices, passions, ideals, their love, hate, humour, poetry and religion.

Let us single out a few of these affinities between Bismarck and the German people, in order to understand, however imperfectly, why the news of his death that has burst so suddenly upon us means for the sons of the Fatherland all over the globe the severing of their own lives from what they feel to have been the most complete embodiment, since Luther, of German nationality.

I.

Perhaps the most obviously Teutonic trait in Bismarck's character is its martial quality. It would be preposterous, of course, to claim warlike distinction as a prerogative of the German race. Russians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Americans, undoubtedly, make as good fighters as Germans. But it is not an exaggeration to say that there is no country in the world where the army is as enlightened or as

popular an institution as it is in Germany. I do not underrate the evils of militarism. I believe the struggle against these evils will be the foremost task of the next twenty-five years in German political life. But I fail to see how it can be denied that the introduction of universal military service, which we owe to the inner regeneration of Prussia after the downfall of 1806, has been the very corner-stone of German greatness in this century.

The German army is not composed of hirelings, of professional fighters whose business it is to pick up quarrels, no matter with whom. It is, in the strictest sense of the word, the people in arms. Among its officers there is a large percentage of the intellectual élite of the country; its rank and file embrace every occupation and every class of society, from the scion of royal blood down to the son of the seamstress. Although it is based upon the

unconditional acceptance of the monarchical creed, nothing is farther removed from it than the spirit of servility. On the contrary, one of the very first teachings which are inculcated upon the German recruit is that in wearing the "king's coat" he is performing a public duty, and that by performing this duty he is honouring himself. Nor can it be said that it is the aim of German military drill to reduce the soldier to a mere machine, at will to be set in motion or be brought to a standstill by his superior. The aim of this drill is rather to give each soldier increased self-control, mentally no less than bodily; to develop his self-respect; to enlarge his sense of responsibility, as well as to teach him the absolute necessity of the subordination of the individual to the needs of the whole. The German army, then, is by no means a lifeless tool that might be used by an unscrupulous and adventurous despot to gratify

his own whims or to wreak his private vengeance. The German army is, in principle at least, a national school of manly virtues, of discipline, of comradeship, of self-sacrifice, of promptness of action, of tenacity of purpose. Although, probably, the most powerful armament which the world has ever seen, it makes for peace rather than for war. Although called upon to defend the standard of the most imperious dynasty of western Europe, it contains more of the spirit of true democracy than many a city government on this side of the Atlantic.

All this has to be borne in mind if we wish to judge correctly of Bismarck's military propensities. He has never concealed the fact that he felt himself above all a soldier. One of his earliest public utterances was a defense of the Prussian army against the sympathizers with the revolution of 1848. His first great political achievement was the carrying through of King William's

army reform in the face of the most stubborn and virulent opposition of a parliamentary majority. Never did his speech in the German Diet rise to a higher pathos than when he was asserting the military supremacy of the Emperor, or calling upon the parties to forget their dissensions in maintaining the defensive strength of the nation, or showering contempt upon liberal deputies who seemed to think that questions of national existence could be solved by effusions of academic oratory. Over and over, during the last decade of his official career, did he declare that the only thing which kept him from throwing aside the worry and vexation of governmental duties, and retiring to the much coveted leisure of home and hearth, was the oath of vassal loyalty constraining him to stand at his post until his imperial master released him of his own accord. And at the very height of his political triumphs he wrote to

his sovereign: "I have always regretted that my parents did not allow me to testify my attachment to the royal house, and my enthusiasm for the greatness and glory of the Fatherland, in the front rank of a regiment rather than behind a writing-desk. And even now, after having been raised by your Majesty to the highest honors of a statesman, I cannot altogether repress a feeling of regret at not having been similarly able to carve out a career for myself as a soldier. Perhaps I should have made a poor general, but if I had been free to follow the bent of my own inclination I would rather have won battles for your Majesty than diplomatic campaigns."

It seems clear to me that both the defects and the greatness of Bismarck's character are intimately associated with these military leanings of his. He certainly was overbearing; he could tolerate no opposition; he was revengeful and unforgiving;

he took pleasure in the appeal to violence; he easily resorted to measures of repression; he requited insults with counter-insults; he had something of that blind *furor Teutonicus* which was the terror of the Italian republics in the Middle Ages. These are defects of temper which will probably prevent his name from ever shining with that serene lustre of international veneration that has surrounded the memory of a Joseph II. or a Washington with a kind of impersonal immaculateness. But his countrymen, at least, have every reason to condone these defects; for they are concomitant results of the military bent of German character, and they are offset by such transcendent military virtues that we would almost welcome them as bringing this colossal figure within the reach of our own frailties and shortcomings.

Three of the military qualities that made Bismarck great seem to me to stand out

with particular distinctness: his readiness to take the most tremendous responsibilities, if he could justify his action by the worth of the cause for which he made himself responsible; his moderation after success was assured; his unflinching submission to the dictates of monarchical discipline.

Moritz Busch has recorded an occurrence, belonging to the autumn of 1877, which most impressively brings before us the tragic grandeur and the portentous issues of Bismarck's career. It was twilight at Varzin, and the Chancellor, as was his wont after dinner, was sitting by the stove in the large back drawing-room. After having sat silent for a while, gazing straight before him, and feeding the fire now and anon with fir-cones, he suddenly began to complain that his political activity had brought him but little satisfaction and few friends. Nobody loved him for what

he had done. He had never made anybody happy thereby, he said—not himself, nor his family, nor any one else. Some of those present would not admit this, and suggested “that he had made a great nation happy.” “But,” he continued, “how many have I made unhappy! But for me three great wars would not have been fought; eighty thousand men would not have perished; parents, brothers, sisters, and wives would not have been bereaved and plunged into mourning. . . . That matter, however, I have settled with God.” “Settled with God”!—an amazing statement, a statement which would seem the height of blasphemy, if it were not an expression of noblest manliness; if it did not reveal the soul of a warrior dauntlessly fighting for a great cause, risking for it the existence of a whole country as well as his own happiness, peace, and salvation, and being ready to submit the consequences,

whatever they might be, to the tribunal of eternity. To say that a man who is willing to take such responsibilities as these makes himself thereby an offender against morality appears to me tantamount to condemning the Alps as obstructions to bicycling. A people, at any rate, that glories in the achievements of Luther has no right to cast a slur upon the motives of Bismarck.

Whatever one may think of the worth of the cause for which Bismarck battled all his life—the unity and greatness of Germany—it is impossible not to admire the policy of moderation and self-restraint pursued by him after every one of his most decisive victories. And here again we note in him the peculiarly German military temper. German war-songs do not glorify foreign conquest and brilliant adventure; they glorify dogged resistance, and bitter fight for house and home, for kith and kin. The German army, composed as it

is of millions of peaceful citizens, is essentially a weapon of defense. And it can truly be said that Bismarck, with all his natural aggressiveness and ferocity, has in the main been a defender, not a conqueror. He defended Prussia against the intolerable arrogance and un-German policy of Austria; he defended Germany against French interference in the work of national consolidation; he defended the principle of state sovereignty against the encroachments of the Papacy; he defended the monarchy against the republicanism of the Liberals and Socialists; and his last public act was a defense of ministerial responsibility against the new-fangled absolutism of his young imperial master.

The third predominant trait of Bismarck's character that stamps him as a soldier—his unquestioning obedience to monarchical discipline—is so closely bound up with the peculiarly German conceptions

of the functions and the purpose of the state, that it will be better to approach this part of his nature from the political instead of the military side.

11.

In no other of the leading countries of the world has the *laissez faire* doctrine had as little influence in political matters as in Germany. Luther, the fearless champion of religious individualism, was in questions of government the most pronounced advocate of paternalism. Kant, the cool dissector of the human intellect, was at the same time the most rigid upholder of corporate morality. It was Fichte, the ecstatic proclaimer of the glory of the individual will, who wrote this dithyramb on the necessity of the constant surrender of private interests to the common welfare: "Nothing can live by itself or for itself; everything lives in the whole; and the

whole continually sacrifices itself to itself in order to live anew. This is the law of life. Whatever has come to the consciousness of existence must fall a victim to the progress of all existence. Only there is a difference whether you are dragged to the shambles like a beast with bandaged eyes, or whether, in full and joyous presentiment of the life which will spring forth from your sacrifice, you offer yourself freely on the altar of eternity."

Not even Plato and Aristotle went so far in the deification of the state as Hegel. And if Hegel declared that the real office of the state is not to further individual interests, to protect private property, but to be an embodiment of the organic unity of public life; if he saw the highest task and the real freedom of the individual in making himself a part of this organic unity of public life, he voiced a sentiment which was fully shared by the leading classes of the

Prussia of his time, and which has since become a part of the political creed of the Socialist masses all over Germany.

Here we have the moral background of Bismarck's internal policy. His monarchism rested not only on his personal allegiance to the hereditary dynasty, although no mediæval knight could have been more steadfast in his loyalty to his liege lord than Bismarck was in his unswerving devotion to the Hohenzollern house. His monarchism rested above all on the conviction that, under the present conditions of German political life, no other form of government would insure equally well the fulfilment of the moral obligations of the state.

He was by no means blind to the value of parliamentary institutions. More than once has he described the English Constitution as the necessary outcome and the fit expression of the vital forces of English society. More than once has he eulogized

the sterling political qualities of English landlordism, its respect for the law, its common sense, its noble devotion to national interests. More than once has he deplored the absence in Germany of "the class which in England is the main support of the state—the class of wealthy and therefore conservative gentlemen, independent of material interests, whose whole education is directed with a view to their becoming statesmen, and whose only aim in life is to take part in public affairs"; and the absence of "a Parliament, like the English, containing two sharply defined parties, whereof one forms a sure and unswerving majority which subjects itself with iron discipline to its ministerial leaders." We may regret that Bismarck himself did not do more to develop parliamentary discipline; that indeed he did everything in his power to arrest the healthy growth of German party life. But it is at least perfectly clear that his reasons

for refusing to allow the German parties a controlling influence in shaping the policy of the government were not the result of mere despotic caprice, but were founded upon thoroughly German traditions, and upon a thoroughly sober, though one-sided view of the present state of German public affairs.

To him party government appeared as much of an impossibility as it had appeared to Hegel. The attempt to establish it would in his opinion have led to nothing less than chaos. The German parties, as he viewed them, represented, not the state, not the nation, but an infinite variety of private and class interests, the interests of landholders, traders, manufacturers, labourers, politicians, priests, and so on; each particular set of interests desiring the particular consideration of the public treasury, and refusing the same amount of consideration to every other. It seemed highly desirable

to him, as it did to Hegel, that all these interests should be heard; that they should be represented in a Parliament based upon as wide and liberal a suffrage as possible. But to entrust any one of these interests with the functions of government would, in his opinion, have been treason to the state; it would have been class tyranny of the worst kind.

The logical outcome of all this was his conviction of the absolute necessity, for Germany, of a strong non-partisan government: a government which should hold all the conflicting class interests in check, which should force them into continual compromises with each other; a government which should be unrestricted by any class prejudices, pledges, or theories, which should have no other guiding star than the welfare of the whole nation. And the only basis for such a government he found in the Prussian monarchy, with its

glorious tradition of military discipline, of benevolent paternalism, and of self-sacrificing devotion to national greatness; with its patriotic gentry, its incorruptible courts, its religious freedom, its enlightened educational system, its efficient and highly trained civil service. To bow before such a monarchy, to serve such a state, was indeed something different from submitting to the chance vote of a parliamentary majority; in this bondage even a Bismarck could find his highest freedom.

For nearly forty years he bore this bondage; for twenty-eight he stood in the place nearest to the monarch himself; and not even his enemies have dared to assert that his political conduct was guided by other motives than the consideration of public welfare. Indeed, if there is any phrase for which he, the apparent cynic, the sworn despiser of phrases, seems to have had a certain weakness, it is the word, *salus publica*.

To it he sacrificed his days and his nights; for it he more than once risked his life, for it he incurred more hatred and slander than perhaps any man of his time; for it he alienated his best friends; for it he turned not once or twice, but one might almost say habitually, against his own cherished prejudices and convictions. The career of few men shows so many apparent inconsistencies and contrasts. One of his earliest speeches in the Prussian Landtag was a fervent protest against the introduction of civil marriage; yet the civil marriage clause in the German constitution is his work. He was by birth and tradition a believer in the divine right of kings, yet the King of Hanover could tell something of the manner in which Bismarck dealt with the divine right of kings if it stood in the way of German unity. He took pride in belonging to the most feudal aristocracy of western Europe, the Prussian Junkerdom; yet

he has done more to uproot feudal privileges than any other German statesman since 1848. He gloried in defying public opinion; he was wont to say that he felt doubtful about himself whenever he met with popular applause; yet he is the founder of the German Parliament, and he founded it on direct and universal suffrage. He was the sworn enemy of the Socialist party—he attempted to destroy it root and branch; yet through the nationalisation of railways and the obligatory insurance of workmen he infused more Socialism into German legislation than any other statesman before him. He began as a quixotic champion of royal autocracy; he died the advocate of the German nation against the capricious mysticism of imperial omnipotence.

Truly, a man who could thus sacrifice his own wishes and instincts to the common good; who could so completely sink his

own personality in the cause of the nation; who with such matchless courage defended this cause against attacks from whatever quarter—against court intrigue no less than against demagogues—such a man had a right to stand above parties; and he spoke the truth, when, some years before leaving office, in a moment of gloom and disappointment he wrote under his portrait, “*Patriæ inserviendo consumor.*”

III.

There is a strange, but after all perfectly natural antithesis in German national character. The same people that instinctively believes in political paternalism, that willingly submits to restrictions of personal liberty in matters of state such as no Englishman would ever tolerate, is more jealous of its independence than perhaps any other nation in matters pertaining to the intel-

lectual, social, and religious life of the individual. It seems as if the very pressure from without had helped to strengthen and enrich the life within.

Not only all the great men of German thought, from Luther down to the Grimms and the Humboldts, have been conspicuous for their freedom from artificial conventions, and for the originality and homeliness of their human intercourse, but even the average German official—wedded as he may be to his rank or his title, anxious as he may be to preserve an outward decorum in exact keeping with the precise shade of his public status—is often the most delightfully unconventional, good-natured, unsophisticated, and even erratic being in the world, as soon as he has left the cares of his office behind him. Germany is the classic land of queer people. It is the land of Quintus Fixlein, Onkel Bräsig, Leberecht Hühnchen, and the host of Fliegende

Blätter worthies; it is the land of the beer-garden and the Kaffekränzchen, of the Christmas-tree and the Whitsuntide merry-making; it is the land of country inns and of student pranks. What more need be said to bring before one's mind the wealth of hearty joyfulness, jolly good-fellowship, boisterous frolic, sturdy humour, simple directness, and genuinely democratic feeling that characterises social life in Germany.

And still less reason is there for dwelling on the intellectual and religious independence of German character. Absence of constraint in scientific inquiry and religious conduct is indeed the very palladium of German freedom. Nowhere is higher education so entirely removed from class distinction as in the country where the imperial princes are sent to the same school with the sons of tradesmen and artisans. Nowhere is there so little religious formalism coupled with such deep religious feel-

ing as in the country where sermons are preached to empty benches, while *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, *Wallenstein* and *Faust*, are listened to with the hush of awe and bated breath by thousands upon thousands.

In all these respects—socially, intellectually, religiously—Bismarck was the very incarnation of German character. Although an aristocrat by birth and bearing, and although, especially during the years of early manhood, passionately given over to the aristocratic habits of dueling, hunting, swaggering and carousing, he was essentially a man of the people. Nothing was so utterly foreign to him as any form of libertinism; even his eccentricities were of the hardy homespun sort. He was absolutely free from social vanity; he detested court festivities; he set no store by orders or decorations; the only two among the innumerable ones conferred upon him which he is said to have highly valued were the

Prussian order of the Iron Cross, bestowed for personal bravery on the battlefield, and the medal for "rescuing from danger" which he earned in 1842 for having saved his groom from drowning by plunging into the water after him. What he thought of meaningless titles may be gathered from his remark anent the bestowal upon him by the present Emperor of the ducal dignity: "If ever I wish to travel incognito, I shall call myself Duke of Lauenburg."

All his instincts were bound up with the soil from which he had sprung. He passionately loved the North German plain, with its gloomy moorlands, its purple heather, its endless wheatfields, its kingly forests, its gentle lakes, and its superb sweep of sky and clouds. Writing to his friends when abroad—he traveled very little abroad—he was in the habit of describing foreign scenery by comparing it to familiar views and places on his own estates.

During sleepless nights in the Chancellery at Berlin there would often rise before him a sudden vision of Varzin, his Pomeranian country-seat, "perfectly distinct in the minutest particulars, like a great picture with all its colours fresh—the green trees, the sunshine on the stems, the blue sky above. I saw every individual tree." Never was he more happy than when alone with nature. "Saturday," he writes to his wife from Frankfort, "I drove to Rüdesheim. There I took a boat, rowed out on the Rhine, and swam in the moonlight, with nothing but nose and eyes out of water, as far as the Mäusethurm near Bingen, where the bad bishop came to his end. It gives one a peculiar dreamy sensation to float thus on a quiet warm night in the water, gently carried down by the current, looking above on the heavens studded with moon and stars, and on each side the banks and wooded hilltops and the battlements of

the old castles bathed in the moonlight, whilst nothing falls on one's ear but the gentle splashing of one's movements. I should like to swim like this every evening." And what poet has more deeply felt than he that vague musical longing which seizes one when far away from human sounds, by the brook-side or the hill-slope? "I feel as if I were looking out on the mellowing foliage of a fine September day," he writes again to his wife, "health and spirits good, but with a soft touch of melancholy, a little homesickness, a longing for deep woods and lakes, for a desert, for yourself and the children, and all this mixed up with a sunset and Beethoven."

His domestic affections were by no means limited to those united to him by ties of blood; he cherished strong patriarchal feelings for every member of his household, past or present. He possessed in a high degree the German tenderness for

little things. He never forgot a service rendered to him, however small. In the midst of the most engrossing public activity he kept himself informed about the minutest details of the management of his estates, so that his wife could once laughingly say: a turnip from his own fields interested him vastly more than all the problems of international politics.

His humour, also, was entirely of the German stamp. It was boisterous, rollicking, aggressive, unsparing—of himself as little as of others,—cynic, immoderate, but never without a touch of good-nature. His satire was often crushing, never venomous. His wit was racy and exuberant, never equivocal. Whether he describes his *vis-à-vis* at a hotel table, his Excellency So-and-So, as “one of those figures which appear to one when he has the nightmare—a fat frog without legs, who opens his mouth as wide as his shoulders, like a carpet-bag, for each

bit, so that I am obliged to hold tight on by the table from giddiness ”; whether he characterises his colleagues at the Frankfort Bundestag as “mere caricatures of periwig diplomatists, who at once put on their official visage if I merely beg of them a light to my cigar, and who study their words and looks with Regensburg care when they ask for the key of the lavatory ”; whether he sums up his impression of the excited, emotional manner in which Jules Favre pleaded with him for the peace terms in the words, “He evidently took me for a public meeting ”; whether he declined to look at the statue erected to him at Cologne, because he “didn’t care to see himself fossilized ”; whether he spoke of the unprecedented popular ovations given to him at his final departure from Berlin as a “first-class funeral ”—there is always the same childlike directness, the same naïve impulsiveness, the same bantering earnest-

ness, the same sublime contempt for sham and hypocrisy.

And what man has been more truthful in intellectual and religious matters? He, the man of iron will, of ferocious temper, was at the same time the coolest reasoner, the most unbiased thinker. He willingly submitted to the judgment of experts, he cheerfully acknowledged intellectual talent in others, he took a pride in having remained a learner all his life, but he hated arrogant amateurishness. He was not a church-goer; he declined to be drawn into the circle of religious schemers and reactionary fanatics; he would occasionally speak in contemptuous terms of "the creed of court chaplains"; but writing to his wife of that historic meeting with Napoleon in the lonely cottage near the battlefield of Sedan, he said: "A powerful contrast with our last meeting in the Tuileries in '67. Our conversation was a difficult thing, if I

wanted to avoid touching on topics which could not but affect painfully the man whom God's mighty hand had cast down." And more than once has he given vent to reflections like these: "For him who does not believe—as I do from the bottom of my heart—that death is a transition from one existence to another, and that we are justified in holding out to the worst of criminals in his dying hour the comforting assurance, *mors janua vitæ*—I say that for him who does not share that conviction, the joys of this life must possess so high a value that I could almost envy him the sensations they must procure him." Or these: "Twenty years hence, or at most thirty, we shall be past the troubles of this life, whilst our children will have reached our present standpoint, and will discover with astonishment that their existence (but now so brightly begun) has turned the corner and is going downhill. Were that to be the

end of it all, life would not be worth the trouble of dressing and undressing every day."

IV.

We have considered a few traits of Bismarck's mental and moral make-up which seem to be closely allied with German national character and traditions. But after all, the personality of a man like Bismarck is not exhausted by the qualities which he has in common with his people, however sublimated these qualities may be in him. His innermost life belongs to himself alone, or is shared, at most, by the few men of the world's history who, like him, tower in splendid solitude above the waste of the ages. In the Middle High German Alexanderlied there is an episode which most impressively brings out the impelling motive of such titanic lives. On one of his expeditions Alexander penetrates into the

land of Scythian barbarians. These child-like people are so contented with their simple, primitive existence that they beseech Alexander to give them immortality. He answers that this is not in his power. Surprised, they ask why, then, if he is only a mortal, he is making such a stir in the world. Thereupon he answers: "The Supreme Power has ordained us to carry out what is in us. The sea is given over to the whirlwind to plough it up. As long as life lasts and I am master of my senses, I must bring forth what is in me. What would life be if all men in the world were like you?" These words might have been spoken by Bismarck. Every word, every act of his public career, gives us the impression of a man irresistibly driven on by some overwhelming, mysterious power. He was not an ambitious schemer, like Beaconsfield or Napoleon; he was not a moral enthusiast like Gladstone or Cavour.

If he had consulted his private tastes and inclinations, he would never have wielded the destinies of an empire. Indeed, he often rebelled against his task; again and again he tried to shake it off; and the only thing which again and again brought him back to it was the feeling, "I must; I cannot do otherwise." If ever there was a man in whom Fate revealed its moral sovereignty, that man was Bismarck.

Whither has he gone now? Has he joined his compeers? Is he conversing in ethereal regions with Alexander, Cæsar, Frederick? Is he sweeping over land and sea in the whirlwind and the thunder-cloud? Or may we hope that he is still working out the task which, in spite of all the imperiousness of his nature, was the essence of his earthly life—the task of making the Germans a nation of true freemen?







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