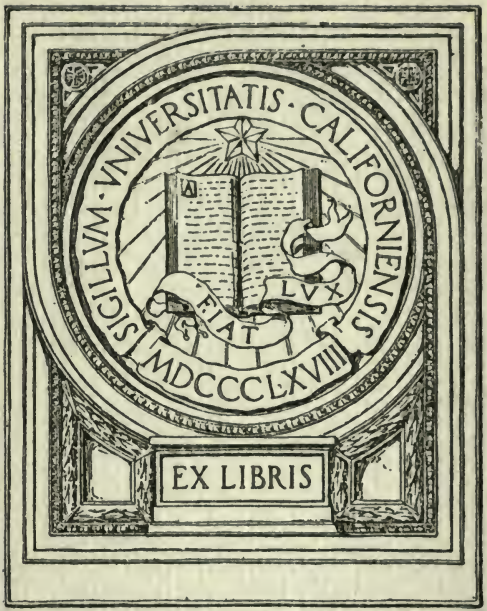
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GERHART HAUPTMANN

GERHART HAUPTMANN

His Life and His Work

1862–1912

BY maroon

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TO

MY FRIEND

HORST K. WINCKELMANN

"Sic eunt fata hominum."

G. HAUPTMANN, *Die Ratten.*

"Nur sämtliche Menschen machen die Menschheit."

Goethe.

PREFACE

THE aim of this essay is to give to the English reader an introduction to Hauptmann's works in their relation to his life and character. My wish is that it may act as a stimulus to read "Hauptmann" and to see productions of his plays on the stage. For an author of the eminence of Gerhart Hauptmann, surely, ought to be more widely known in England than he actually is.

If the style of the study is not hopelessly un-English it is no merit of mine, but the result of the kind assistance I obtained in its revision by my friends the Hon. Mrs. Chaloner Dowdall and Professor D. J. Sloss, and of the valuable suggestions of Professor Oliver Elton and Dr. Graham Brown. Mr. W. G. Jones most kindly read the proofs.

I am indebted to Professor H. G. Fiedler for kindly supplying me with some biographical

notes, and to my friend Professor R. Petsch for lending me a copy of the rare "Promethidenlos" and for freely offering his valuable advice.

To all of them I express my heartfelt thanks.

Part of this study was first delivered as an address to the Liverpool Playgoers' Society on the eve of Hauptmann's fiftieth birthday, and was repeated to the Leeds Playgoers on March 6, 1913.

K. H.

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GERHART HAUPTMANN

CHAPTER A

GERHART HAUPTMANN'S LIFE FROM 1862–1889*

GERHART HAUPTMANN is not unknown in England. Several of his plays have been translated into English, some of them—as, for example, "Lonely Lives" and "Hannele"—have been produced on the stage. As early as 1905 the University of Oxford—even prior to that of Leipzic—conferred upon him the distinction of the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature. And yet the general public is hardly aware of the range of his writings and of the distinguishing characteristics of his personality.

* Since this paper was written Hauptmann has gained the singular, but well-deserved, honour of the Nobel Prize, in November, 1912.

On November 15, 1912, Gerhart Hauptmann celebrated his fiftieth birthday, in the midst of his beloved family, near Obersalzbrunn in the Silesian mountains, where he was born and where he spent the truly happy days of his youth. As the youngest of three sons he passed his first years, from 1862 to 1874, in his home at Obersalzbrunn, where his father, an upright earnest man, kept an hotel. The elder Hauptmann came from a modest family who in a few generations, by their own labour, had come to comfortable circumstances. Gerhart's mild and devout mother, bred up in the fear of God and love of duty, was the daughter of a worthy family of Government officials.

Hauptmann might repeat the words of Goethe:

Vom Vater hab' ich die Statur, des Lebens ernstes Führen
Vom Mütterchen die Frohnatur, die Lust zu fabulieren.

But it is always hard to fit individuals to preconceived epigrams, much harder than to

fit epigrams to persons. It would be certainly going too far to conclude in anything more than a general way that in Gerhart the boy was the father of the man. He grew up lustily and cheerfully, though his temper was much quieter than his brothers'. Although he loved books, probably an inheritance from his self-taught, but well-read father, he apparently loved nature more. He gave himself up to lonely fanciful dreamings. But he was by no means merely an imaginative, fantastic lad; he could be the wildest amongst his playmates, and was *primus inter pares* in the little village. When seven years old he welcomed his returning brothers, after a lengthy separation, by a dance of his own invention, designed to represent a whirlwind. His days were happy. The first sorrows came, as they often do, with school-life, when in Easter, 1874, he was sent to a secondary school at Breslau.

Gerhart was no scholar; to the country lad, town seemed but a prison. He hated school with its regime of cramming. He was distinguished only by his skill in essay-writing and

drawing. His young brother, Carl,* was the only one of his associates to recognize the ability of his early lyrical exultations. Soon Fate relieved the boy. His father, by no neglect of his own, suffered adverse circumstances, and was obliged to realize his assets. He left his paternal home with little besides an unstained character, having paid all his creditors to the last penny.

Gerhart had to be taken from school, much to his delight, and was sent to a small estate belonging to his uncle, where he took the place of his cousin, who had died young. Here

* Carl Hauptmann is a scientist. He studied in Jena with Haeckel and in Zürich with Forel. The fruit of his studies is a valuable publication on "Die Metaphysik in der modernen Physiologie," 1893. He then began to follow the example of his younger brother, Gerhart, by writing dramas. Naturally, he was at once considered as a mere imitator of his greater brother. Yet he is an artistic personality with real individuality. His special talent seems to lie in narrative. But in lyrical poetry he is gifted, even more so than Gerhart. His works are:—Plays: "Marianne," 1894; "Waldleute," 1895; "Ephraims Breite," 1898; "Die Bergschmiede," 1902; "Des Königs Harfe," 1903; "Die Austreibung," 1905; "Moses," 1906; "Panspiele," 1909. Lyrics: "Sonnenwanderer," 1896; "Aus meinem Tagebuch," 1900. Fiction: "Aus Hütten am Berge," 1902; "Mathilde," 1902; "Miniaturen," 1904; and his latest novel "Einhart der Lächler," 1911.

again he could breathe the healthy country air. His childish mind received impressions which have remained constant throughout his life. A pious, implicit Christian faith ruled the house, not fanatically, but still with that singleness of object peculiar to the Moravian sect. Bach and Handel, but also Beethoven, were the geniuses who hovered round the simple house. Music and Nature enraptured the soul of the unconscious poet, who, having escaped from the confinement of town life, enjoyed the free life of the country. His soul grew strong again, and he felt the emotions for which, long years afterwards, when he was in Greece, in 1907, he found expression: "The peasant's soul was strong and naïve. Strong and naïve were his Gods."

Here we notice the change from boy to youth, here also he finds his first pure love. Again in his Greek diary he is reminded of his first love-scene in his uncle's orchard, where he paces up and down at the side of a seventeen-year-old maiden. The love idyll is suddenly interrupted by urchins popping over the fence and throwing stones. The hero gets violent, but

the lovely maiden mildly appeases him as well as the intruders. One feels in his later writing how happy he felt then—thirty years ago!

But again Gerhart did not stay here. He loved nature, he revered the piety of his relatives, he revelled in music. But his life's aim was higher. He could not become a peasant. After two years he revisited Breslau, this time to study Art, especially sculpture. So many poets in their years of preparation have gone through the same course; for instance, the Swiss writer, Gottfried Keller, perhaps the greatest German novelist of the nineteenth century, and Henrik Ibsen. Their artistic soul smoulders within them; it demands an outlet, and the flame leaps at everything; but at last it bursts forth. The poet has discovered his realm.

So Gerhart Hauptmann went to the Art School in Breslau. But soon he was in trouble again, and had it not been for one friend amongst the professors, he would have been rusticated after four months. He stayed another year, until April, 1882, modelling and

writing youthful, historical dramas. Then he left to follow his brother Carl as a student at the University of Jena. Philosophy and Natural Science were his main subjects of study, but he did not forget his sculpture. Needless to say, a world-renowned scientist like Haeckel attracted him. The talk of the circle in which he lived was centred in scientific and socialist ideas, and both these tendencies find their way into his later dramas. But he had not yet settled down, or steadied himself to express them. The unsatisfied, surging desire still drove him onward. In spring, 1883, he visited his eldest brother George, then newly married, in Hamburg, and started from there on a sea trip to the Mediterranean. He followed in the wake of Childe Harold, and perceived, like him, the discrepancy between the beautiful lands and the creatures therein:

"Oh Christ! It is a goodly sight to see
What Heaven hath done for this delicious land:
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!
What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand!
But man would mar them with an impious hand:

And when the Almighty lifts his fiercest scourge
'Gainst those who most transgress his high command,
With treble vengeance will his hot shafts urge
Gaul's locust host, and earth from fellest foemen purge."

In Marseilles Hauptmann left the boat and travelled by train along the Riviera to Genoa, where he met his brother Carl. Together they went to Naples and spent six happy weeks in Capri. They parted, Carl going back and Gerhart remaining in Rome till the malarial fever drove him home also.

The fruit of this long voyage is Gerhart Hauptmann's first published book, an epic—"Promethidenlos," 1885. Hauptmann afterwards withdrew it from sale, so that there are only a few copies extant. He himself recognized its deficiencies in metre, rhyme, and substance. But there are two notes ringing through the whole epic which sound through all Hauptmann's future work: pity for the darkness of wretched humanity; longing for the light of heavenly beauty. He himself is

the hero Selin, who shudders at the sight of the misery in the slums of Naples, whose heart bleeds for those wretched creatures who sell their bodies and kill their souls. Here he pronounces the beautiful words:

"Die Dichter sind die Thränen der Geschichte:
Die heisse Zeiten mit Begierde schlürfen."

But Hauptmann had not yet found his calling, whether to follow the Muse with the chisel or with the lute. The hero Selin of his epic cannot decide—his end was a grave at sea.

Meanwhile Hauptmann hurried back to a house set high among the Thuringian mountains. Four sisters, bereft of their father, lived here an idyllic existence. The eldest had already been carried off by George, the eldest brother of Gerhart. Carl carried off the brunette Martha, and young Gerhart felt drawn towards the southern beauty of Mary. Long afterwards he describes the sisters, the beautiful seclusion of their lives, and their wooing. In 1891, when travelling by train along the base of the mountain, he called out to his companion: "Should

I ever write a Midsummer Night's Dream, it could only have its setting over there." Fourteen years afterwards, in 1905, he really wrote it. It was published in 1907, and soon withdrawn from the stage. It certainly had its deficiencies, but yet I should sadly miss, in a collection of Hauptmann's works, his " Jungfern vom Bischofsberg "—" The Maidens of Bischofsberg." It is bathed in a lyrical, harmonic atmosphere, which is expressed by one of its characters : " Beautiful, camerado, but also melancholy." Brown-red autumn colours lend to it their tones. A romantic dreamland rises before us. Four sisters live and are wooed by their suitors in ancient Gothic halls surrounded by parks and vineyards. The end of the Midsummer Night's Dream is : All's well that ends well. There is little action, but exquisite sentiment. We listen to Hauptmann's half-melancholy, half-humorous recollections of the happy days he spent there, and seem to listen to a delightful and romantic fairy tale.

To this place — " Hohenhaus " — Gerhart

went from Italy, where he soon became engaged to Mary. He entered the Art Academy of Dresden to continue his studies in sculpture, and returned to Rome in 1884, but severe fever confined him to bed. Nursed by his betrothed, he recovered, and once more went back to Hohenhaus in spring.

In May Gerhart, now twenty-two and still undecided which Muse to follow, married his bride in Dresden, whence they went to live in Berlin. There, following Richard Wagner's theory of the "work of art of the future," he thought to unite plastic art and poetry by becoming an actor, and he took up serious studies. Again he gave it up, and feeling oppressed by the stone walls and the stifling air of the town, fled once more to the healthy, regenerating countryside. He went with his young wife, his brother and a friend, to Rügen to breathe the sea air. The atmosphere of the island is felt in his latest published drama—"Gabriel Schilling's Flight."

In the autumn they returned to live in Erkner, a pleasant suburb which is to Berlin what

Chislehurst is to London. There he at last found rest and stayed for four happy years, during which time three sons were born to him respectively in 1886, 1887, and 1889—the great year of Hauptmann's life, when his first drama was published and staged.

CHAPTER B

LITERARY TENDENCIES OF HIS TIME

DURING those four years at Erkner Hauptmann acquired his dramatic ideals and technique. Here he came into close contact with all the new tendencies which were then current in the literary life of Germany. Various forces were at work. In the middle of the century, what is commonly known as the breakdown of German idealism had numbed all enthusiasm for philosophy and poetry. As the great historian of literature, Gervinus, expressed it: The time of fiction and idea had passed; the time of will and deed had come. It is the time when Schopenhauer at last gained the fame so long delayed. His pessimism, which Eduard von Hartmann had made the fashionable philosophy, was only too effective to turn the mind aside from lofty speculation to the world

of hard facts. The glorious rise of empirical science contributed to the same end. Not ideas, but matter, counted. Materialism held sway.

These decades after 1850 are as philistine as any in the history of German literature, in spite of the names of Keller, Fontane, Rabe, Heyse. What was looked for in the theatres was amusement, and nothing but amusement. Not that I denounce this as an absolutely inartistic aim. But their amusement consisted in the flattest satisfaction of superficial sentimentality and sensuality. Black and white drawings became a requirement on the stage; fair heroes and black villains; reward to the former and punishment to the latter. Poetic justice triumphed. *Fiat justitia, pereat mundus.* Displays of feelings were welcomed, so long as they were not rooted in the fathomless depths of human nature. Dramatic Art gives expression to its creations through an exalted language.

But there will always be times of decadence in Art when the artistic diction as a means is

confused with the artistic creation as an aim. These are the barren times of the rhetorical drama, which instead of a living creation gives a dead and hollow pathos. In those epochs the artist has to seek for the true springs of creative art. It might have been expected that the Franco-German War, which at last brought the realization of the long-desired ideal of a German Empire, would have inspired the dry poetic brains with jubilant enthusiasm. It failed to do so, for the materialistic fetters were too strong to be shaken off. The result of the union was a grand display of energy in the fields of industry and commerce. That great practical genius, Bismarck, by the example and success of his life-work, inaugurated a period of intense practical activity throughout the nation. Positivism was its domain, together with historical science with the minuteness of its methods adapted from the rising natural sciences, and finally psychology with its empirical foundation.

Gradually the crude materialistic *Weltanschauung* gave way. There was as yet only

a general ferment which awaited the leaven of new ideals. These could not be wholly created from within; the new forces which at the end of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties slowly created new convictions of literary aims, came chiefly from outside. As the age was inclined through historical and scientific reasons to disregard the political boundaries, as it, in fact, tended to cosmopolitanism, artists looked abroad for what they could not find at home.

The intellectual life of France had undergone a complete change between 1850 and 1870, and it is at once felt in poetry in the widest sense. It is the age of Naturalism in literature. Balzac, Flaubert, the brothers Goncourt, and finally Zola, are known well enough as both the founders and masters of the new Realism in Art. Comte's Positivism is strongly alive in it. The new Art obtained its material from nature and experience, its principle of selection and its aim are Reason and Truth, its method is borrowed from the dominating Natural Sciences. The sponsors

of the marriage between literature and science are Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. It often seems as if novels and dramas were only written to exemplify their theories; naturalistic poetry and natural science cannot be separated. Is it a wonder, then, that the young German writers who had most of them, like Gerhart Hauptmann, sat at the feet of the great scientific theorist Haeckel in Jena, who had studied under Forel and others in Zürich, at once felt strongly drawn towards this Naturalism?

From its outset Naturalism is connected with Socialism. They rise on the same basis—the minute investigation into the atomistic nature of reality. Socialism was founded in Germany as early as 1863 by Ferdinand Lassalle. Checked by the patriotic wave of the war, it sprang up again after the terrible crash of the Gründerjahre—those years of reckless speculation—and was kindled to a blaze by the anti-socialist legislation after 1878. Naturally, this forceful movement found channels into literature, and flooded it. We have already

heard that the earliest publication of Hauptmann bears full witness to this in its keynote of sympathy with the poorest of the poor.

Those various tendencies were focussed in two centres of Germany—in Munich and Berlin. In the latter town it was chiefly the work of the brothers Hart, who set forth the new literary ideals in their "Critical Duels" of 1885. They felt they could never sufficiently admire Zola's devotion to truth, his realism; this must be the leaven of all poetry. But on the other side, they were independent enough to point out the deficiencies of his theories. They firmly denounced the identification of poetry with psychological science as Zola had expressed it: "Le retour à la nature, l'évolution naturaliste, qui emporte le siècle, pousse peu à peu toutes les manifestations de l'intelligence humaine dans une même vie scientifique." They emphatically enunciated in accord with Zola that no matter, not even the vulgar and immoral, is in itself unpoetical. "*What* the poet represents is indifferent; it only matters that he represents it as a poet." "The

how, not the *what*, tells." But even here we find the connexion with Zola who expressly stated the substance of poetry and fiction to be "un coin de la nature vu à travers un tempérament." There we have already the recognition of the ultra-naturalistic and individual moment in artistic production.

However, the brothers Hart did not state the principle that form is the fundamental element in literary work. Their guiding principles were social and ethical rather than æsthetic. They wrote: "Our combats do not decide between the Ugly and the Beautiful, but between Good and Evil; our Weltanschauung is not optimistic like the Greek, and our ideal is not the α'ισθόν, the becoming, the harmony of the formal, but the love, which descends to the depths of human nature and knows how to glorify misery and sickness."

In 1886, a year after the appearance of the "Critical Duels," a literary club was formed in Berlin, where these fundamental principles of Hart were matured and reduced to a more precise and lucid statement. The Club

"Durch" is of the greatest importance in the history of modern German literature. Socialists, individualists, natural scientists, all found themselves united in their endeavour to further their literary aims, and, like most of his friends, Gerhart Hauptmann joined it in May, 1887, after having celebrated its first anniversary in his house at Erkner. The general trend of the minds assembled therein was towards a combination of social ethics with profound psychology. They could not look for better exponents than were to be found in Russian and Scandinavian literature. One has only to think of Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Ibsen, to be convinced of the height of their almost religious attitude in social ethics and of their unrivalled power of psychological characterization. Their works were leavening the entire production of modern German writers.

It is true that at first they were hailed in Germany under rather a misapprehension. They were looked upon as faithful adherents to the dogma of Naturalism, which just then took its final form in the work of Arno Holz,

the originator of the so-called "consequent naturalism." Holz widens the "milieu" theory of Hippolyte Taine and the Aristotelian mimesis to an absolute photography of nature. He coins—in rather clumsy style—the definition: "Art tends to revert to Nature. It becomes Nature in proportion to its respective conditions of reproduction and their treatment." A purely atomistic and mechanical nature is reconstructed by the most exact scientific method to give a complete empirical understanding of world and nature as it is—in his eyes. As a fruit of his minute investigation into everyday life, he, together with a colleague of his, Johannes Schlaf, published a small volume of sketches entitled "Papa Hamlet," which appeared in 1888 as a translation from a Norwegian author.

A year afterwards, in 1889, a drama was published and dedicated to this supposititious Bjarne Peter Holmsen. It is the first published drama of Gerhart Hauptmann, and has the title "Vor Sonnenaufgang"—"Before Sunrise." There would have been no chance of its

production in any of the then existing municipal or state stages. But just previously the Parisian Théâtre Libre of André Antoine had visited Berlin and influenced some literary men there, among them Hart, Theodore Wolf, now the editor of the "Berliner Tageblatt," the well-known Maximilian Harden, Otto Brahm, now Director of the famous Lessing Theater in Berlin,* and Paul

* After this essay had been written the news arrived that Otto Brahm had died suddenly. Modern German drama loses in him one of its prominent leaders. Endowed with thorough scholarship which qualified him to write the best biography of Kleist existing, he was gifted with an unerringly keen feeling for dramatic value. It was this which made him recognize Hauptmann's dramatic power from the first. He brought Hauptmann's plays before the public long before the ordinary theatres were open to them. He was the practical genius among the circle of the ardent supporters of Hauptmann's art. He staged all his plays in the best productions they have had. At first he threw open to them the "Freie Bühne," then the "Deutsches Theater," and in the last years the "Lessing Theater," of which he was the most famous Director and will be for a long time to come. His name is inseparably connected with the rise of the modern German drama. Gerhart Hauptmann, at the bier of Otto Brahm, on Sunday, 1st December, said: "The work of this man was partly my work, and my work was partly his. This profoundly valuable man was distinguished by the special German qualities of idealism, not of a vague idealism, but of a firmly founded one, produced by fulfilment of duty and circumspection." Requiescat in pace!

Schlenther, afterwards Director of the Vienna Court Theatre, to follow its example, by founding a so-called free theatre—" Freie Bühne." In September, 1889, it was opened with Ibsen's " Ghosts." The second drama to be produced was written by an unknown author; it was Gerhart Hauptmann's " Vor Sonnenaufgang "; it was the rise of his dramatic sun.

CHAPTER C

GERHART HAUPTMANN'S WORK FROM 1889–1912

I. Dramas

1. *Social Dramas*

"Vor Sonnenaufgang" was produced on October 20, 1889, amidst unprecedented stormy scenes both of approval and dissent, and at once put its young author in to the foremost rank of German playwrights. It focussed in itself all those various literary tendencies of which we have been speaking. During his years at Erkner Hauptmann read almost every book on sociological problems he could get hold of, and naturally his drama is a proof of it. The chief interest is in social-ethical problems. By the discovery of coal on their property a peasant family has come to immense wealth, and thereby to unaccustomed luxury. In-

stead of giving up their life to daily work as previous generations had done, they spend it in idleness, and in consequence are driven to all sorts of base vices. Immorality rules the house. The eldest daughter is married to a low, mean, and sensual character. At the opening of the play his former schoolfellow, Loth, who has come to study labour and housing conditions in the Silesian mountains, enters the house. He at once starts to preach his idealistic creed of abstinence and morality. The youngest daughter, by being brought up in the Moravian community, has been kept clean from the contamination of a home, wherein the father is a drunken beast and the stepmother is as coarse and brutal as she is vain. She is to be married to the idiot son of a neighbour who lives in adultery with her mother. This horrible milieu reminds us of Tolstoy's grand and sinister drama "The Power of Darkness." It was due to this portrait of the lowest immorality that Hauptmann was hailed as the hero of Naturalism. It remained unnoticed that he already had departed from naturalistic

dogma by depicting the growing love between the young girl Helen and the idealist Loth, in the course of which Hauptmann gives us, in the fourth act, the most charming love-scene which has been written in modern German drama. His own soft nature in its overflowing wealth of feeling breaks through. The portrait of Helen is one of his finest creations, and ranks with the best to be found in German literature. Her partner, Loth, on the other side, is an absolute failure. He is a blubbering theorist, invented to put forth the sociological problems the author has at heart, which are clearly indicated by the milieu. When hearing that his chosen bride, who desires to be rescued from the squalor of her parental home, belongs to a family of hereditary drunkards, he departs, leaving her without explanation, without consolation. The play ends in tragedy for the poor girl, who commits suicide. Thus, by the strength of his artistic individuality, Hauptmann has himself crossed his aim of creating a " social drama," which denomination he chose as sub-title of his work.

The next social drama is the greatest he has written—"The Weavers," written in 1892, in broad Silesian dialect—in English the Yorkshire dialect would best correspond to it—and produced on the Free Stage on February 26, 1893. It had a tremendous success, due to its own artistic merits, but also to the blind futility of the censor who forbade its production. In purely dramatic technique it is perhaps Hauptmann's boldest attempt, and in that he fully succeeded it shows his dramatic power. Instead of selecting one individual as hero of the tragedy, to bear his message, he does not hesitate to make the whole mass of weavers the focus of the drama. They sing, as he once put it in one of his few lyrical attempts, "mit Donnergetön, das Lied, so finster und doch so schön, das Lied von unserm Jahrhundert." Their unlimited misery is the theme. Hauptmann having grown up in the weaving centre in Silesia, knows it well. He dedicates the drama to his father, who had told him the tale of his own father, of how he had to work and to suffer as

a poor weaver himself. It is the expression of his deep pity, and sincere concern, for the wretched conditions of those people who work from early morning to late at night until they become bent and blind, and yet are half-starved, have no money to buy bread, or to buy medicine for their sick, although the sick-bed is never empty. Instead of food they have stones to satisfy their hunger, and if they kill a dog their starved stomachs cannot digest it. The drama opens with the situation arising from a proposal to reduce their wages. They can endure it no longer, and still are too weak to rise up against it. But gradually even they become possessed with the spirit of revolt. A young man, just home from his military service, tells them of the life in the town outside their wretched hovels. A song is circulated among them, called the Blood Justice—"Das Blutgericht." It is their confederate song, it becomes their creed, prayer, and symbol. In a grand scene at the close of the third act, all of them, poor, ragged,

half-starved creatures as they are, burst out with the revolutionary tune. It rings through the streets, and they march to their employer's house and demolish it just after he has escaped. In the fifth act soldiers come to restore order, but the weavers stand up against them, and succeed in driving them back; at that moment a volley is discharged, and a stray bullet flies through a window, hitting the only man who has not taken part in the rebellion. He was sitting throughout behind his loom, working, and praying most devoutly to the Almighty. Here the curtain drops.

Hauptmann had made profound studies for this work, and besides his own knowledge of the actual condition, he consulted the records of the weavers' revolt in the forties, a story which he adapted for his drama. It consists of successive pictures and situations, and yet it is an inseparable unity and entity, by reason of the atmosphere which pervades it from beginning to end. I repeat—"The Weavers" is Gerhart Hauptmann's greatest social drama.

Two years before this play Hauptmann

wrote an interesting novel: "Bahnwärter Thiel" (Thiel the Railway-Guard). A simple railway-guard is left a widower with an only child, who was specially entrusted to his care by the dying mother. To fulfil his promise he marries again, a strong, robust lass who soon has the command of the house. More and more drawn to her by mere sexual attraction, he has not the power to resist the ill-treatment of his child. Finally, through her carelessness, it is killed by a train. His passion suddenly rises to frenzy. He kills her and her child. The neighbours discover him and find him mad. Naturalistic in structure, there are almost lyrical descriptions of the beautiful forests round Berlin, and passages almost psychic when the simple-minded railway-guard gives himself up in his solitude to the worship of his deceased wife.

Eleven years afterwards, in 1898, Gerhart Hauptmann took up this story again and welded it into one of his best social dramas—"Fuhrmann Henschel." Again the technique is of naturalistic exactitude, filled with re-

miniscences of Hauptmann's own home. Here a dying wife makes her husband promise not to marry again. Yet he finds it necessary to break his promise, the woman being the very servant girl to whom his former wife had objected. The buxom wench has a past, and soon turns her attention to another man. In the meantime, just as in the novel, the man's appetites more and more take possession of him. But there is a difference between the novel and the drama: the former treated of a purely individual psychological problem ; here we have a social problem. Henschel's existence is inseparably bound up with his social respectability. By his wife's reckless effrontery and his own pitiful weakness it is gradually destroyed. We have here a character like the father in Hebbel's " Maria Magdalene." Henschel's fate is the more tragic because he feels himself responsible for his lost social honour and even, perhaps, for the death of his first child, who follows its mother to the grave in a short time. He has broken the word he had pledged, he has

violated his honour. Again we are confronted with occult elements which already appeared in the short story. The departed wife's shade haunts him, he blames himself for all that has happened, and finally he dies. With great skill Hauptmann has contrived to weld together the social milieu and the portrait of an individual driven step by step to his own destruction.

He set himself a similar task five years afterwards, in 1903, in "Rose Bernd." Again we see an individual character, this time a woman is indissolubly connected with its social milieu, and its whole structure predestined by it to its own doom. It is again the story of Hebbel's "Maria Magdalene." A full-blooded young woman, instinctively resenting marriage with her destined suitor, who is a consumptive, becomes involved with the bailiff of the village. He is a man in the prime of life, whose wife has been bedridden for ten years, and he sincerely loves the strong and healthy girl. To cover her fall, she yields to a sensual villain, thereby injuring her social honour in the

attempt to shield it. The villain boasts of his success, and her honest, somewhat pharisaical, father insists on a libel action. She commits perjury, and finally ends as the murderess of her newly-born babe. By an absolutely irresistible necessity she is driven on and on till she comes to this final deed. This development of character within the iron confines of her social basis is most perfect dramatic art, and what is more, Hauptmann's characters are living beings of flesh and bone, and not mere exemplifications of ideas. In creating them, Hauptmann can avail himself of the fruits of his long-continued studies in sculpture. His artistic eye sees men and situations corporeally, not as mere shadowy spectres. It may happen that they are only carved out in relief, but they are always individual and characteristic. Plastic imagination which he once pronounced to be "the essential happiness of human cognisance," is also the essential feature of his mind.

The best example of it is perhaps the chief female character in Hauptmann's recent play,

which may also be called a social drama, " Die Ratten " (The Rats), produced in 1911 in Berlin. It clearly shows how the social surroundings influence the character, the whole attitude towards life and its most profound problems. The longing of a mother for a child to replace her first-born which had died soon after birth, strengthened by the concurrence of the wishes of her dearly-beloved husband, grow more and more, and finally gain possession of all her thoughts. She contrives to get a newly born, fatherless babe, and at last connives at the death of the rightful mother when she asserts her claim to the child. The discovery of the whole tragedy involves her own death. The story is curiously and, it must be said, often too lightly linked with a parallel story in the play of a stage Director, his daughter and her lover. But this parallel story in its humorous structure adds the most effective contrast to the sombre tragedy we witness. Besides, it affords us the most interesting information about Hauptmann's own life. In more than one way he is the lover

of the Director's daughter. The model for the father is his own teacher, Hessel, with whom he studied acting when he came to Berlin. He himself is Spitta, the lover with the defect in speech, who resents all hollow rhetoric. Brahm, the first discoverer of the genius in " Vor Sonnenaufgang," late manager of the Lessing Theater, where all the plays of Hauptmann are first produced, did not allow it in his theatre. The character of Spitta in the play enunciates Hauptmann's conception of Art, when he considers acting to be a " valueless accident in the drama," when he negatives " poetic justice, guilt and punishment," when he thinks that "according to circumstances a carter or a charwoman from the slums may be just as good a subject for tragedy as Lady Macbeth and King Lear." " Before Art, as before Law, all men are equal." Of course, there is not an absolute identification of Spitta and Hauptmann, but only of an epoch in Hauptmann's life, namely, in 1885 when he intended to become an actor, and had the same convictions as

those put forth by H. Hart, in the "Critical Duels," of the same year—"return to young Goethe, to Lessing, to Diderot." Both have the same emotional basis, that effervescence for the "Special, Sombre, Great," and that confidence that "In ourselves lie the germs." But especially the ethical structure of both is alike. Spitta feels the same burning pity for the poorest on earth which we have noted already in Selin, the hero of the "Promethidenlos." These religious ethics pervade Hauptmann's character and determine his attitude towards life. Thus the "Ratten," excellent as it is in its relentless tragedy, in its most pathetic and yet most human portrait of Frau John, is of great personal value.

The comic element here is well used to set forth the chief tragedy. The play is called "Tragicomoedie." But Hauptmann has also treated social problems in purely comic technique, and in this way gave us what may well be called the best modern comedy in German literature—"Der Biberpelz" (The Beaver Coat). The contrast of bare reality

with the presumptuous honesty of the heroine of the play, the washerwoman, Mrs. Wolff, produces the most comic effect. Hauptmann realizes that the field of the comic is the intellect, and he contrives to raise the aspect of all actions to this level, in order to prevent any ethical and moral ill-feeling from damaging its humour. He therefore chooses an old literary device—a scene in court—to form the setting of a comedy. The contrast of the blind and pretentious judge with the clever washerwoman who is the moving spirit in everything and pretends to know nothing, is perfect comedy. All thefts, at first the wood—the policeman unwittingly assisting the thief—then the fur coat, are committed by Mrs. Wolff, and yet the honest soul is never suspected. It is a scene of thrilling humour, when we see together in court the judge, the thief, the owner of the stolen goods, its receiver, the wrongly suspected, and the thief, Mrs. Wolff, the only calm one of the lot, domineering by her acknowledged respectability.

Eight years afterwards, in 1901, Hauptmann

took up this subject again, and wrote the tragi-comedy "Der Rote Hahn" (The Red Cock). It naturally loses in comparison with the former play, which lifted the spectator up to the serene sphere of humour, from which lofty point of vantage everything in the segment of the world which the poet shows us looks small and trifling, and where our feelings find vent in joyous and cheerful laughter. In the new play Hauptmann deliberately sets himself another aim—he emphasizes much more the ethical aspect of Mrs. Wolff's character, and thereby leads us into the field of tragedy. This, of course, is artistically fully justified. But he does not fully succeed in bringing out the tragedy, and loses the effect of the comedy. On the other side, it must be acknowledged that we are biassed by the strength of the former comedy to expect the old Mrs. Wolff in her cherished portrait, and are disappointed when we discover features unknown hitherto.

2. *Family Dramas*

These social dramas form one part of Hauptmann's art. But his is a strong individuality. And he had not in vain lived among those young Berlin writers of the Club "Durch," on whom Max Stirner, that famous individualist, already exerted a great and deep influence, and where, later, the star of Nietzsche's individualistic creed rose to unparalleled heights. It is only natural then that Gerhart Hauptmann should take a profound and serious interest in the handling of individualistic problems. The outcome of it is a series of so-called Family Dramas. The first of them is "Das Friedensfest" (The Coming of Peace), dedicated to the great German novelist, Theodore Fontane, who, from the outset, had recognized Hauptmann's genius. As its motto it bears on the title-page a passage from Lessing: "They find action in no tragedy but that in which the lover kneels down, etc. It has never struck

them that every internal conflict of passions, every sequence of antagonistic thoughts, where one annihilates the other, may also be an action; perhaps they think and feel too mechanically to be conscious of any activity. To refute them seriously were fruitless labour." These words of Lessing approach very closely to those which Hauptmann himself uses in the preface to the first collected edition of his works in 1906. It shows how much the young playwright of 1890, whom everybody believed to be a revolutionary in dramatic art, was in accord with the classical exponent of dramatic technique. After October 20, 1889, however, Gerhart Hauptmann's name stood for that of the prophet of naturalism and the apostle of ugliness. "Das Friedensfest," his second drama, was published in 1890. He takes up the problem of heredity, already touched upon in his first play, and handling it with perfect technique, focusses all the interest on one family.

Later on, in the diary of his Greek voyage, Hauptmann reiterates the problem in another connexion, showing how deeply he was affected

by it.—"I am convinced that deep antagonism between near relatives is to be counted amongst the most gruesome phenomena of human psychology. In such struggles it may happen that ardent love and ardent hatred run parallel —that love and hatred are to be found in each of the combatants at the same time and of the same strength. This produces the exquisite tortures and the endlessness of such conflicting emotions. Love makes them eternal, hate alone would soon bring them to decision. What could be more terrible than the strangeness of those who know each other."

No doubt in these family dramas Gerhart Hauptmann is the best disciple of Henrik Ibsen. In the play in question various members of a family who have been scattered all over the world by their irreconcilable individual hereditary characters, meet together to celebrate Christmas, the day of peace. All at first seems to be harmonious, but immediately the different characters move one against the other. There is an atmosphere throughout the play, like a heavy

summer day, the clouds veiling the sky more and more like a black, impenetrable wall, until the flash of lightning disperses them. The unique tragic effect is unrivalled in Hauptmann's other plays.

"Das Friedensfest" is the best example of how the naturalistic drama drifts against the iron limits of the rules of French classical drama. Within a few hours, from afternoon to evening, in the same room, the tragedy develops and comes to an end. In dramatic concentration it is only to be compared with Ibsen's best plays. It also shows Ibsen's technique in throwing light from opposite sides on the same problem in successive dramas. In Hauptmann's first drama the healthy Loth forsakes Helene, who is foredoomed by heredity. Now the pessimistic gloom is inverted. Wilhelm is the son of his broken-down father with all his morbid nervousness. His brother Robert openly tells him of the taint. He himself despairs; but his betrothed, who is strong and healthy, trusts him entirely. She throws in her lot with his, and declares herself de-

pendent on him. This unwavering confidence will restore his strength and health, if this be possible. Of course, Hauptmann does not bluntly tell us it does, but we are impressed with this absolutely optimistic conviction. He leaves room for the wiseacres to discuss the issue and future development. Perhaps it would have been more discussed than it actually was if they had not got weary of such problems after the storm Ibsen's "A Doll's House" had excited. If nothing else, the principle that to support the weak strengthens the supporter himself, clearly proves that Hauptmann did not absolutely side with the selfish considerations of Loth in his first play. It is a principle of truly Christian ethics. Hauptmann, even then, does not seem to have been much impregnated by the anarchical doctrines of Max Stirner, Nietzsche's forerunner, who, however, had ardent supporters in the Club "Durch," as for instance John Henry Mackay, the lyrical poet of Scotch origin. There is some relief in this Christian optimism from the sombre, tragic atmosphere which enshrouds the play,

which is never cleared, not even by such a charmingly simple song as :

> " Wenn im Hag der Lindenbaum
> Wieder blüht,
> Huscht der alte Frühlingstraum
> Durch mein treu Gemüt ! "

It is like a sudden blue speck in the overclouded sky. A sensitive nervousness dominates the various characters. This too is a sign of that time.

It comes out more strongly in the next play, " Einsame Menschen " (Lonely Lives), of 1891, where the contemporary nervous strain seems to be concentrated in the hero, Johannes Vockerat. Gerhart Hauptmann prefixed to it the sombre dedication, " I put this drama into the hands of those who have lived it." He has lived it. It has already been remarked how long he had to struggle until he found his own vocation. A good deal of himself lives in this Johannes Vockerat. He has broken the tradition of his paternal home, and thrown overboard his old belief in which he was

brought up. He turned to the new gods lifted up by natural science, by men like Charles Darwin, Ernst Haeckel, and Herbert Spencer. He is the type of those unsettled years in the eighties and nineties. His wife is a tender, loving woman, who in vain struggles to free herself from the traditional bonds, to be to him the companion for whom his artistic soul is longing. And when he finally finds one in the student, Anna Mahr, he himself feels too weak to shake off the shackles, and drowns himself. Hauptmann himself has been strong enough to live the new life, he has fulfilled what Spitta promised. But it was not without the hardest of fights, just as it is foreseen at the close of the fragment "Aus den Memoiren eines Edelmannes" (From the Memoirs of a Nobleman), which Hauptmann published in the "Tag" on December 25, 1907.

Here in our play there is already raised the same problem which was to be of the utmost significance for Hauptmann's own life—the problem of the man placed between two women.

Here Johannes solves it in favour of his legal wife. But he perishes. A few years afterwards Hauptmann had to fight it out for himself. In 1905 he was divorced, and he subsequently married Margarethe Marschalk, an actress and violinist; their son is now thirteen years old. It is obvious what a man of Hauptmann's sensitive and impressionable character must have suffered in the preceding ten years, when he almost gave up talking to anybody—when even he would hardly see his most intimate friends. At last, when all was over in 1905, he set out for his long-desired Greek voyage, and we can now understand his hidden meaning as we read the passage quoted above. The problem did not leave his mind. He made another attempt to dispose of it in Goethe's manner. It was in 1907 that he wrote "Gabriel Schilling's Flucht" (Gabriel Schilling's Flight). When it was first published, in January, 1912, in the journal "Die Neue Rundschau," it was significantly prefaced by the words: "The following drama was written in the year 1906. I have rather feared than desired its production,

therefore it has not taken place. To-day I should not like to put the work to the hazard of a production. It is no affair for the general public, but for the purely passive and intimate attention of a small circle. My desire, which cannot be fulfilled, is for one single performance in the most perfect style, in the most intimate theatre." His desire was granted, for in the small theatre of Goethe, in Lauchstedt, his play was produced in the summer of 1912, before a select audience, by a perfect cast of actors, with scenery painted by the greatest living artist of Germany, Max Liebermann. It is now produced everywhere in Germany. An artist stands between his commonplace wife, whose interests are petty and materialistic, and the Russian, who has a son by him, and to whom he feels irresistibly drawn, although he acknowledges his own weakness. Hauptmann himself had lived on the island of Rügen, to which Gabriel Schilling fled to start a new and healthier life; the catastrophe overwhelms him.

There are singular beauties in this play,

such as the meeting of the rival women before the door of the dying artist. This spontaneous outburst of human nature reveals the great dramatist. But what I like best in the play is its unique and even atmosphere, like bracing sea air which enwraps the whole drama, as if it were a lyrical poem.

Again, Hauptmann shows that his eye is not only quick to see the tragic element in individual problems, but that he knows how to raise these problems to the level of humour. His first comedy, "Kollege Crampton," which he wrote in a few weeks during the year 1891, and which was inspired by Molière, is full proof of it. In most determined realism—he does not even disdain to give the broadest hints of the real persons standing behind the characters of the play—he draws the portrait of the Professor of Art in the Academy of Breslau, where he himself had been studying, and gives us the most delightful Rembrandtesque picture we could desire. Again, we see an artist descending lower and lower and blaming his materialistic wife for it. But yet there is hope. His

guardian angel is his daughter, who finally, with the help of noble-minded friends—they bear the maiden name of Hauptmann's mother—rescues the drunkard from the slum and sets him up in a new life, and we feel confident he will not shame her. It is the lucid realism, the human sentiment and the deeply penetrating psychological intuition of Hauptmann, as displayed in this comedy, that attract us so much.

Once more it is the profound psychology which is prominent in the next drama of this series, "Michael Kramer," 1900. It is a double tragedy—the tragedy of ugliness and the tragedy of misunderstanding between father and son—again the horrible "antagonism of near relatives." The son is ugly and shuns society, as did Hauptmann himself, at that time feeling himself dishonoured and isolated. And yet in that ugly body there lives a burning desire for love. Everywhere rejected, by father and by the girl he loves, he despairs and dies. And the awakened father has to look into his grave and feel the great truth: "Death is

the mildest form of life : the masterpiece of the eternal love." The play is technically weak in some points, and yet its tragedy is overpowering in its prophetic insight into the human soul.

All these prose dramas show a characteristic which is one of their most distinguishing features in comparison with the works of preceding playwrights : the dialogue. Perhaps Ibsen's influence is nowhere more keenly felt than here. Ibsen, in the conciseness and pregnancy of his speech, had achieved what before was as good as unknown. The persons of his drama speak as ordinary mortals do ; there is no stilted rhetoric. They keep wonderfully clear of the insignificant speech of everyday life as naturalism demanded it, and from the clumsy literary jargon of earlier dramatists. Here Hauptmann is a most successful follower of the great Norwegian.

3. *Fairy Dramas*

Ibsen's influence on Hauptmann's diction is, indeed, so strongly effective that it might almost be said to reach into our author's verse dramas. For there is another side of Hauptmann's dramatic genius which is unfolded in what he calls his "Fairy Dramas." There the lyrical strain of his artistic nature appears at its best. We have not many lyrical poems of his. An early volume—"Das Bunte Buch"—though sent to press, was not published. Some of the poems gathered therein are known—partly by Schlenther's excellent biography of Hauptmann, partly by Fiedler's interesting collection in "The Oxford Book of German Verse," which also contains a preface by Gerhart Hauptmann—and to them we may add the charming and simple verses in the "Friedensfest."

On the whole, Hauptmann seems to be denied the gift of purely lyrical expression. His poems, as far as we know them, fail to carry us away by an impression of spontaneity and

impetuosity. They are too full of intellectual reflection. It is strange that he should lack the power of writing lyrics. For his Greek diary is supreme evidence of the naïve and impressionable nature of his mind. As to the form, his Fairy Dramas reveal his mastery of poetic diction. In fact, his drama " Der Arme Heinrich " contains passages of the best verse in modern German literature. And he certainly has the gift of creating a uniform and harmonious atmosphere which, after all, is perhaps the highest perfection of a lyrical poem. He is so strongly gifted in this direction that it sometimes even endangers the realistic development of his dramatic plot. One might almost be tempted to divide his plays into two sections—lyrical and non-lyrical. To the former we would reckon his Fairy Dramas, but also plays like " Die Jungfern vom Bischofsberg," or even " Das Friedensfest " and " Gabriel Schilling's Flucht," in virtue of their unique atmosphere. Scenes like the love-scene in " Vor Sonnenaufgang " are pearls of lyrical feeling. And yet

Hauptmann will never rank with such true lyrical poets as Stephan George, or Rainer Maria Rilke.

One of his best lyrical attempts is a poem of 1887, " Im Nachtzug " (In the Night Express). There is plenty of power and splendid rhythm in it ; we read on and on, and are enraptured by the strength of its imaginative impulsiveness. Yet it cannot be denied that it has much more epic quality than lyrical delicacy. The epic stands much nearer to his profoundly intellectual genius. He himself declares that the dramatic and the epic are never clearly separated, just as little as the tendencies of time and space. (Greek Spring, p. 222.) This declaration is at the same time a refutation of some of his biographers, like Bartels and Sulger-Gebing, who maintain that his special talent lies in the epic much more than in the drama. We might equally well conclude from the above-stated evidence that his chief gifts are for lyrical poetry. Gerhart Hauptmann is a dramatist, but he is more than that. He is a dramatic genius. If needs

be, he knows how to convey his message in epics as well as in lyrics.

We have noticed how within the stereotyping tendencies of naturalistism and the social tendencies of the age, a craving arose for the valuation of personality. The importance of the individual will power in an age of highly strung and practical activity must necessarily lead to an artistic subjectivism. The strong-willed individual masters reality. Consequently the artistic personality scorns the observance of the external; his own individuality gives aims and laws to his art. Art is the expression of the individual. This individualistic conception of Art is fundamentally romantic. And as the ideas, often only imperfectly felt and dimly conceived, cannot bear the cold daylight of reality; the artist creates and peoples a new world, and so symbolism comes into favour. Again, this new development, especially in its emphasis on formalism, was greatly assisted by foreign influence—Verlaine, Baudelaire, Maeterlinck, became known; and in Italy too, Gabriele

d'Annunzio. To the deep-rooted religious sentiment of Gerhart Hauptmann symbolism, with its mystic elements, was bound to appeal.

His feelings, especially in the years of inward conflict, strove for dramatic lyrical expression. The first play of this series is "Hannele's Himmelfahrt" (Hannele) of 1893 which he dedicated in beautiful words to his first wife. It is permeated by the sincerity of his social compassion. The simple story is of a motherless and cruelly treated child, who is driven to death, and in her last hours sees in visions the heavens open and the angels with the Saviour Himself descending to take her up to happier regions. The intermingling of the crude reality and the golden vision is so artistic that we feel transported to the heavenly spheres, and we listen enraptured to the song of the angels at the close of the play:

"Auf jenen Hügeln die Sonne,
Sie hat dir ihr Gold nicht gegeben;
Das wehende Grün in den Tälern,
Es hat sich für dich nicht gebreitet."

(On yonder hills the sun,
Hath given his gold but not to thee;
The waving green in the dales,
It is not spread for thee.)

But it must be admitted that it requires a very fine and skilful staging to produce the full artistic effect of the play.

The next play, in 1893, is on a broad historical basis and falls out of the series. It is more a fragment of dramatised history than historical drama. The hero, the focus of the various dramatic tendencies, stands rather in the middle ground, whilst the foreground is occupied by a broadly-drawn movement of the Peasant Revolt during the Reformation. Hauptmann has devoted most earnest work to this play, and it abounds in elaborate and carefully studied details. This, in fact, rather damages the dramatic effect, as it takes away the bracing air of nature which such a subject demands, and leaves us the impression of study atmosphere. But it is a great, perhaps too great, conception to concentrate dramatically the antagonistic religious and social forces,

and to focus them in the one towering personality of the peasant leader, Florian Geyer, whose name gives the title to the play. It must be admitted that Hauptmann's genius has fallen short—he has failed to convey to us the grandeur of this leader. His strength was his weakness. His power of psychological insight misled him into giving us a fine and most captivating study of a singular individuality, but perhaps he would have done better to draw an al fresco portrait. The play is full of the most exquisite beauty, and yet we sometimes feel that we hear mere words and miss the strong active personality behind them. It also is the best proof of Hauptmann's extraordinary conscientiousness in writing, which we notice throughout his works, and which is shown by the innumerable sketch-books, "Cahiers" bound in grey linen, and piled up in order round the wall of his high-vaulted study in Agnetendorf.

Three years later Hauptmann published a sequence of six scenes, adapted from Grillparzer's novel "Elga." Like Hannele, it is

a dream vision, framed in two scenes of reality. The four remaining scenes render most effectively the tragic fate of a husband too deeply in love with his idolized wife. He is betrayed by her and revenges himself on her and her lover. A simple story rendered thrilling by the vivid rapidity of the succession of events and by the impressive lucidity with which the figures stand out from the background of dreamy vision.

"Elga" is followed by "Helios," in the same year—a dramatic fragment but a perfect treasure house of diction, permeated by deep pessimism, and yet filled with burning desire for strength, beauty, and freedom. "Helios" is the author's poetical confession, which is more clearly and concisely repeated in one of his few lyrical poems reprinted in Professor Fiedler's Anthology:

"Wie eine Windesharfe sei deine Seele Dichter!
Der leiseste Hauch bewege sie;
Und ewig müssen die Saiten schwingen im Atem des Weltwehs,

Denn das Weltweh ist die Wurzel der Himmels-
Sehnsucht.
Also steht deiner Lieder Wurzel begründet im
Weh' der Erde,
Doch ihre Scheitel krönet Himmelslicht."

Hauptmann's worldly woe is the root of his longing for heaven.

His third publication of the same year is the great drama "Die Versunkene Glocke" (The Sunken Bell). This mirrors in wonderful verse the inner conflict Hauptmann had to go through. It is again the artist with his soul's desire for all that is high, good, and beautiful, misunderstood by his associates, and most of all by his honest, commonplace wife. In the mountains, in the realm of spirits, he finds a companion, but the ties which hold him to the earth, and to his legal wife, are too strong for him; he cannot liberate himself; he cannot fulfil his divine artistic mission. His great work of art, his bell, lies deeply buried in the mountain water. It will never be kissed to life by the golden sun.

His soul goes from him and his body dies. In death he finds his loving spirit; the night is long, but the sun comes. The drama is Hauptmann's human and artistic confession.

It is followed two years later by the "Hirtenlied" (The Song of the Shepherds), again a dramatic fragment. The longing soul of the artist leaves his swamp of pessimistic despair and strives upwards towards the light of the sun. His ideal cannot be reached by resignation, it must be gained daily by the hardest endeavour and by self-conquest. But with his will his strength grows, and he lifts aside the heavy rock which prevents the parched crowd from satisfying their thirst. "Hirtenlied" is the high song of Hauptmann's artistic longing. We hear iterated the note which is ringing through all Hauptmann's plays—the longing for the road to freedom. So many may confess with the artist: "Ich kann den Mut nicht finden, den mancher fand, den letzten Mut ins Freie." The world of dreams may recompense us for the cruel reality as it does for poor Hannele.

Yet it is only meagre amends. The artist begs of the angel :

" Willst Du mich führen, leite mich ins Helle !
Ins klare Sonnenlicht des frischen Tages !
Mit Träumen schreckst du mich. Lass endlich mir
Den starken Morgen alles Traumgewölk
Durchtrennen ! Gib mir jenes ganze Sein,
Das keines Traums bedarf."
(Wilt thou guide me, lead me to the light !
Into bright sunlight of gladsome day !
With dreams thou dost appal me. Let at last
Strong morning part all dreamy clouds.
Give me that whole existence,
Which needs no dream.)

In the next play of this series, published in 1900, Hauptmann again tries his power in comedy. In " Biberpelz " he followed his greatest German example, Kleist's " Der Zerbrochene Krug," and in " Kollege Crampton " the greatest French writer of comedy, Molière,—now he goes back to Shakespeare and his " Taming of the Shrew." The motto on the title-page is the

translation of the last words in Shakespeare's Induction :

" Sly : What, household stuff ?
Page : It is a kind of history.
Sly : Well, we'll see't. Come, madam wife, sit by my side,
And let the world slip : we shall ne'er be younger."

The motive which since the " Arabian Nights " has run through the literature of the world—the deception of a peasant, so that he believes himself to be lifted to a high social sphere—is made use of by Hauptmann in his " Schluck und Jau," a play of two simple-minded vagabonds who in their drunkenness are made to believe themselves princes whose every wish is fulfilled at once. There is closer kinship to Holberg's than to Shakespeare's treatment of the same subject. We must not criticize it too sharply, as the prologue itself says that it is only " the child of an easy humour." But the interweaving of reality and illusion shows great skill, and what raises the farce to a higher level

is the undercurrent of Hauptmann's sincere sympathy with the poor and outcast. Hauptmann seems to give himself up to contented resignation, and yet this note is not so strongly expressed as to interfere with the artistic aim, the hilarity of the comedy.

Two years later Hauptmann again published a confession. He himself is "Der Arme Heinrich." It is the outcome of his family conflict. We saw his portrait in the artist, Arnold Kramer. Like him Prince Heinrich is hideous in his illness and shuns human society. How deeply Hauptmann was affected is proved by this self-portraiture, where he describes the prince as a leper, an outcast whose vicinity everybody fears, and whom they hunt down like a wild beast. But his salvation came. The pure maiden, Ottegebe, who in her disinterested, innocent love is willing to sacrifice herself to save him, is the only one who never forsakes him. He has days and weeks of deepest despair. She is always his angel, and finally he throws aside his self-

confidence and self-reliance, and puts his whole fate in those fair hands. Through her he is purified, and gains new confidence for a fresh beginning: "Let my falcons, my eagles, soar again!" The play, which goes back to a legend of the Middle Ages, derived from Hartmann von Aue, is perhaps in beauty of diction and verse the most perfect of all Hauptmann's dramas. To give only one example, we quote the words Heinrich speaks to the monk Benedikt, to whom he has come in order to see Ottegebe:

"Zum letzten Male denn: Mönch, dieser Tag
Hat mich gelehrt: so arm ist keiner, Gott
Kann ihn noch ärmer machen. Denn wo nahm
Ein Räuber je dem alles, der nichts hat!?—
Wohl, wohl, das Kind ist tot! sie ist gestorben,
Ist hin.—Als mir ein weisser Lazarus
Die Mär', wie sie gestorben ist, erzählte—
Dass ihr das Herz brach um den siechen Herrn!—
Da stiess ich mit der Macht des Wahnsinns nieder
Den fürchterlichen Schrei, der in mir rang,
Und schwieg—und glaubt' es nicht. Dann aber
flogen

Die Füsse mir! Wohin? Ich wusst' es nicht:
Durch Felder, durch Gestrüpp, bergauf, talunter,
Durchs Rinnsal wild geschwollener Bäche, bis
Ich hier an dieser letzten Schwelle stand.
Warum denn lief ich?—Welcher goldener Preis
Liess mich so springen, einem Läufer gleich?
Was dacht' ich hier zu finden? War es nicht,
Als riss' ein Feuerwirbel jäh mich fort?
Als wär ich selbst ein Brand, ein wilder Häher,
Der schreiend und brennend durch die Wälder
fährt?
Mir war . . . rings klang die Luft: sie ist nicht
tot!—
Sie lebt!—Dein klein Gemahl ist nicht gestor-
ben!—
Und dennoch . . . dennoch starb sie."

In Robert Browning's poem "Pippa Passes" we read: "Cannot you tell me something of this little Pippa I must have to do with? One could make something of that name." Hauptmann did make something of it, and gave us in 1906 what is, in spite of certain shortcomings, a beautiful fairy drama, "Und Pippa Tanzt" (And Pippa Dances). There is not much relation between Browning's and Haupt-

mann's creation, and it is futile to trace parallels. Hauptmann's drama is the unrestrained revelation of his never-dying, ardent desire for beauty. He is the young, dreamy and visionary lad who follows Pippa, the ideal of beauty, catches her and loses her again, and will go on in search of her to his life's end. Hauptmann himself has told us much of his conception. " I wanted to put the symbol of beauty in its power and transitoriness in the centre of the play. That this symbol symbolized itself for me in glittering, fragile glass, iridescent, and ever changing, that I created this fairy tale merely depends on the impressions which I received from the land on which I was born, in which I grew up and lived. The chief character is called Pippa ; involuntarily I thought hereby of the most famous of all dancers, of Pepita ; her father was called Tagliazoni ; the similarity of name with Taglioni is an accidental one, for I have never heard anything of this dancer before. My work deals, in spite of its fairy dress, with dramatic happenings which may, and

must be, kept separate from all symbolism. Pippa is the daughter of an Italian glass-blower, an evil type of man whom she, although he is her father, cannot love. From the fields of Venice, from Murano, the place of the noblest art in glass, they were driven to the rough North, and the young, graceful, and beautiful creature charms all who approach her. The manager of the glassworks, who brags of his money, courts her; the old, poor, robust Huhn wants to get possession of her; the travelling artizan, Michel Hellriegel, is fascinated by her, and he wins her heart, since her father, the cheat, is slain by those whom he has cheated in the game, and the old Huhn forcibly carries her off to his decayed glass-works. Michel becomes her rescuer; he liberates her from the power of the giant, and flies with her in storm and rain into the mountains. The fugitives reach a snow-covered hut, in which Wann, a mild and wise old man, lives, and he too, the enlightened man who has done with the charms of life, succumbs to the power of Pippa. Then Huhn enters: by his brutal

force he crushes, and kills the tender Pippa; and poor Michel, who becomes blind from grief, sees, in his fancy, in the snowy desert of the Silesian Mountains the golden palaces, the emerald beauties of Venice for which he has been unconsciously longing." So far the actual contents as the play is seen on the stage. But then Hauptmann gives us the key to the hidden meaning underlying it.

" In all of us there lives something for which our souls desire ; we all seek for something which dances to and fro before our souls in beautiful colours and graceful movements. This something we will call Pippa. She is a young beauty, for whom are seeking all in whom imagination has not yet been extirpated. The manager of the glassworks who desires her dreams of Titian, who is supposed to have a likeness to his uncle, the head forester ; the old Huhn is a primitive strong nature, a great artist, a brutal fellow, with brutal instincts for the enjoyment of beauty, an old corybant —thus I call him purposely—and the young travelling artizan, Michel Hellriegel, he is the

symbol for that which lives in the soul of the German nation. He is the youth full of *naïveté* and humble humour, full of hopes and longing, the youth who yields with humour to his tragic fate but who does not lose his illusions, for he lives on in them. The brutal force in my fairy tale, as so often in life, vanquishes the tender beauty, and, as if hypnotised, Pippa follows the ardent desire of Huhn, and dances and dances until she falls down, and is shattered. How many thousands of young, beautiful girls are in profane reality desired by old corybants and destroyed? But Michel lives; he it is who is nearest to our nation; he will continue to seek for the ideal of beauty. And the beauty who, like Pippa, must expose herself and dance before the mob, is slain by the mob as Pippa is by the old *Kraftmensch* Huhn. And Wann, whom I have designated as a mythical personality, he, the old man, who lives alone in the mountains, who, enlightened, looks down on things and men, he, the sage, who knows the depths of the earth and of mankind, he, too, still feels joy at youth

and beauty. He takes her up to protect her, but he cannot save her, since brutal force makes Pippa dance to death.

" I did not want sophisticated reasoning, nor can others comprehend my fairy poem through it; I wanted to express what I felt, what hovered around me, what my imagination evoked of fairy charm and the longing for beauty, what captivated my soul. The external did not and does not matter to me; I wanted only to liberate myself from what was rooted firmly in my mind; I wanted to free myself from it when I wrote the poem, not by cool reflections, but in such a way as to make everything that lives in my heart rise glitteringly by the charm of the ideal of beauty in many colours and in images of light. Now my dream has become reality and this forms my happiness; perhaps someone may at some time understand fully my dream and my happiness; perhaps the soul of the German nation will apprehend what I especially wanted to symbolize by the character of Michel. Yea, what was not hovering around me! I thought of a

marriage between the German genius, in the person of Michel, and the ideal of southern beauty as it is embodied in Pippa." So far Gerhart Hauptmann himself. (Printed in the "Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger, January 20th, 1906.)

All this, however, does not matter so much as the fact that whoever sees or reads the play is deeply impressed by its singular beauty which lies beyond the world of hard fact, and lives in the realm of unintelligible, irrational feeling.

Here we have the conception of the ideal love problem. In the next drama of 1908, "Kaiser Karl's Geisel" (Charlemagne's Hostage), Hauptmann handles the sex problem. On one side we see the greatest man of his time, Charlemagne, on the threshold of old age. Yet he is a strong man, upright and proud. But advancing age—he is sixty—throws its shadows on his heart. He meets young Gersuind, the Saxon hostage, a wild daughter of nature. She is love itself. With all the superb freshness of girlhood she

is a mature woman, longing for *the* man. She does not meet the strong man who conquers her by his brutal, natural force. She gives herself to all sorts of people, and yet does not find the only man for whom her womanly soul and body are crying. Charlemagne could be this man, but he feels constrained by his dignity. And here we see the tragedy of his greatness. Spring with all its desires once more comes over one who is sixty years old. Love in Gersuind, tempts him with all her charms, and he feels irresistibly drawn towards her. Yet he conquers himself, and by this act kills his rejuvenated feelings and the cause, the love, which aroused them. Gersuind disgraces both herself and the Kaiser, who neglects his duties owing to his partiality for her. She is poisoned by the Chancellor, and Charlemagne has to stand at her bier, as Michael Kramer stood at his son's. The psychological representation of these two characters is singularly convincing. The strength of the undirected craving of the woman in her prime, which pours forth like a mighty torrent, is in-

stinctively felt; and the tragedy of the great man, who, just at the decline, has to sacrifice his second youth, is most pathetic. The humaneness of the great character appeals to us, and we admire him when we see that he is broken down but rouses himself and once more returns to active service in his calling. Hauptmann found the subject of this "Legendenspiel," as he calls it, in "Le sei giornate" of Sebastiano Erizzo, a sixteenth-century writer. He himself tells us in the words, with which he prefaces his drama: "Scrivesi adunque, che il re Carlo, il quale il Francesi col cognome di Magno agguagliano a Pompeo ed ad Alessandro, nel regno suo ferventemente s'innamorò d'una giovane, la quale, per quanto agli occhi suoi pareva, ogni altra del regno di Francia di bellezza in quei tempi trapassava. In questo re di si fervente amore acceso di costei, così perduto, ed ebbe l'animo così corrotto dalle sue tenere carezze e lascivie, che non curando il danno, che per tal cagione nella fama e nell' onore ricevea, ed abbandonati i pensieri del governo del regno . . ."

A similar problem is treated in "Griselda" of 1909. The strong woman must be captured by the strong man. It is the old saga of Brynhild and Siegfried. Nothing and nobody is allowed to stand between them. Man's love is unrestrictedly egotistic; woman's love is wider—the problem of motherhood enters into its realm. Out of this difference arises the conflict. But Griselda's love for her husband proves to be strong enough to overcome all his egotistic doubts. The husband and wife join again after their cruel separation; cruel to both of them. How deeply Hauptmann looks into the problem! Their too intense love inflicts infinite harm upon each of them. It has been said that our author depicts here a pathological extravagance of matrimonial love, yet an authority like Ellen Key says, when speaking of Maeterlinck's and Verhaeren's perfect married lives: "Maeterlinck's as well as Verhaeren's marriage is childless. This, perhaps, is a reason for the perfection to which these marriages have attained, a perfection which, elsewhere, is only shown

in the poems and letters of the Browning couple. For it is due to the consequences of limitation in time and space, which no love can annihilate, that where there are children the married people can rarely cherish and cultivate their love in every detail." And besides, an author is surely entitled to show us exceptional characters, exceptional here in their overflow of mutual love. Hauptmann treats the story of Boccaccio in most effective realistic scenes. Like the preceding dramas, "Griselda" is rather loose in its structure and not mature enough. Yet he who can write the opening scene of "Griselda" with its realistic colouring of overflowing vitality cannot be denied the gift of true dramatic genius.

These are all of Gerhart Hauptmann's dramas. We may confidently look forward to a new play with the Greek Odysseus Legend as its basis. Already he has given a public reading of the Telemachus scene, which he wrote in a sort of trance when on his voyage to Greece he visited in the spring of 1906 the beautiful island of Corfu. On what we know

of it from his own words in his Greek diary, we may base great expectations, especially in regard to the scenes of the shepherd Eumaios, which may show his power of depicting quiet rural scenes.

4. *Survey of Hauptmann's Dramatic Art*

Surveying the dramatic development in the nineteenth century, we find apparently the old truth that history repeats itself. The years 1830 and 1880 are both landmarks which indicate a new era. The fourth and the ninth decade of the last century are revolutionary periods in the history of German literature. In 1834 L. Wienbarg published his new code of literary conviction, the "Æsthetic Campaigns" (Æsthetische Feldzüge); in 1882 the brothers Hart did the same in their "Critical Duels" (Kritische Waffengänge), followed three years later by Karl Bleibtreu's "Revolution der Literatur." In both cases, the young generation consciously broke away from the old ideals to hail the new. But there is a fun-

damental difference between these epochs —1830 marks the end of a development, 1880 the beginning. 1832 is the year of Goethe's death, and with it synchronizes the reverberating death-knell of romantic literature. In 1831 the last great representative of German idealism, Hegel, died. Gradually this grandest treasure which German thought had ever acquired faded away after his death. Materialism took its place. Such men as Moleschott and Büchner dethroned Kant and Goethe. The ebb of the tide was about 1880. The strong will-power embedded in Bismarck's life-work began to tell. As 1830 saw the beginning of the end of German idealism, so 1880 saw the beginning of its revival. In 1850 it was dead, in 1900 it was alive and is still flourishing. The period of German classical literature preceded 1830, the period of utter drought preceded 1880. Therefore the revolution of 1830 in its literary achievement failed, as it was doomed to fail from the outset. The circumstances accompanying these revolutions are different in each case. The more

they differ the brighter are the auspices of the result, and Gerhart Hauptmann is a strong warrant.

The great triumvirate, Friedrich Hebbel, Otto Ludwig, Richard Wagner, all of whom were born in 1813, belong, of course, with their works to the barren epoch from 1830 to 1880. But their actual fame only dawned towards the end of that period, and more strongly after 1880. Franz Grillparzer's name must be linked to theirs. These are the men who carried on the great tradition. Gerhart Hauptmann is their heir. He availed himself of the indisputable enrichments which materialism had produced: the careful observance of detail. Naturalism is the daughter of materialism and, together with Ibsen's influence, is the most important element in shaping Hauptmann's style. It seems to me idle to discuss whether his talent lies more in the realistic or in the romantic drama, more in prose dramas or those which are in verse. His mastery of diction, be it prose or verse, is perfect, and in this he is indebted to

Naturalism and to Ibsen. Its concise pregnancy is unthinkable without them. His early dramas are the best proof of this. In their realistic style monologues and asides are tabooed. But just as we saw the naturalistic drama drift toward the stringent rules of French classical tragedy, so this realistic style drifts towards symbolism. Complete sequences of thought cannot be expressed by words. They have to be acted. The pantomime enters into the play. The author has to write long stage directions. These are significant of all naturalistic or realistic dramas. An attempt has been made to prove, by their evidence, that Hauptmann's best talent lies in the epic field. All playwrights of modern realistic dramas side with him in this. I will refer, for example, to Granville Barker's "The Voysey Inheritance," and to Galsworthy's "Justice." But the idea is not new. Diderot, to whom the brothers Hart, in their "Critical Duels," refer often enough, had already recognized the great emotional power that lies in mute acting on the stage. And it is not a bad sign that modern

German literature in general, and Gerhart Hauptmann in particular, should definitely go back to Lessing and Diderot, who heralded the classical period of German literature. It is their uncompromising sincerity which reigns throughout Hauptmann's works. In the relatively short period of the twenty-three years from 1889 to 1912, he has published no less than twenty-two dramas, besides other works, and we are never struck by an insincere note in them or by a feeble and shallow compromise. Although he does not, as we have seen, sacrifice " carrément l'humanité à l'artiste," he does not neglect the artistic requirements. Assuredly his works are not all of equal merit. It is true that he sends works to the press which ought to have been retained longer and which are not ripe for publication in all their details. These failings are the result of an overflowing wealth of productive power, but they are failings nevertheless. " Die Jungfern vom Bischofsberg," " Kaiser Karls Geisel," " Griselda," and others, with all their undeniable artistic qualities, afford proof

enough of this. Yet there is no better exponent of Zola's demand that there must be a personality in a work of art, or else it is none: "Il faut que je retrouve un homme dans chaque œuvre, ou l'œuvre me laisse froid."

II. Novels

But the dominant chord of his soul is his sympathy with the poor and unfortunate. The sincerity of his social and ethical feelings gives them the dignity of religion. In his young days at Erkner Hauptmann called himself an atheist. And yet there could hardly be found a more religious character than his. We have noted how in his youth he was impressed by Moravian surroundings. Afterwards he may be said to have been influenced, probably unconsciously, by the strong wave of modern Spinozaism. Just as Spinoza was charged with irreligion, though the fundamental ethical bias of his life and theory is of such profound sincerity that one is entitled to identify his ethics with religion, so Gerhart Hauptmann in the ethical

basis of his character may truly be called religious. In various other ways, too, parallels could be drawn between Spinoza and Hauptmann. To note only one—I will refer to their love of nature. We need only think of the great scientist and founder of the monistic creed, Haeckel, who so deeply influenced Hauptmann, to see at once how and by whom Gerhart Hauptmann was led to Spinoza. In the thought of Spinoza lay perhaps the strongest inducement for Hauptmann to leave the purely materialistic creed, or rather to permeate it with spiritualism. In this respect he is a true adherent to the newly-revived German idealism as founded by Lessing, Herder, Kant, Goethe, Schiller. The same undogmatic pietism which in its union with Leibnitz's philosophy created the so-called German idealism, was equally an influence on his mind. And we also saw that he regained the practical and social interest which is inseparable from the enlightenment of the eighteenth century, and which it had so soon lost in Germany. How this affects him we may see in his dramas. In

" Before Sunrise " Helene lives in her Moravian reminiscences; we experience the religious conflict in " Lonely Lives "; we are thrilled by the pathetic portrait of the pious weaver who is shot in " The Weavers "; we see poor Hannele's heavenly visions; the grand struggle of the Reformation rises before us in " Florian Geyer "; the " Sunken Bell " chimes in with its religious tunes; and so it goes on.

But Hauptmann has also directly attacked this religious problem in his great novel " Emanuel Quint, Der Narr in Christo " (The Fool in Christ). Nowhere in the whole range of modern German fiction do we see greater power of psychological insight than here. All his knowledge and understanding of his native Silesian country is welded together in an unrivalled study of the wretched social conditions of the poor weavers. In these surroundings Emanuel Quint grows up, one of the poorest of the poor. Early in his youth he feels himself impelled by an inner force to preach the Gospel of the loving Saviour. Soon he finds followers. The utter poverty

and distress of the weaving district is the best soil to foster the longing for heavenly love. The disinherited expect the coming of the Lord. Their dearth of material comforts makes them long for the reign of heaven. The inner voice of the leader and the confidence of his followers strengthen each other. Gradually religious mania takes possession of Quint's whole personality. Persecution only deepens his self-confidence and increases the number of his disciples. In the prison cell his mania reaches the climax when in a vision he sees the Saviour Himself entering his own body. He is now Christ Himself. This vision, essential as it is for the psychological development of the present novel, is already anticipated in Hauptmann's early short story " Der Apostel " (The Apostle), where he sketches a religious maniac. The end of the novel perhaps falls off somewhat, but it never lacks interest. Hauptmann here lays down the principles of his religion, which is a sort of primitive Christianity on a democratic, social basis. He preaches the religion

of pure, disinterested love, which Selin, the hero of his first published work, "Promethidenlos," had offered to the outcasts of the Neapolitan slums. Hauptman's whole life and work seem to be mirrored in this novel, just as his pious aunt Julie Schubert is the model of the "vivacious Christian," Julie Schneibler. He himself appears in the story as the faithful chronicler, who is supposed to tell us Emanuel Quint's life just as it happens. He is that Kurt Simon who feels drawn so irresistibly to poor Emanuel, the seeker after God. In one of his early poems, reprinted by Paul Schlenther, he asks :

"Nie noch sah ich unsre Gottheit,
Die uns schützt und die uns führet,
Sage mir, wie denk ich jenen
Gott mir ? Zeige mir den Gott ! "

It would lead us too far afield to comment on every character of the novel, which is the confession of our author, and shows at its best the brilliancy of his art. We can only notice the pathological truth of the portrait of Ruth, the gardener's daughter, or of the

unparalleled and convincing characters of the brothers Scharf, who stand out like a Rembrandt portrait. There is too great a plenitude of beauty to permit of a detailed consideration of the novel. One has to read and re-read it, and even what at first seemed to be dragging will be found to be full of wisdom and suggestive remarks. The more we read it, the more we unmask the chronicler who stands behind it, and the more we recognize what a profound and sincere thinker Gerhart Hauptmann is. We begin to understand the source of his dramatic genius. He himself has said: "Thinking is fighting; therefore dramatic."

The next and last novel of Gerhart Hauptmann's is again entirely personal. Its title is "Atlantis," partly because its scene is on the Atlantic and in America, partly because it reveals the longing of the central figure for a new country, hidden as yet like sunken Vineta. The novel is loose in its construction and, in various places, lacks motive; it is artistically deficient, yet it compensates, as Hauptmann's works always do, by its

personal value. Hauptmann is more than merely the possessor of an artistic technique; he is a man. He longs to solve the riddle of the universe and, to this end, the riddle of his own life. He sounds his own theme when the hero of the present novel proposes, as his future task in life, to explain the words Schopenhauer has left open in "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung": "Behind our existence there is hidden something which is made accessible to us only if we shake off the world." All his works are more or less confessions. Hauptmann's artistic character is above all condensed humanity. In order to lay bare the psychology of his own mind, he disregards the laws and principles of artistic structure. Reverting to our criticism on "Florian Geyer," we may say that his weakness in the one is his strength in the other. "Atlantis" is the faithful description of the crisis in Hauptmann's life, when, in 1892, he suddenly left Europe to cross the ocean for America. It also recalls Hauptmann's severe illness in the years 1904 and 1905, when death was quite as near to

him as it is to Friedrich in the novel. "Atlantis" leaves the impression of being almost a medical report. Friedrich von Kammacher is the Hauptmann of the nineties. In the account of his marriage we read Hauptmann's confession of the circumstances of his own married life, even in detail. Eva Burns may have been drawn largely from Margarethe Marschalk, Hauptmann's second wife.

Although "Atlantis" is deficient from the artistic point of view, yet it proves to be the work of an artist. Hauptmann gives us a description of the storm in the middle of the Atlantic as if he had been an eye-witness. We have lately read the terrible account of one of the greatest of ocean disasters. The novel was written before it. And yet, somehow, it seems as if its account were inspired by those sombre reports. The presentiment of danger oppressing everybody and causing a nervous tension approaching almost breaking point, and then the actual announcement of real danger; a sudden calm

spreading in the first moment, a sense of unreality in face of the gravest possible reality —this is more than learned philosophy. It is the clairvoyance of genius. The intuitive psychical knowledge which Hauptmann possesses is astonishing. He describes the feverish hallucinations of Friedrich, or his long dream with its intermingling of reality and illusion so truly that no psychologist could find fault with him. This, of course, is due to the fact that Hauptmann writes what he himself has lived through. Quite a series of autobiographical references might be gathered from "Atlantis," from which we quote only one on pages 18 and 19:

"It seems that the life of uncommon men with each decade enters a dangerous crisis. In such a crisis the accumulated germs of illness are either overcome and secreted, or the organism which carries them succumbs. Often such a succumbing is bodily death, but sometimes, too, only mental. And again, one of the most important and, to the observer, most marvellous crises is that at the turn

from the third to the fourth decade. The crisis hardly starts before the thirtieth year but it often happens that it is retarded till the middle of the thirties, and even beyond that ; for it is at the same time a great settlement of accounts, a fundamental balance of life which one will rather willingly defer as long as possible than tackle too early."

The personal meaning of this remark is not hidden to those who have read our study. To confirm this assertion I quote a passage from " Greek Spring," where Hauptmann alludes to his previous journey to America : " I lived, then, through stormy weeks on two seas, and I knew perfectly that, even if we on our Bremen steamer actually reached the harbour, this would not be the harbour for my own fragile vessel."

Since this study was written, Hauptmann has published the story of " Lohengrin," told for the young. He dedicated it to his son Benvenuto. To tell a story for young people is a task which I hardly thought Hauptmann

fit for. And yet his version of the "Lohengrin" legend is so attractive in its simplicity, and yet so artistic in its well-balanced structure, that it is certain to command admiration. Of course, Hauptmann cannot suppress himself. His technique, sprung from realistic soil, manifests itself in the psychology of the story. The old folk-lore legend, like the ballad, brings forth only the main stages of the story's progress. The links are left to the imagination of the reader, and thus they appeal so much to the young naïve mind, which is more imaginative than the sophisticated adult mind. It is in this respect, perhaps, that Hauptmann forgets that he is talking to the young.

We recognize everywhere the familiar characteristics of the artist, the psychological deepening for realistic interpretation, the humanizing of conventional figures through compassion, and finally the powerful dramatic gradation in the description of single scenes. The story winds up with the profession of what we noticed to be a basis of Hauptmann's writing:

the longing for beauty: "Mankind had again driven out noblesse, beauty, goodness, love from their world into the deserts of maternal nature, into the fluctuating realm of infinity, wherein, if God will, they may yet steer towards their origin."

III. Theory

As Henrik Ibsen used to treat problems from various standpoints in successive dramas, so we have seen Hauptmann return again and again to the problems which arise before his pensive eye. He is a great sentimentalist; his wealth of feeling, as we noticed, is boundless. But he is also an earnest and deep thinker. He is a personality, and he wants his plays "to be understood as the natural expression of a personality." He pronounces his dramatic creed in his "Griechischer Frühling" (Greek Spring), but more definitely in the preface to the edition of his collected works in 1906:

"I believe the drama to be the expression of

genuine mental activity, in a stage of high development. . . . From this aspect there results a series of consequences which enlarge endlessly the range of the drama beyond that of the ruling dramaturgies on all sides, so that nothing that presents itself, either outwardly or inwardly, can be excluded from this form of thinking, which has become a form of art." We have already noted how much these words are akin to Lessing's own conception of drama. Gerhart Hauptmann is a truly artistic genius. His technical execution may sometimes be lacking, yet the inner vision is always perfect and definite, and it is irresistibly felt throughout his works.

The spontaneity of his artistic nature reveals itself at its best in the diary he kept on his Greek voyage. In the spring of 1907 he embarked to set eyes on the treasures of Greek nature and art, for which his soul had longed ever since he had grown up. The *naïveté* of the great poet is alive in them, and responds to every new impression. He sees the beauty of Greece and he sees it with his own eyes.

He has come " to see visions, to hear voices " (p. 176). He has preserved the soft impressibility of a childlike and an artistic mind, unhardened by learning. Yet he is not Greek, he is German. His deep-rooted nationality makes itself felt. Homer's Odyssey accompanies him, but he reads it with the eyes of Goethe, who wrote the " Nausikaa." There exists an excellent German translation of Homer by Voss, but Goethe says: " It is possible to think that somebody possesses a more naïve and truer feeling for the original." Gerhart Hauptmann possesses this genuine affinity, although the national hue of his impressions is not to be disputed. We feel the kinship of one genius with the other, though they are separated by centuries and continents. The national elements of Hauptmann's art are so strongly felt that it is difficult even for a kindred nation like the English to appreciate his works at once. He acknowledges himself that he is fully aware of the Teutonic stamp of his artistic individuality: " A slim, tall English lady, handsome in her

youth, with the noble features of classical portraits, is on board. Strangely enough, I can only imagine from such a race the Homeric ideal of woman, a Penelope, a Nausicaa" (p. 64–65). We have only to think of "The Weavers" or of "Emanuel Quint" to realize that Hauptmann actually is "the elevated expression of the national soul"—in these cases of the soul of his own Silesian people—which he declares (p. 103) to be the indispensable characteristic of every poet. He is very often said to be too sombre, his outlook on life too gloomy. There is no doubt that he can be sombre and gloomy. He finds sacrificial homicide to be the root of tragedy. "It cannot be denied, tragedy means hostility, persecution, hate and love as the rage of life! Tragedy means anxiety, disaster, danger, pain, torment, torture; it means malice, crime, abjectness; it means murder, bloodthirstiness, incest, and butchery" (p. 171).

Yet we have only to look into his dramas to be convinced that Hauptmann is far from wishing tragedy to be a mere pile of melo-

dramatic cruelties. What he wants to impress on our minds is that " tragedy and comedy do not originate in feebleness and flight from life " (p. 92). If he asserts that no tragedy is without murder, this murder is that guilt without which life itself cannot continue; it is in itself the crime and the punishment (p. 170). This is a strong and powerful Weltanschauung in which the final, ethical, and metaphysical results of Darwinism and Nietzsche's doctrine are alive. But, just as Nietzsche's superman sings the song of supreme joy and dances the dance of Mistral, so Hauptmann's heart rejoices in serenity. We feel in his work that profound and sincere compassion with people in misery and wretchedness. And yet he is fully in accord with Nietzsche's Zarathustra in placing " Lust " high beyond " Weh " :

" Weh spricht : Vergeh !
Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit—
Will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit."

The liberation of mankind is the ever-repeated song of his dramatic muse. Often the bonds and fetters are too strong to be

broken. Helene dies, Vockerat finds his grave in the lake, Florian Geyer perishes; and yet there is hope. Heinrich returns to new life, Crampton awakens; even poor Hannele can realize that "there is no deadly enmity between a healthy mind and reality; and what it perhaps destroys it helps to build up again the more strongly" (p. 68), namely, in dreamy vision. This last quotation shows us how thoroughly optimistic Hauptmann's views are. He is no more a pessimist than Ibsen, who indeed may stand as the ideal optimist. Of course he had long years of personal gloom, when his outlook upon life seemed to be overshadowed by heavy clouds. But in 1907 these clouds had passed, and when he visits Olympia the soul of Aristophanes is much nearer to him than Homer's and the tragedians'. The highest form of human life seems to him to be "serenity, the serenity of a child, which in an aged man or nation either dies away, or rises to the power of comedy" (p. 90). In this sense, he continues, tragedy and comedy have the same

material to deal with, just as Socrates in Plato's banquet declares that one and the same author should be able to write comedies and tragedies, and that the poet of tragedy should be also the poet of comedy. Hauptmann's artistic belief, as confessed here, is a thoroughly strong and healthy one. He has often been condemned for a failure to create strong personalities as did the classical writers in ancient and modern times. The overpoweringly strong will of the hero, crushed only by external and divine fate, seems to be lacking in his dramas. It does not lie with us to refute this accusation by citing characters like Prince Heinrich or Charlemagne, who surely conquer themselves, and who when judged by the end of the drama can never be called weaklings. It would be useless hair-splitting to attempt to acquit the author of this accusation: Dr. Vockerat, Meister Heinrich, Gabriel Schilling—they all prove it to be true. And yet what does this prove against Hauptmann's genius? Every age has its own drama. Shakespeare's tragedy is different from the Greek, Goethe's is

different from Shakespeare's. Again we repeat Hauptmann's words that the poet is the elevated expression of the people's soul. The epoch he lives in differs fundamentally from preceding ages. The poet is the mouthpiece of the Zeitgeist. The characters of his drama are the types of his age. Every great poet is a sincere realist. Even if we had no documents of the English Renaissance, we could trace the psychology of the Renaissance type from Shakespeare's plays. Hauptmann draws the realistic portrait of man at the threshold of the twentieth century. We cannot blame him for the nervous character of his age. The intellectual revolution caused by the inventions of modern technique, and by the doctrines of modern science, has not yet subsided. The confidence in the individual will-power has been shaken. It is gradually beginning to form and strengthen again. We are really too close to judge, but it seems as if we are now living in an age of convalescence. This convalescence is, in Germany, inseparably allied with German idealism, of which Gerhart Haupt-

mann is a pronounced adherent. He has lived through the nervous and unstable times of the last decades of the nineteenth century. But when we follow him in his "Greek Spring," where he unreservedly gives us his impressions at first sight, he stands before us as a strongly built and strongly-willed personality. It is evidence of superb strength and health when he writes: "Tragedy as well as comedy have nothing to do with weak, super-sensitive nerves, and as little as they, have their writers—but least of all, their audience" (p. 91). Such an utterance makes us look forward to the future productions of Hauptmann's genius with the greatest confidence, with the highest expectation.

The artist Hauptmann is ever awake. He never contents himself in telling us what everybody knows. He wrestles with life to force it to yield its secret. He is a seeker after truth. "The bell is more than the church, the call to dinner is more than the food," says Michael Kramer. The burning desire of his heart to announce inspired messages is urging him on

to ever new attempts. Often he seems to be possessed with the idea of a new drama before the old one is off his hands. Hence the immaturity of some of his recent dramas. But mature or not, his new plays invariably tell us something, something which we did not know before. The Faust-like words Prince Heinrich speaks to Ottacher, his servant, are a very suitable motto for Hauptmann's own artistic personality:

"Du rangst! Dein Ringen hab ich wohl erkannt.
Die Ringenden sind die Lebendigen, und
Die in der Irre rastlos streben, sind
Auf gutem Weg."

CONCLUSION

The *embarras de richesses* in publications on Gerhart Hauptmann proves that he undoubtedly is a powerful factor in modern German civilization. He is fundamentally involved in it. It cannot be thought of without him. It may be said of Goethe that his age bears his stamp. We cannot say so much of Hauptmann. But he gives voice to his time; he is, as we have already expressed it, the mouthpiece of the Zeitgeist.

I naturally cannot enumerate all the articles on the subject which have been published in periodicals. Poole and Fletcher, in their admirable "Index to Periodical Literature," give rich materials; the "Spectator," in 1893 (p. 436), gave the first notice of Hauptmann's works. Since then almost every journal seems to have had at least one article on the German playwright.

The "Atlantic," in 1897–8, by T. F. Coar; in 1900 by M. Müller.

The "Nation" (New York), in 1900–1, by Kuno Francke; in 1901 by C. Harris; in 1898 by Kuno Francke; in 1902–3 by Kuno Francke.

The "Fortnightly Review," in 1901, by B. Marshall.

The "Quarterly Review" in 1899–1900.

The "Edinburgh Review," in 1903.

The "Saturday Review," in 1904–5, by M. Beerbohm.

Most of these articles appeared in "Poet-Lore."

1905, "Bulthaupts Interpretation of Gerhart Hauptmann," by P. H. Grummann, No. 2, p. 117.

1908 (March), "German Drama, Poetry, and Fiction in 1908," by Amelia von Ende, p. 120–8.

1909 (May), "The Assumption of Hannele," p. 161–91.

1909 (July), "Before Dawn," p. 241–315.

1909 (May), "The Standpoint of Pippa Dances," by P. H. Grummann, p. 129–34.

1910 (July), "Dramas of Gerhart Hauptmann," by P. H. Grummann, p. 285–99.

The year 1912 has naturally witnessed an enor-

mous increase in Hauptmann literature. But as far as I have seen none of the first-rate monthly and quarterly periodicals of England has an article celebrating Hauptmann's fiftieth birthday. The admiration of the dramatist is much greater in America, where the first dissertation in English on Hauptmann was published.

Carl Albert Krause, "Gerhart Hauptmann's Treatment of Blank Verse." New York Dissertation, 1910.

For biographical purposes, I mention Modern Dramatists. Mulliken, C. A., Reading list on modern dramatists. Bulletin of Bibliography pamphlets, No. 18, 1907.

CHAPTER D

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. General publications on modern German literature

Albert Sörgel, "Dichtung und Dichter der Zeit." Leipzig, 1911.

Rich. M. Meyer, "Die Deutsche Literatur des 19 Jahrhunderts." 4th edition. Berlin, 1911.

Georg Witkowski, "Das Deutsche Drama des 19 Jahrhunderts." 3rd edition. The 2nd edition of 1906 is translated by L. E. Horning and was published in 1909 by George Bell and Sons, London.

Georg Witkowski, "Die Entwicklung der Deutschen Literatur seit 1830." Leipzig, 1912.

O. E. Lessing, "Masters in Modern German Literature." Dresden, 1912.

Otto Doell, "Die Entwicklung der naturalistischen

Form in jüngstdentschen Drama. Hamburg, 1908.

Richard Huneker, "Iconoclasts" [contains an essay on Hauptmann.]

There are many other publications; every history of German literature, brought up to date, deals with Gerhart Hauptmann. In English I mention J. G. Robertson's thorough "History of German Literature," and his very useful "Outlines" [1911]. Other histories are those by Kuno Francke [1901], and by Calvin Thomas, [1909]. I also mention T. F. Coar, "German Literature in the 19th Century" [1910], and Ashley Duke's "Modern Dramatists" [1911].

For a general survey of the history of German thought in the 19th century I refer to W. Windelband's excellent lectures on "Die Philosophie im deutschen Geistesleben des 19ten. Jahrhunderts," Tübingen [1909], and to the copious volume of Th. Ziegler, "Die Geistigen und Sozialen Strömungen des 19 Jahrhunderts." Berlin [1911].

B. Biographies of Gerhart Hauptmann

Adolf Bartels, "Gerhart Hauptmann." Weimar, [1897].

U. C. Wörner, "Gerhart Hauptmann," 2nd edition. Berlin [1901].

Paul Schlenther, "Gerhart Hauptmann: sein Lebensgang und seine Dichtung." Berlin [1898].

This book is indispensable for everybody who studies Hauptmann's life, as it is the best-informed of all his biographies. Fortunately it has now been brought up to date in the new edition of 1912.

Albert Hanstein, "Gerhart Hauptmann." Leipzig [1898].

Valuable as written by a witness of Hauptmann's start.

Sigmund Bytkowski, "Gerhart Hauptmann's Naturalismus und das Drama." Hamburg [1908].

Gerhart Hauptmann, "Kritische Studien." Special number of the Journal "Zeitschrift für Schlesische Kultur." Ed. by Dr. O. Reier [Vol. II, No. 12, 1909].

E. Sulger-Gebing, "Gerhart Hauptmann." Leipzig [1909].

Kurt Sternberg, "Gerhart Hauptmann. Der Entwicklungsgang seiner Dichtungen" [1910].

Julius Röhr, "Gerhart Hauptmann's Dramatisches Schaffen." Dresden and Leipzig [1912].

Erich Wulffen, "Gerhart Hauptmann's Dramen," 2nd edition. Berlin [1911].

Interesting studies in the criminal psychology and pathology of Hauptmann's characters; not very satisfactory.

There are many articles scattered throughout German and English periodicals. To name one, I refer to Robert Petsch, "Gerhart Hauptmann und die Tragödie des XIX Jahrhunderts." Neue Jahrbücher, 1908, I. Abt., XXI Bd., 8 H.

CHAPTER E

TABLE OF WORKS

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3.	"Vor Sonnenaufgang" (Before Dawn)." Poet-Lore in July (1909), p. 241–315 .	1889	21–23, 24–26, 42, 43, 52
4.	"Der Apostel" .	1890	84
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