BENN'S SIXPENNY LIBRARY

GERMAN LITERATURE

By GILBERT WATERHOUSE
Litt D.
Professor of German in the University of Dublin

LONDON: ERNEST BENN LIMITED
BOUVERIE HOUSE, FLEET ST. E.C.

CONTENTS

First published 1928

GERMAN LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

THE earliest literary monument of any Germanic language is the Gothic translation of the Bible made by Bishop Wulfila (Ulfilas), who died in Constantinople in A.D. 383. This work has no place in German literature in the strict sense of the term, for what we understand by "German" is High German—that is to say, the dialects of South and Central Germany, and the principal specimens of the oldest High German literature date only from the ninth century.

Apart from what Tacitus tells us in his *Germania* (A.D. 98) we know very little of the original home of the Germanic tribes, but by the end of the seventh century their eastern boundary lay along the line of the Elbe and Saale. With the exception of Schleswig-Holstein, the whole of the country east of these rivers had become Slavonic, and behind this boundary the Germanic tribes gradually coalesced to form six great confederations. The Frisians held the North Sea coast with its islands; the Saxons (Low Germans) covered the basins of the Weser and the lower Elbe; the Thuringians inhabited the mountains and forests of Central Germany; the Franks, the most powerful and active of all, occupied the valleys of the Rhine and Main; the Alamanni reached from the Vosges and the Alps to the Upper Danube; and the Bavarians were established in the basins of the Danube, the Inn, and the Isar.

In the seventh century, during the first period of Franconian supremacy, numbers of the Germans embraced Christianity. The Salic Franks had already been

converted in the course of their conquest of Gaul, and in 612 the Irish missionaries, Columbanus and Gallus, penetrated into Alamannia, where Gallus founded the famous monastery that still bears his name. Three Englishmen, Wilfrith, Willibrord, and Winfrith, carried on the great work in the eighth century. The first two devoted themselves to the Frisians; the third, better known as St. Boniface, laboured chiefly among the Franks and Thuringians. He also founded the monastery of Fulda, which soon rivalled St. Gall as a seat of learning.

The consolidation of the Franconian state was accomplished by Charles the Great (768-814), who conquered the Saxons after thirty years of hard fighting and forced them to turn Christian. Not only did he create a united Germany, but by victories over the Avars and the Slavs he made it possible for the Bavarians to descend the valley of the Danube, and he began that reconquest of Eastern Germany which continued throughout the Middle Ages. Like Alfred of England, Charles was a great patron of learning. He invited foreign scholars to reside at his Court and he encouraged the establishment of monastic schools. With his reign German education and German literature may fairly be said to begin.

CHAPTER I

THE OLD HIGH GERMAN PERIOD

It can readily be imagined that the great migrations of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries were not favourable to the development of a written literature. Nevertheless, they produced princes and heroes like Dietrich von Bern (Theodoric the Great of Verona), Etzel (Attila), Ermanarich (Ermanaric, King of the Ostrogoths). Hugdietrich and Wolfdietrich (Theodoric I.

and Theodebert I. of Metz), and others, who became the centres of legends, partly fabulous, partly historical, which lived for centuries in the memory of the people before assuming a written form. These tales were recited or sung to the accompaniment of the harp by professional minstrels, who were at first regularly attached to the ducal Courts.

Still older than these heroic, semi-historical legends are the myths and fairy-tales of the Germanic peoples. Pre-eminent in the lore of the Saxons is the figure of Wieland, or Wayland Smith, who, crippled by the cruel order of his king, takes terrible vengeance on the latter's children and then, mysteriously endowed with wings, saves himself by flight. He astonishes the people with his cunning in metal-working and marries a swan-maiden. In the figure of Siegfried the Franks preserved the nature-myth of light and darkness, familiar to us in the story of the "Sleeping Beauty." The young hero penetrates the wall of flame and wakens the sleeping maiden, just as the young day pierces the morning mists and the red glow of dawn and wakens the sleeping earth, but only to succumb in due course to the shades of night; or alternatively, just as summer delivers earth from the bonds of one winter only to perish at the approach of the next. This myth, personified in Siegfried and Brunhilde, underwent a remarkable fusion with historical matter and reappeared in the elaborate literary form of the *Nibelungenlied* at the end of the twelfth century.

The only specimen of the purely heroic legend which has survived in an Old High German form is the alliterative fragment called the *Hildebrandslied* (*c.* 800), which relates how Hildebrand, the companion of Dietrich in exile, engages in single combat with his own son, Hadubrand. The manuscript is incomplete, but we may assume that the fight ends with the death of the son, as in the Persian story of Sohrab and Rustum, or in the Irish one of Cuchulain and Connla.

Whereas Charles the Great had displayed a liberal

interest in education and learning and had even given instructions for the collection and transcription of old German poems, his son Lewis the Pious (814-840) was a more austere Christian and lent no encouragement to the preservation of a heathen literature. The clergy were zealous in the religious instruction of the people, and their policy was to destroy rather than to preserve anything that would tend to remind their converts of ancient practices or beliefs. They were, however, compelled to adapt themselves to the needs and the capacity of the people in the use of the vernacular, and accordingly glosses or literal renderings of Latin words and phrases were written between the lines or on the margins of religious texts. Then complete translations were circulated, such as Tatian's *Diatessaron* (*c.* 835), and lastly, didactic or imaginative works were composed. The old alliterative technique survives in *Muspilli* (*c.* 830-840), an apocalyptic poem with topical allusions, but from the appearance of Otfrid's *Evangelienbuch* (*c.* 868), rhyme, borrowed from the accentual Ambrosian hymns of the early Church, takes the place of alliteration in German verse.

The *Ludwigslied* (881) is the last noteworthy poem of the ninth century, and for over two hundred years German literature shows few signs of life. With the extinction of the Carolingian dynasty in 911, the supremacy of the Franks passed away and their place was taken by the Saxon emperors (918-1024), under whom a kind of classical Renaissance set in. Only in the monastery of St. Gall was there any consistent devotion to German. Here Notker III. (952-1022) translated the *Psalms,* Aristotle's *Categories,* and Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae,* but of imaginative German literature there is none. The heroic legend of Walther and Hildegunde was turned into Latin hexameters by Ekkehard of St. Gall about 930. About a century later in date are the fragments of the Latin poem called *Ruodlieb,* a rudimentary novel of German life.

CHAPTER II

THE MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN PERIOD

THE traditional epic themes were kept alive throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries by "Spielleute," or minstrels, of whose activities we have only indirect evidence until after 1150.

Towards the middle of the twelfth century appear the first signs of the great revival which inaugurates the Middle High German period. The *Annolied* (*c.* 1110) bears marks of the heroic tradition. Ostensibly a life of Anno, Archbishop of Cologne, it begins with paraphrases of Scripture and proceeds to chapters from Roman history and a medley of native and foreign legend before settling down to the biographical theme. Very similar in spirit and scope to this *Lay of Anno*, but much longer, is the *Kaiserchronik*, or *Book of Emperors and Kings*, a history of Rome and the Roman Empire from the earliest times to 1147, the year of the Second Crusade. Unmistakably a product of the cloister, this compilation of history and legend, which may be dated 1140-50 as a whole, admits many secular elements. The old Germanic sagas find a place beside the lives of saints, and here for the first time free play is given to that expanding curiosity with regard to the outside world which was engendered and nourished by the Crusades.

While the compilers of the *Annolied* and the *Kaiserchronik* condescend to secular subjects occasionally for the purpose of moral edification, the author of *König Rother* (*c.* 1150) revels in the story for its own sake. This is the first epic in which German saga appears in anything like its full vigour, and it is in a sense unfortunate that the anonymous minstrel should have brought it up to date by association with the Crusades. In *Herzog Ernst* (*c.* 1175) we have a third variety of epic, not religious like the *Annolied* or the

principal legends of the *Kaiserchronik*, nor yet, like *König Rother*, a remnant of early Germanic tradition. The hero of the poem, Duke Ernest of Suabia, is relatively modern. Believing himself cheated of his rights to the throne of Burgundy, Ernest raised an unsuccessful rebellion against his stepfather, the Emperor Conrad II. (1027-39), and then sought refuge in the Black Forest, where he maintained himself as little better than a robber chief until he was killed in battle in 1030. Like Robin Hood in England, the figure of Duke Ernest appealed to the popular imagination, and a crop of stories grew up round him. In the hands of a professional minstrel these stories might have been worked up into a purely German epic, but the lure of the east was too strong, and the learned author sends his hero on a Crusade and exposes him to adventures with fabulous monsters and among queer races whose pedigree, amplified and distorted by the credulous imagination of successive centuries, can be traced back to Herodotus.

This group of four poems, *Annolied*, *Kaiserchronik*, *König Rother*, and *Herzog Ernst*—especially *König Rother*—is visible evidence of a revival of German epic poetry after several centuries of submerged existence. New elements, such as Church legend, ancient history, current topics, are powerfully represented, but the main theme is essentially German in each case. One extraneous element, the Crusades, claims more and more attention, and in *Herzog Ernst* it has already become dominant.

* * * * *

In these campaigns for the recovery of the Holy Land from the Infidel, Christian ideals were revived, clergy and princes were united in a noble purpose, a new world was opened to scholar and soldier alike, geographical and historical notions were enlarged, and all kinds of novel legends were imported from the East. Further, there was greater intercourse between

the representatives of different nations. Germans met French under conditions of greater intimacy and brought back not merely a knowledge of the East, but also an additional knowledge of their neighbours in the West. Inquiring writers found French literature already so rich in tales of adventure as to relieve them of all obligation to excogitate original themes, and a period of mere imitation set in which rapidly overshadowed the native art of *König Rother*. Thus we find, even as early as 1130 or 1140, a German paraphrase of a lost *Chanson d'Alexandre* and another of the *Chanson de Roland*. Both these versions are the work of Franconian priests, and it seems likely that the valleys of the Rhine and its tributaries provided routes by which the influence of French poetry ascended to the remoter parts of Germany.

Although these two poems, as paraphrases of French originals, set the standard for the great bulk of Middle High German epic poetry until the great themes of Germanic saga reappeared, there is nevertheless a gap of thirty to forty years between them and the next imitation from the French: Heinrich von Veldeke's *Eneit* (1175-84). Heinrich's verse shows skill and refinement, and with the story is blended a new view of women and love which henceforth marks all Middle High German poetry. The word "Minne" comes to signify that formal idealization of love which originated with the troubadours of Provence and spread through Northern France into Flanders, Germany, and Austria, although it is to the great lyric poets like Walther von der Vogelweide that we must look for the full bloom of the "Minnelied."

As an epic poet Heinrich von Veldeke raises himself so high above the *Alexanderlied* as to mark the beginning of an improved art. Like him, his three great successors, Hartmann von Aue, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Gottfried von Strassburg, turn to France for their material.

Hartmann von Aue was apparently a Suabian,

though the place from which he takes his name cannot be precisely identified. Impelled by an unhappy love affair and the death of his lord, he joined a Crusade, but whether that of 1189-91 or that of 1197-98 is uncertain. Little else is known of him except that he was alive in 1207 and that he died before 1220. He had a knowledge of Latin, acquired probably in some monastic school, and of French. His lyrical poetry probably preceded his narrative poems, the earliest of which is *Erec der Wunderaere,* or *Wonder-worker* (*c.* 1192), which is the first noteworthy German poem of the Arthurian cycle. It is based on the *Erec* of Chrétien de Troyes, whose *Yvain* was similarly the source of Hartmann's *Iwein,* which was completed before 1204. Both these poems deal with the conflict between two forms of duty: Erec, happy in his marriage with Enite, neglects knightly adventure; Iwein, on the contrary, warned by the example of Erec, deliberately takes leave of his wife Laudine for a year, but becomes so absorbed in adventure that he fails to return at the appointed time. Both Erec and Iwein have to expiate their fault before discovering the mean which satisfies both forms of duty. This lesson in proportion—*diu mâze,* moderation in all things—is in the forefront of Middle High German moralizing, and is observed by none more than by Hartmann himself, both in tone and in style, which may be justly termed "classic." In *Der arme Heinrich* we have, perhaps, the most charming tale of the period. Hartmann probably followed a Latin source, as yet undiscovered, but the story in its essentials bears a certain resemblance to the nursery tale of *Beauty and the Beast.* It was paraphrased by Longfellow in his *Golden Legend.*

Wolfram von Eschenbach took his name from the village of Eschenbach, near Ansbach. He was of noble birth and owned a small estate, but poverty seems to have compelled him to wander. From 1203 to 1216 he enjoyed the patronage and hospitality of Landgrave Hermann of Thüringen, who kept his court at the

Wartburg, near Eisenach. Here Wolfram met his great lyrical contemporary, Walther von der Vogelweide; here, too, tradition lays the scene of the famous "Contest of Minstrels," celebrated in a late Middle High German poem, and subsequently retold by the novelist, Hoffmann, and by Wagner in *Tannhäuser*. After the death of the Landgrave in 1217, Wolfram returned to Eschenbach, where he died between 1219 and 1225.

Wolfram's fame rests on his *Parzival*, written between 1200 and 1216, which follows two French sources—viz., a lost poem, by a writer whom he calls Kyot of Provence, and the *Perceval* of Chrétien de Troyes. *Parzival* is far more than an imitation from the French. The romance of adventure is refined by association with a spiritual allegory, and the whole theme is raised to a higher plane and pursued with an earnestness that is entirely Wolfram's own. *Parzival* is the noblest conception of medieval imaginative literature. It presents in the acceptable form of a romance the story of a human soul, rising from ignorant simplicity to conscious endeavour, failing for a time from pride and chagrin, and rising again to the unswerving pursuit of a spiritual ideal, offering always the utmost for the highest.

The third great master of the epic, Gottfried von Strassburg, is a more shadowy figure than the other two. From references to him by other poets it has been inferred that he was a *bourgeois*, not an aristocrat. From internal evidence his unique work, *Tristan*, may be dated about 1210. Gottfried lacks the classical restraint of Hartmann von Aue and the spirituality of Wolfram, but he is a more vivid narrator and a more resourceful artist than either. He quotes as his source one Thomas of Brittany, who may be the author of a few Old French fragments, though Chrétien de Troyes also wrote a *Tristan*, now unfortunately lost. Whatever his source may have been, Gottfried has drawn from it the first great love tragedy of German literature.

These three, Hartmann, Wolfram, and Gottfried,

are the great exponents of the "Hofepos," or Court Epic, by which term is understood a theme of knightly adventure, borrowed as a rule from some French source and paraphrased or elaborated or otherwise interpreted in German verse by a writer of noble birth or acknowledged learning, whose identity is known and whose association with either the imperial or some minor court can be established. Each of these great writers influenced a number of lesser men, whose works swell the bulk of the Court Epic while rarely reaching the standard of quality set by their masters. The Arthurian cycle remains pre-eminent, but Biblical legends and the lives of saints find a place, and the final trend, when the treasury of foreign fiction seems exhausted, is towards the exploitation in verse of "history," ancient or recent. Thus arose the rhymed chronicle.

* * * * *

In the midst of many honest but wearisome endeavours to prolong the life of the idealized Court Epic, two poems were written which, while outraging the conventions of chivalry, contained elements of great vitality. They were *Pfaffe Amis,* by a Spielmann known as Der Stricker, who flourished in the first half of the thirteenth century, and *Meier Helmbreht* (*c.* 1240), by Wernher der Gartenaere. Der Stricker represents that irrepressible and irreverent type of minstrel who preferred jest to earnest, comic adventure to heroic enterprise. He produced the first complete "roguetale" in German literature, although *Amis* is not wholly an original creation, for he bears a strong family resemblance to the Morolf who acts as a foil to Solomon in the still older Spielmann's epic, *Salman und Morolf.* Amis becomes an even more vigorous personality in the popular mind than Morolf, and he is succeeded by a number of similar and equally successful figures, such as the priest of Kalenberg and Till Eulenspiegel, who swell the anecdotal jest-books of the

sixteenth century. *Meier Helmbreht,* on the other hand, is not a burlesque, but a serious romance of peasant life—a realistic novel in verse, which contrasts sharply with the idealized epic of the Court. It is anticipated in some respects by the Latin *Ruodlieb* and is also linked to the contemporary peasant lyrics of Neidhart von Reuental, but, like *Amis,* it definitely marks a new development in narrative literature. It is the ancestor of the modern novel of German peasant life.

* * * * *

Side by side with the Court Epic and within the period (1180-1220) of its fullest vigour there flourishes the "Volksepos," or National Epic, which is, perhaps, the finest product of Middle High German literature. The fragmentary *Hildebrandslied* and Ekkehard's *Waltharius* are the only written evidence of the perpetuation of the Germanic sagas until we reach the much-garbled *König Rother,* but they were preserved orally in the repertory of wandering minstrels. In the general revival of poetry and music under the Hohenstaufen emperors (1138-1254) they come to the surface at last, possibly as a reaction from the foreign or exotic fashion set by the *Rolandslied* and the *Alexanderlied* and continued in the Court epics. They suggest to the more patriotic mind themes equal in heroic content to the exploits of King Arthur's knights; they begin to interest men of education and poetic skill; they are written down and pass from hand to hand; they are expanded here and contracted there, combined, separated, worked up, and polished until they acquire a form which is clearly not that under which they were current among mere wandering minstrels. They were edited and refined by poets every whit the equals in art of the famous "Court" poets, but "authorship," in the scrupulous sense in which it was understood by all poets who valued their reputation, could not be claimed by any one man. Each

knew that the subjects of these legends were public property; each may have felt, indeed, that he was condescending to touch them at all. Whatever the reason may have been, the "national" epics remain anonymous.

The *Nibelungenlied,* which is preserved in ten complete and twenty-two incomplete manuscripts, took its final shape in South-East Germany about 1200. The mythological part of the story embraces the figures of Siegfried and Brunhilde. The name "Nibelungen" means, primarily, "men of darkness," by which is understood "the dead." The Nibelungs possess a hoard of gold, and whoever wins it from them is doomed to join them. Thus the name is acquired with the gold, first by Siegfried, then by the Burgundians. The Scandinavian form of the story preserves these elements better than the *Nibelungenlied.* Sigurd (Siegfried) kills the dragon, Fafnir, rouses Brunhilde from her slumber behind the wall of fire, and wins her love. The historical element rests on the following facts: In the year 437, Gundahari, King of the Burgundians, whose capital was at Worms, fell in battle against the Huns with twenty thousand of his men. In 453, Attila, King of the Huns, died from the bursting of a bloodvessel on the night of his marriage to a Germanic princess named Hildico. These two incidents, at first entirely disconnected, become blended into one legend. Popular imagination rejects the prosaic explanation of Attila's death and prefers to suspect the bride of murder. A motive for her act has then to be found. Her name is clearly Germanic. The Burgundians slaughtered by the Huns in 437 were also Germanic. Therefore she was related to their king, Gundahari. Therefore she murdered Attila in revenge for the slaughter of her kinsmen sixteen years before. The fact that Attila himself was not present at the battle is disregarded. This form of the legend is preserved in the Scandinavian cycle, but it has been completely remoulded in the second part of the *Nibelun-*

genlied. Here Kriemhild, seeking vengeance on her brother, Gunther, and his vassal, Hagen, for the murder of Siegfried, induces her second husband, Etzel (Attila), to invite the Burgundians to his Court, and thus compasses their destruction.

The figures of the *Nibelungenlied*, although modernized and Christianized, live and move before a background of ancient and mysterious myth. Christianity is professed, but the real religion which underlies their thoughts and actions is the old religion of Asgard and Valhalla. It is this belief which is responsible for the sense of fate and coming doom which broods over the whole poem. It is deep beneath the surface in the first half of the story, but it seems to fight its way up till, in the last acts of the tragedy, it dominates the whole, and Hagen rises in the midst of slaughter, a hero of the old religion of Odin.

The Gothic king, Theodoric the Great, who as Dietrich von Bern plays a reluctant but decisive part in the last act of the Nibelungen tragedy, is the centre of a whole cycle of minor epics. Quite different in atmosphere, and second only to the *Nibelungenlied* in artistic merit, is *Gudrun*, a saga of the North Sea coasts. Gudrun, daughter of Hetel, King of Hegelingen (Frisia), though betrothed to Herwig of Seeland, is carried off by another suitor, Hartmut of Normandy. Persisting in her refusal to marry Hartmut, she is cruelly treated by his mother Queen Gerlinde, and compelled for thirteen years to perform menial tasks. An expedition from Hegelingen then lands on the Norman coast, and Herwig and his companion, Ortwein, discover Gudrun and her companion, Hildburg, washing clothes in the snow by the sea. The Norman castle is then stormed and the king and queen are killed, after which the lovers are reunited and a general reconciliation takes place.

* * * * *

Although lyrical poetry did not begin to flourish until Middle High German times, and derived even

then its chief inspiration from abroad, nevertheless its origins are not wholly foreign. There is some evidence that love poems existed in Carolingian times, for a capitulary of 789 expressly forbade nuns to write or send "winileodos," a word which can hardly mean anything except "love poem." To what extent an unwritten secular lyric literature flourished we can hardly even guess, and the written lyric could only develop on religious lines as long as the art of writing remained a monopoly of the clergy. Within the clerical circle, lyrical inspiration was alternately checked by asceticism and encouraged by mysticism, with the result that the mystical adoration of the Virgin provided the Church's principal contribution to lyrical poetry.

Free from these restraints were the songs of the "Goliards," or wandering scholars, of which we possess a twelfth-century collection entitled *Carmina Burana,* so called from the Bavarian monastery of Benediktbeuern. The poems are mainly Latin, but a few are German, and others have German refrains or odd verses in German. Apart from these beginnings, there is little to record until the late twelfth century, when the springs of native inspiration were fortified with an infusion from the richer sources of France and Provence. Two poets, the Austrian Knight of Kürenberg, who used the Nibelungen stanza and has therefore been considered as a possible author of the *Nibelungenlied,* and his fellow-countryman, Dietmar von Aist, seem to owe nothing to foreign influence. Two more, Herger and Der Spervogel, both evidently of the ordinary minstrel class, seem to be the creators of the didactic lyric, presenting popular wisdom and satire in short monostrophic poems, technically known as "Sprüche," but the real bloom of the lyric begins with its association with the conventions of chivalry.

With Heinrich von Veldeke, who bears testimony, not only in his *Eneit,* but also in his lyrics, to the influence of France, may be joined, among the earlier Minnesingers, Friedrich von Hausen, who perished

with Barbarossa on the Crusade of 1189; the Thuringian, Heinrich von Morungen, whom some rank next to Walther von der Vogelweide in merit; Rudolf von Fenis, the closest imitator of the troubadours; and Reinmar der Alte, the friend and instructor of Walther himself.

Walther von der Vogelweide was born about 1168, most probably in South Tyrol. His native dialect was certainly Austro-Bavarian, and he perfected his art at the ducal Court of Vienna under the instruction of Reinmar der Alte, to whom he pays respectful tribute in the poem beginning *Owê daz wîsheit unde tugent.* Though of noble birth, Walther was probably only a poor younger son, and, like Wolfram, he was dependent on the patronage of princes. Under Leopold V. and Frederick I. he appears to have found the ducal Court congenial. To this period belong his more spontaneous love poems, some melancholy in the style of Reinmar, others exuberant and humorous. Whether they reflect his devotion to some real person or not is difficult to determine, so completely does he observe the convention of "Minnedienst" which forbids the poet to reveal the identity of his beloved. It has been conjectured that he left Vienna in 1198 in consequence of unrequited love, but there are more obvious reasons for his departure. Duke Frederick died in that year and was succeeded by his brother, Leopold VI., who showed Walther little favour. While the death of his patron would be enough to lead Walther to try his fortune elsewhere, he was probably influenced by an event of still greater importance. Henry VI., the able and ambitious son of Barbarossa, had died in 1197, at the early age of thirty-two, and his son, Frederick, was a child of three. Two claimants for the crown arose in Philip of Suabia, Henry's younger brother, and Otto of Brunswick, afterwards Otto IV. Walther attached himself whole-heartedly to the cause of Philip and wrote a series of "Sprüche," or political lyrics, not hesitating to castigate the clergy

and the Pope when Innocent III. excommunicated Philip in 1201. The civil war dragged on until 1218, when the death of Otto left the young Frederick II. undisputed King of Germany. During these years Walther led the life of a wandering minstrel, visiting the minor courts and changing his abode as the spirit or his pecuniary circumstances moved him. Finally, in 1220, he found a liberal and appreciative patron in the Emperor. Rewarded with a small estate near Würzburg, he expresses his delight in the naïve poem beginning *Ich hân mîn lêhen, al die werlt! Ich hân mîn lêhen!* and looks forward to passing his declining years in modest comfort. Nevertheless, a despondency due to failing health creeps into his verse, and his mind turns more and more to religion. The beautiful elegy *Owê wâr sint verswunden alliu mîniu jar!* which may well have been his last poem, indicates a visit to the scenes of his boyhood, possibly in connection with preparations for the Crusade of 1228. This year may be accepted as the approximate date of his death.

In Walther von der Vogelweide are united all the great lyric qualities of his age. He surpasses his contemporaries in the love song, and he is the first political poet in the history of German literature. Above all, he is the first truly patriotic poet, the first to feel himself thoroughly German and to write lovingly of his country, as in the famous poem beginning *Ir sult sprechen willekomen, der iu maere bringet, daz bin ich.* His love poems are delicate in sentiment and show an exquisite mastery of metrical form, and his humour is naïve and joyous. He strove to uphold the canons of good taste both in art and in manners, and mercilessly condemned all vulgarity and lapses from modest behaviour. In short, Walther expresses all that is best in "Minnesang" and "Minnedienst." He remains the greatest lyric poet of Germany before Goethe and the only Middle High German writer whose matter and style appeal almost as directly to the modern reader as to the public of his own day.

Two elements contributed to the decay of Minnesong: the conventions of "Frauendienst," when pushed to extremes, as in Ulrich von Lichtenstein's *Frauendienst* (1255), became ludicrous and offered an easy mark for parody and satire; secondly, the rustic themes so despised by Walther began to be exploited with success by poets of talent and education. The Court began to lose its hold on poetry, and writers who, in Walther's judgment, ought to have known better, turned from the society of lords and ladies to the manners and pursuits of the peasantry, deserting a spring that was beginning to run dry in favour of a new and more piquant source of inspiration. Foremost among these novelty-seekers was Neidhart von Reuental (*c.* 1180-1250), whose art takes a middle place between the refined Court lyric and the simple, unaffected "Volkslied." The Court and its elegance do not attract him; he prefers, though with a condescension and an arrogance which betray his aristocratic training, to join the villagers in their pastimes and to extol the charms of peasant beauties.

A taste for satire and moralizing marks the decline of Middle High German literature. The advice of a father to his son and of a mother to her daughter is contained in two poems knows as *Winsbeke* and *Winsbekin*. More general guides to right living are *Der welsche Gast,* or *The Stranger from Italy,* by Thomasin von Zirclaere (Cerchiari), Freidank's *Bescheidenheit,* or *Sound Judgment,* and Hugo von Trimberg's *Renner* (*c.* 1300).

One of the most subtle vehicles of satire and moralizing was the fable, which, though indigenous to a variety of countries, owes its position in European literature mainly to the dissemination by way of Italy of Æsopic stories and anecdotes from the Alexandrian *Physiologus*. The Æsopic fable of the sick lion and the cunning fox, which forms the basis of all medieval collections, was elaborated in Latin verse at the Court of Charles the Great by Paulus Diaconus. This Æsopic

element was gradually blended with the semi-religious collection of animal stories which took shape in Alexandria in the second century. The *Ecbasis captivi* (*c.* 940) combines features from both these sources. About 1150 a Flemish writer, Nivardus, produced another Latin poem, *Ysengrimus,* in which the wolf plays the chief part. The cycle had meanwhile assumed large proportions in Northern France, and the *Roman de Renard* served about 1170 or 1180 as the model for an Alsatian monk, Heinrich der Glîchesaere, who produced the first German version of the story. A Middle Dutch *Reinaert,* likewise based on the French, was composed by one Willem about 1250, revised and improved by Hinrik van Alkmaar in the fifteenth century, then translated into Low German and printed at Lübeck as *Reynke de Vos* in 1498. This is the definitive version of the story in German literature.

To sum up, the Middle High German period witnessed the only great efflorescence of literature before the second half of the eighteenth century. It was an age of verse, not of prose, for Latin still remained the language of science and philosophy. A few legal documents, a few tracts and sermons, and the mystical writings of Eckhart, Heinrich Seuse (Suso), and Johannes Tauler are the principal specimens of Middle High German prose. The outstanding features of the period as a whole are the passing of imaginative literature from the control of the Church to that of the Court, its close association with the conventions of chivalry, its decline with the collapse of the Hohenstaufen dynasty, and its gradual transfer in a decadent state to the expanding middle class.

CHAPTER III

TRANSITION

THE condition of Germany in the thirteenth century shows expansion in some directions and disintegration in others. Her geographical boundaries were greatly enlarged under the Hohenstaufen emperors. The Knights of the Sword practically conquered Livonia and Esthonia; the Teutonic Order germanized Prussia; the margraves of Brandenburg extended their boundaries beyond the Oder; the Danes were forced to withdraw from Holstein, Mecklenburg, and Pomerania; German settlers won Lusatia and Meissen from the Slavs and established themselves, though less effectively, in Bohemia and parts of Hungary. With the colonization of the Baltic provinces, Lübeck and other ports became rapidly prosperous. The Hanseatic League originated in a treaty between Lübeck and Hamburg in 1241 and monopolized the Baltic trade until the sixteenth century. Agriculture flourished, partly in consequence of colonization, partly owing to the more frequent emancipation of serfs in exchange for the payment of rent; and general trading, with Scandinavia by way of the Baltic ports and with the East by way of Italy, increased enormously. This commercial expansion was accompanied by an increase in the number and importance of the towns, within whose walls craftsmen and merchants could follow their occupations with security. Trade corporations took shape and acquired social and political importance. Municipal rights were acquired from overlords in exchange for cash or service, and although there was as yet no general municipal franchise, the change from the personal rule of a founder or overlord to the government of a town by its own principal citizens was a long step on the road to democracy.

While some German institutions thus showed a virile development, these changes were not immediately favourable to literature, which responded more readily to the adverse influence of political disintegration. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the energy of both the aristocracy and the clergy was expended in the causes of rival kings and Popes. The royal patronage of art and literature disappeared, the ideals of chivalry gave way to a brutal "Faustrecht" or "law of might," the military reputation of armed knighthood was destroyed by the invention of gunpowder, and the clergy, distracted and demoralized by politics, ceased to set the people a worthy example of conduct. Nor did the cause of literature gain much at first by the establishment of the first German universities, Prague (1348), Vienna (1365), Heidelberg (1386), and Leipzig (1409), however much classics, science, and the professions may have benefited thereby. The commercial spirit of the age and the progress of geographical discovery were conducive rather to practical than to intellectual occupation. Academic learning turned first to ancient Rome for its inspiration. Latin became once more the vehicle of learned intercourse, not merely with foreign countries, but also within Germany itself. The fertilizing influence of the Italian humanists was felt north of the Alps, and translations of Petrarch, Æneas Silvius, and Boccaccio kept pace with translations of Plautus and Terence. German literature did not directly benefit from these studies, and the development of the German language was greatly retarded by the use of Latin as a medium of instruction.

Another factor in the process of disintegration was the development of the language itself. In the Old High German period it is not possible to speak of a uniform literary language. It is true that the Franconian dialects predominate in the ninth century, but taking the period as a whole we find that Bavarian and Alemannic are strongly represented in the texts

that have survived. The chief specimens of Middle High German literature, on the other hand, no matter whence the authors came, show a remarkable uniformity. This is due partly to the fact that the chief poets were of the same social standing, and that the audience they found at one Court was very much the same as at another, partly to the increasing circulation of Court poetry in manuscript and the consequent gradual elimination of any markedly peculiar form due to the native dialect of the poet or his scribe. With the collapse of Court poetry in the fourteenth century this promising development was arrested. The literature that took its place was, as in the Old High German period, a local growth, and the dialect of each large town became a potential medium of literature. Moreover, any town that was quick to acquire a printing-press was in a position to enhance the importance of its own dialect. Those which were later in the field had to import printers from other towns, and the imported dialect would be reflected for a time in the productions of the press. In this way the dialects of Mainz, Nuremberg, Bamberg, Augsburg, and Strassburg acquired additional importance.

Again, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the German language underwent another series of phonological changes. Certain long vowels became diphthongs, certain diphthongs became long vowels, certain short vowels became long. These changes did not taken place equally in all dialects. They were complete and uniform in some dialects, partial and irregular in others. Thus with the decline of a literary aristocracy there remained no force strong enough to check the vigorous individual development of the German dialects. Their growing diversity not only complicated literature but also impeded the machinery of government, for the territory of one prince frequently included the area of more than one dialect. It therefore became the task of the Chanceries to evolve an official language which would be generally

intelligible for the purposes of administration. Under the Luxemburg emperors, particularly Charles IV., whose Chancery was at Prague, was developed, from the correspondence and intercourse of officials, the most important of these Chancery languages. As Prague was the outpost of a Middle German colony, related in dialect to Saxony, the literary Austro-Bavarian dialect suffered a further decline and the importance of Middle German was enhanced. The geographical position of Bohemia induced a natural contact with Saxony, and the language of the Chanceries of the Emperor and the Elector gradually assumed a common form.

The development of lyrical poetry in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries must be traced back to the *epigoni* of Minnesong, and, in particular, to Heinrich von Meissen (*c.* 1250-1318), called "Frauenlob." His contemporary, Johannes Hadlaub, strives faithfully to follow the great example set by Walther, but Heinrich von Meissen strikes out a line for himself. Fully satisfied with his own intellectual resources, he is learned and ingenious, and his art shows on the one hand a lyrical treatment of non-lyrical matter and on the other hand an elaboration of form which rapidly becomes trivial. In these respects Heinrich von Meissen set an example which almost obliterated the memory of true Minnesong, and it is not without justice that he has been called the first of the "Meistersingers."

By the end of the fourteenth century it had become common for the members of trade guilds in certain important towns of southern Germany and the Rhine valley, such as Nuremberg, Ulm, Augsburg, Colmar, and Mainz, to dabble in poetry and music as a recreation from the labours of the week. They began to establish musical clubs, called "Singschulen," and to practise singing, music, and the writing of verse. In the early stages their subject-matter was entirely religious. With increasing proficiency they gave the

public the benefit of their practice, and sang from time to time in the local church or town-hall. As this form of recreation increased in popularity it fell a victim to the spirit of organization. Singing-schools sprang up throughout South and Central Germany. A variety of fantastically designated officers controlled the studies and competitions of the school, checking with meticulous care every breach of rule, whether in versification, music, or content. This insistence on the element of competition was not wholly capricious, for the Meistersingers believed that they were perpetuating the traditional "Wartburgkrieg," described in the late Middle High German poem so entitled, which purports to record a contest in which Walther defeats Heinrich von Ofterdingen and Wolfram exchanges riddles with Klingsohr von Ungerland. Nevertheless, the very popularity of "Meistergesang" contributed most swiftly to its decline. The competition of mediocre talents became so keen that their art, lacking true inspiration, degenerated into mere elaboration of form. The greatest of the Meistersingers, Hans Sachs, is great for other reasons than his associations with "Meistergesang," and the continuity of German lyrical poetry is maintained, not by the Singschule, but by the "Volkslied."

The "Volkslied," by which term we understand the simple, anonymous lyric orally current among the people, is represented by simple love songs, hymns, and ballads. With the promotion of the Germanic sagas from the repertory of the strolling minstrel to the dignity of manuscript existence side by side with the polished themes of the Court epics, popular appreciation seems to have waned. Without suffering extinction, they lost their grand dimensions and wealth of detail. New heroes arose during the Middle Ages and supplanted the older figures in the memory and the imagination of the people. The Minnesinger, Heinrich von Morungen, becomes "Der

edle Moringer," who miraculously returns from abroad in time to prevent the marriage of his wife with another. In the ballad of *Tannhäuser*, the minstrel of that name is associated with the legend of the Venusberg. In others the names of the persons have been forgotten; we hear only of "the knight" and "the lady," etc., and the historical ballad is gradually blended with the love song. Events of both local and national importance find prompt expression in popular verse. A spirited *Ballad of the Battle of Sempach* commemorates the victory of the Swiss over the Austrians in 1380; *Schüttensam* and *Epple von Geilingen* are typical of the local warfare between townsfolk and predatory barons, and numerous Low German ballads celebrate the conflict of Germans and Danes in Dithmarschen. On the religious side, portions of the Church liturgy—*e.g.*, the *Kyrie eleison*—had long been current in the vernacular, and a special term "leis" had come to indicate the type. Ballads existed in connection with the chief seasons of the ecclesiastical year and the popularity of mysticism caused a recrudescence of "Marienlieder," or hymns to the Virgin.

A few obscure talents continued to labour in uninspired devotion to the epic. The legends of Arthur and the Holy Grail were recklessly entangled with the adventures of the Argonauts and the history of Troy, until in 1478 one Ulrich Fürterer produced that final, monstrous amalgamation to which he gave the title, *Das Buch der Abenteurer*. The national epics fared rather better in learned hands. Eleven of them were retold in doggerel verse by Kaspar von der Rön about 1472, and are known collectively as the *Dresdener Heldenbuch*. After this they persist in the attenuated form of ballads and, more vigorously, in prose form as chapbooks. The Court epic likewise descends to prose and a distinct stage in the development of the novel is marked thereby. Gräfin Elisabeth von Nassau-Saarbrücken based two romances of

chivalry, *Loher und Maller* (1407) and *Hug Schapeler* (1437), on French originals, and thus claims a place in the history of German prose.

The fifteenth century was not an age of romance, which demands leisured ease for its enjoyment. It was an age of action, invention, discovery, and business. It was resentful of political authority and suspicious of ecclesiastical authority. It witnessed the revival of classical studies, the erection of the first printing-press by Johann Gutenberg at Mainz (*c.* 1450), the propagation of news and knowledge in print, the establishment of universities, and the great achievements of science and navigation. The layman forced an entry into the intellectual domains of the clergy and found himself equally competent to interpret and decide. A spirit of criticism began to assert itself.

Straightforward satire is best represented by Sebastian Brant (1457-1521), a keen student of Freidank's *Bescheidenheit*. In his *Narrenschiff*, or *Ship of Fools*, which was published at Basle in 1494, in the Alsatian dialect, Brant describes the qualities of one hundred and ten different types of fool, praising poverty as the source of all virtue and admonishing men to consider rather the fewness of their wants than the multitude of their possessions. Not only did this remarkable work serve as a text for a series of sermons by Geiler von Kaisersberg, but it ran through seventeen editions in quick succession and was translated into Latin, French, Low German, Dutch, and English. It was the first German book to achieve a European reputation, and it became a model for satire both in Germany and abroad.

While *Das Narrenschiff* and its imitations can be traced back to the serious didactic literature of the Middle High German period, the descendants of the irresponsible *Pfaffe Amis* are equally numerous and still more popular. The first of importance in date—it belongs to the last quarter of the fifteenth century—is a collection of anecdotes associated with the poet,

Neidhart von Reuental, who appears under the name of Neidhart Fuchs. Then comes the amusing but vulgar *Pfaffe vom Kalenberg,* by Philip Frankfurter of Vienna. Meanwhile, on Low German soil, legend had been busy with an itinerant jester named Till, to whom was soon added the nickname of "Ulenspiegel." The first Low German chapbook dealing with him belongs to the year 1483, but is now lost; the first High German version, *Eulenspiegel,* dates from the year 1515, but only a few of the jests and pranks which it contains are due to the original Till. He became typical of a whole class of strollers, and the pranks attributed to the individual illustrate the mixed shrewdness and rascality of his class.

Something has been said in these pages about the decline of the Church as a literary force, but to the Church is directly due the early development in Germany of an important literary form—the drama. The drama had its origin in the liturgy of the Church. At the chief festivals of the year special emphasis was laid on certain elements of the liturgy or of the scriptural story by relating them in dialogue form. The birth of Christ, His Passion, and Resurrection were among the earliest subjects selected for this treatment, and the practice spread to other incidents. Gradually the number of participants increased, the *locus* was moved from the church to the churchyard or other open space or to some other building, and finally, though hardly before the fourteenth century, German was substituted for Latin to give the laity a larger share in the representation.

By the fourteenth century these religious plays, generally called "mysteries," though the word may go back to *ministeria,* "appertaining to the service," rather than to *mysteria,* embraced a very wide scope. One of the most famous, the *Play of the Ten Virgins,* performed at Eisenach on April 24th, 1322, had an elaborate stage in three tiers, depicting heaven, the world, and hell, and so realistic was the performance

that Landgrave Friedrich, who was present, had a seizure, from the effects of which he died in the following November.

While the "Mystery" contains the beginnings of tragedy and of the spectacular drama, elements of comedy were not entirely absent. No matter how serious the intention of the performers, there was always the potentiality of mirth in the awkward representation of a minor character by some clumsy fellow whose identity was well known to all the onlookers. A legitimate outlet for merriment and buffoonery was then provided, or naturally offered itself, in the more riotous Shrovetide celebrations. Out of a welter of horseplay, masquerading, and pantomime grew the "Fastnachtsspiel" or Shrovetide play, a frivolous, often vulgar, knock-about farce. These plays, in the crude form in which they existed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, amounted to little more than the dramatic treatment of a "Schwank" or facetious anecdote. They were within the capacity of the average Meistersinger and are therefore largely represented in German literature. However humble its origin, contemptible its matter, and crude its form, the "Fastnachtsspiel" is, nevertheless, an important ancestor of modern German comedy.

CHAPTER IV

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

THE attack which Martin Luther (1483-1546) launched against the Church from the moral side had been facilitated not only by the "Babylonian Captivity," the Great Schism, the Hussite Wars, and the triumph of the reactionary party within the Church, but also by the critical studies of scholars. Erasmus had published his Greek Testament, with a Latin translation, in 1516,

and Johannes Reuchlin of Pforzheim his *Rudimenta hebraica* in 1506. Material for a critical study of Holy Scripture was thereby supplied for the use of all who could take advantage of it, and in the controversy occasioned by Reuchlin's Hebrew *Grammar,* the *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum* (1515) dealt a shrewd blow at the authority of the clerical party. This contest between scholars and prelates produced no popular leader, and it was only in Luther that the religious impatience of the age found an adequate voice.

Luther's translation of the Bible differs from the first printed version of 1466 inasmuch as the latter is only a translation of the Vulgate, whereas the former springs directly from the Hebrew and the Greek, thus embodying the learning of the Renaissance. More important still, it marks an epoch in the history of the German language. It is the foundation on which Modern German rests. Luther did not use his own native Thuringian dialect in this great work, nor did he create an artificial language. He took what he found ready to his hand: the administrative idiom of the Saxon Chancery, which, being now identical with the language of the Imperial Chancery, was the only written form of German which could be said to have more than local currency. It needed only the impetus which a popular literary achievement could give to become the accepted written language of all Germany. With this great popular work a new period was opened in the history of the language, the South German dialects lost the importance they had gained in the Middle Ages, and the whole edifice of Modern German literature was reared on the Middle German foundation now laid down.

It was with theological rather than literary aims that Luther turned to the compilation of a Protestant hymnal. He translated the *Te Deum,* the Creed, and some of the best Latin hymns; he paraphrased the Psalms: *Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir* (Ps. cxxx)

and *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* (Ps. xlvi); and he captured the tone and spirit of the Volkslied: *Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her.*

The Catholic side of the controversy is represented by the Franciscan, Thomas Murner, a scholar with a coarse and vigorous satirical talent. His earlier works, *Die Narrenbeschwörung, Die Schelmenzunft, Die Mühle von Schwindelsheim,* and *Die Gauchmatt* (Fool's Meadow) are satires on general folly in the style of Sebastian Brant. In the bitterest of all, *Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren* (1522), he ridicules the iconoclasm and excesses of Protestantism and bespatters Luther personally with scurrilous abuse.

While the old mystery play, now supported by the technique of Seneca, Terence, and Plautus, was groping its way towards an adequate dramatic form, there appeared the genial figure of the shoemaker, Hans Sachs (1494-1576). As a Meistersinger he is credited with over four thousand songs, but none of those which survive makes any special appeal to the modern reader. His strength lies in the "Schwank" or comic anecdote, which he culls from every conceivable source and provides with a moral. The octosyllabic rhyming couplet, the last poor scion of the ancient heroic verse, is an admirable vehicle for his naïve humour, and such stories as *Sankt Peter mit der Geiss* (1555) and *Der Bauer mit dem bodenlosen Sack* (1563) are still a sheer delight. As a dramatist he is most successful with the "Fastnachtsspiel," a short farce or dramatised "Schwank," which he purged of the grossness in which his predecessors, Hans Rosenplüt (*c.* 1460) and Hans Folz (*c.* 1510) had wallowed. Its dramatic construction is slight and the theme just a facetious anecdote, but the action and the delineation of character are so clear that these farces can still be read with enjoyment and even successfully acted. Among the best are *Der farend Schuler ins Paradeis, Der Baur im Fegfeuer* and *Der Roszdieb zu Funsing.*

Hans Sachs's longer plays reveal an almost total

ignorance of dramatic technique, but are an imposing testimony to the extent of his reading. He chooses his subjects from every known source: the Bible, ancient and modern history, classical literature, foreign romances, fairy-tales, and the Nibelungen saga. No theme appears to daunt him, for he treats all his characters alike; from Siegfried and Clytemnestra to God Himself all speak the same homely Nuremberg dialect and embarrass neither themselves nor their author, no matter in what situation he may place them. The climax of naïve incongruity is reached in the comedy, *Die ungleichen Kinder Evä* (1552). Hans Sachs comes rather at the end than at the beginning of a period. He represents, like the medieval "Spielleute," a popular form of literature, and like the best of them, he raises it out of the mire and makes it not only respectable, but attractive.

In the last quarter of the sixteenth century the development of the drama is disappointing. No one appears to bridge the gap between the Latin plays of Philipp Nikodemus Frischlin (1547-90) and the popular comedy of Hans Sachs. Jakob Ayrer (*c.* 1540-1605) wrote "Fastnachtsspiele," but it is not for this that his name survives. He happened to write when the first companies of English comedians were active in Germany, and while no single one of his seventy pieces can be said to live—although the *Comedia von der schönen Sidea* (*c.* 1600) has been much discussed in connection with Shakespeare's *Tempest*—he is saved from being a mere shadow of Hans Sachs by an enlarged conception of dramatic art. The new features introduced by the English players, who made their first appearance in Germany about 1590, were a more elaborate stage, "blood and thunder"—*Titus Andronicus* was a favourite piece—dialogue in prose, songs, and dances, instrumental music, feats of physical dexterity such as prolonged duels, and the figure of the clown. Twelve plays by the Duke of Brunswick, printed in 1593 and 1594, show the chief marks of the English style. Ayrer

elaborated the mechanism of his stage, and by the composition of short, humorous pieces in strophic form, tolerably blended with music and song, he came very near to creating the opera in Germany.

On the whole the Reformation involves few great literary names. Controversial literature is rarely immortal. Luther was a theologian by choice and the creator of Modern German by accident. Hans Sachs accepted the Reformation with satisfaction, turned his back on controversy, and devoted himself to the self-appointed and congenial task of edifying his fellow-men while keeping them amused. Murner compels attention as the ablest pen on the Catholic side. Only one great name remains—Johann Fischart (*c.* 1550-90), who might have been Luther's most doughty ally had he been born a generation earlier. As it was, he became the chief literary pillar of the Reformation against the counter-Reformation led by the Jesuits.

Fischart's literary career began about 1570 with a series of anti-Catholic satires, but his first work of importance was his *Affenteurliche und Ungeheuerliche Geschichtschrift* (1575), a lengthy paraphrase of the first book of Rabelais' *Gargantua et Pantagruel*. With this work, which is a masterly adaptation of a foreign style to German conditions, Rabelaisian satire makes its formal entry into German literature. Fischart's most original work, and one devoid of satirical interest, is a pleasant and well-constructed narrative poem, *Das glückhafft Schiff von Zürich* (1576), which describes a river voyage to Strassburg completed in a single day by a party from Zürich. Less valuable in itself, but instructive as a sign of the growing popularity of the prose romance, is Fischart's translation (1572) of the sixth book of the French *Amadis de Gaula*.

While the figures of Eulenspiegel and the Pfaffe vom Kalenberg continued to entertain the sixteenth century, other collections of heterogeneous anecdotes appeared in rapid succession. Johannes Pauli, a

Franciscan, set the ball rolling with *Schimpf und Ernst* (1522). Jörg Wickram's *Rollwagenbüchlein,* a book for the diversion of travellers, successfully continued the fashion and was followed by M. Montanus' *Wegkürtzer* and Hans Kirchoff's *Wendunmuth.* Midway between these collections and *Eulenspiegel* stand two volumes, the *Lalenbuch* (1597) and *Die Schildbürger* (1598), which are not associated with an individual hero but commemorate the follies of a community. The satirical *Grobianus* (Latin, 1549; German, 1551) owes much to the *Narrenschiff* and to *Eulenspiegel.* Chapbook literature is enriched by the exploits of a new hero, Dr. Faust, the magician who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for twenty-four years of pleasure on earth. The first *Faustbuch* appeared in 1587, enlarged editions followed in 1589 and 1599, and further revisions in 1674 and 1725 kept the story alive until Goethe gave it immortality.

CHAPTER V

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

THE town of Heidelberg assumed at the beginning of the seventeenth century a sudden but transient importance. As the seat of a university founded in 1386, it had already established a sound humanistic tradition, and its library was one of the first in Europe. Further, as the capital of the Elector of the Palatinate, it had a political importance which was enhanced by the Elector's marriage in 1612 to Princess Elizabeth of England. Paulus Melissus, one of the many scholars who had shed lustre on the town, was the Elector's librarian from 1586 to 1602, and to Heidelberg in 1619 came Martin Opitz, a native of Bunzlau in Silesia, who has left an indelible mark on German verse, although his own poems have long been forgotten.

Almost at the moment when Opitz held up, in his *Aristarchus* (1617), the excellence of French, Italian, and Dutch literature as an example to his countrymen, other voices were deploring the corruption of the German language by the wholesale importation of foreign words. The union of the Empire with Spain during the reign of Charles V. and the ambitious wars waged by that monarch with the aid of mercenary troops had brought Germany into closer contact with Spain and Italy, and similar intercourse resulted from the formation of the League controlled by Maximilian of Bavaria. From 1613 onwards appeared translations of the Spanish picaresque novels or "rogue-tales," *Guzman de Alfarache* and *Lazarillo de Tormes,* which combined with *Amadis* to depress the standard of literary taste. By 1617 the corruption of German was so patent that Prince Ludwig of Anhalt-Cöthen and Caspar von Teutleben founded the "Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft" or "Palmenorden," on the model of the Florentine "Accademia della Crusca" (1587), with the declared object of refining German literature and purging the language of unnecessary foreign words. Rival societies with similar objects sprang up in Strassburg, Hamburg, and Nuremberg. However excellent the intentions with which these "Sprachgesellschaften" began, their influence was slight. It cannot for a moment be compared with the influence of the "Pléiade" in France, and no member of any of them made any lasting contribution to imaginative literature. They certainly afford evidence of a revival of interest in literature on the part of princes, for scarcely a book was published in the seventeenth century without a fulsome dedication to some eminent person, and they helped to fix a standard of good taste, but Opitz achieved more single-handed by his *Büchlein von der deutschen Poeterei* (1624) than all the language societies put together.

This remarkable book, which determined the character of German poetry until the rise of Klopstock,

contained scarcely a single original idea, but presented a complete and attractive theory of poetry. It epitomized the work of previous theorists: Horace, Scaliger, Ronsard, Clajus, Heinsius, and Vander-Milius, and offered, for the first time in German, a general view of the chief categories of literature. Opitz held that German poetry was much decayed and required a restatement of theory. His contemporaries hailed him as the greatest poet of his own or any other age. History cannot endorse that view, but concedes to him the merit of extending the literary horizon of Germany by his wide acquaintance with foreign literature. He took charge of German verse at the moment when it most needed help and gave it an energy which at least kept it alive until the great revival of the eighteenth century.

A new aspect of literature in the seventeenth century is its development in outlying portions of the country which had hitherto produced little. Hamburg actually boasted *two* "Sprachgesellschaften," and the theories of Opitz reached Königsberg, where Simon Dach, the author of the popular song *Ännchen von Tharau* (written in Low German), and his musical friend, Heinrich Albert, revealed in verse a depth of feeling to which Opitz was a stranger. The Saxon, Paul Fleming, while following Opitz in form, likewise showed in his *Geist- und Weltliche Gedichte* that he was a better poet than his master. Equally thoughtful are the *Sonn- und Feiertags-Sonette* (1639), of the Silesian, Andreas Gryphius (1616-64), written while he was in exile in Holland.

Gryphius is almost the only representative of the German drama in the seventeenth century. He never attains to greatness, but his mind was enlarged by travel, and his works reflect the variety of his experience. In technique he is an imitator of the Renaissance drama of the Dutchman, Joost van den Vondel, but just as Renaissance architecture degenerated into the baroque, so Gryphius overloaded his tragedies—*Leo*

der Armenier, Carolus Stuardus—with a baroque extravagance which did not survive the century. Two satirical comedies, *Peter Squenz,* based on the comic interludes in *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* and *Horribilicribrifax* are still readable, and a third, *Die geliebte Dornrose,* is remarkable inasmuch as it is written in the peasant dialect of Silesia.

Probably both Dach and Fleming would have been good poets without the example of Opitz to guide them. Certain it is that one form of lyric, the hymn, owed little or nothing to him or his theories. The test of survival in hymns is genuineness of feeling, not precision of form, and it was the desolation caused by the Thirty Years' War (1618-48), not dilettante experiment with rhythmical forms, that turned men's minds to God.

Paul Gerhardt (1607-76), whose early manhood was spoilt by the vicissitudes of war, takes up the note so resolutely sounded by Luther. His faith comes before his verse, and his verse becomes at once the true expression of his faith. Unhampered by any regard for Opitzian theory, he catches the simple spirit of the Volkslied, and his work is still a living force. A few of his one hundred and thirty-one hymns appeared in 1648, the year of the Peace of Westphalia, but the collection entitled *Geistliche Andachten* was not published until 1667. Among the best-known are *Nun ruhen alle Wälder, Befiehl du deine Wege, Wach auf, mein Herz und singe, O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* (based on the Latin *Salve, caput cruentatum*), and *Gott Lob nun ist erschollen das edle Fried- und Freudewort,* with which he welcomed the end of the war. The same occasion produced the still more popular hymn by Martin Rinckart (1586-1649), *Nun danket alle Gott mit Herzen, Mund und Händen.* Among other writers whose hymns still live may be mentioned Johann Rist (*O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort*), Michael Schirmer (*O heil'ger Geist, kehr bei uns ein*), Joachim Neander, and Samuel Rodigast. Devotional and didactic litera-

ture was much enriched in this century by the translation into German of the works of William Perkins, Joseph Hall, Richard Baxter, and Daniel Dyke.

Of all the forms of verse enumerated and practised by Opitz, the most novel was probably the epigram, a pure product of the Renaissance, which became the accepted medium of satire among the learned. A collection of *Monosticha, quædam ethica et politica veterum sapientum,* vaguely attributed to Cato, had been going the rounds among scholars for generations, but the real vogue of the epigram began with the Welshman, John Owen, who produced several volumes between 1606 and 1612. Four fairly complete German translations appeared between 1641 and 1653, and no less than thirty German poets borrowed from Owen before the end of the century. The most original among them was Friedrich von Logau, who published *Deutscher Sinn-Getichte Drey Tausend* in 1654 under the pseudonym of Salomon von Golaw. Logau shows a keen understanding of human nature, deplores the prevailing love of novelty in general, and condemns in particular the growing, uncritical admiration of French fashions and customs.

The sixteenth century style of satire is not strongly represented in the seventeenth. Hans Michael Moscherosch (1601-69) distinctly marks the transition from satire to novel. Buffetted to and fro by both parties in the war, he found at last a refuge in Strassburg and published there his *Wunderliche und Warhafftige Gesichte Philanders von Sittewald* (1642-43). Like Fischart an Alsatian by birth, he resembled his great predecessor in method, although it is to Spain, not to France, that he turns for his model. In the main the book is an imitation of the *Sueños* (Dreams) of Francisco de Quevedo, but Moscherosch adapts his model to the conditions of his own country and times.

Johann Jakob Christoff von Grimmelshausen (1624-76) was sucked into the maelstrom of war at the age of ten. Tossed from one side to the other, he became

a musketeer and ended his days as an administrator in the service of the Bishop of Strassburg. His great work, *Simplicissimus* (1669), the first German novel worthy of the name, is remote from book-learning, though Grimmelshausen was familiar with the *Gesichte* of Moscherosch and the Spanish style. In the wanderings and adventures of his hero, Grimmelshausen combines fact and fiction, recounting many of his own vagabond experiences and depicting with unvarnished realism the course of warfare and the passions of his fellow-men. The popularity of *Simplicissimus* was immense. Grimmelshausen wrote a sequel, imitations sprang up on all sides, and the realistic novel, dimly anticipated in *Meier Helmbrecht,* took its place in German literature. Its more aristocratic brother, the romance, however, had a still larger following, and continued to fortify itself with importations from abroad. Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* passed to Germany by way of France in 1629 and was soon joined by Montemayor's *Diana* and Honoré d'Urfé's *Astrée*. All three achieved a sudden and furious popularity in certain quarters, particularly among the members of the Nuremberg "Sprachgesellschaft." Simultaneously with the pastoral wave came the political novel, *Argenis,* by John Barclay, which was translated by Opitz in 1626. The original went through forty editions in the sixteenth century alone, and it was translated into nine languages before 1700. Then followed another vigorous importation from France—the novel of gallant adventure, descended from *Amadis* but stripped by Gomberville, La Calprenède, and Madeleine de Scudéry of the now obsolete trappings of chivalry and enchantment. Its chief representative in Germany was Philipp von Zesen, founder of the "Deutsch-gesinnte Genossenschaft" in Hamburg, who proceeded from mere translation to the composition of original novels in the same style, of which the best known is *Die adriatische Rosamund* (1645).

The last stage of decadence was reached in the works of Christian Hofmann von Hofmannswaldau (1617-79) and Daniel Caspar von Lohenstein (1635-83). Whereas Opitz and his immediate followers—the so-called First Silesian School—had essayed refinement and precision of expression and had studied good models, both ancient and modern, the Second Silesian School fell victims to that general extravagance of style known in France as *préciosité* and in England as Euphuism. They strained after elegance and novelty of expression, and lost themselves in sensuality and bombast. Hofmannswaldau translated Guarini's *Pastor Fido* and wrote erotic poems in the affected style of Marino. Lohenstein shared the lyrical ignominy of Hofmannswaldau, but added dramatic composition to his sins. He took up tragedy at the point at which Gryphius had unfortunately left it—viz., melodrama bedizened with learning—and in justice to Gryphius it must be admitted that Lohenstein left him far behind. If the merit of tragedy were to be estimated by the intensity of the crimes which it can conceivably depict, Lohenstein's *Agrippina, Epicharis,* or *Ibrahim Bassa* would take a high place in the annals of German literature.

The florid lyrical style of the Second Silesian School had no element of permanence, and little active opposition was really needed to destroy it. Thoughtful men of taste and character turned from the Italians and gave their attention to the flourishing literature of France. They now enjoyed advantages denied to Opitz, for he did not live to see the rise of Corneille, of Racine, and of Boileau. Foremost among them was Friedrich Rudolf Ludwig, Freiherr von Canitz (1654-99), whose *Nebenstunden Unterschiedlicher Gedichte* was published posthumously in 1700. Canitz was an eminent statesmen at the Court of the Great Elector and his successor, and his literary style, refined, sober, if sometimes stiff, is that of a gentleman and a very wholesome antidote to the cloying luxuriance of the

disciples of Marino. He deserves attention as the first to make German verse respond to the standard of elegance set by Boileau and also as the first writer to give Berlin a place in German literature. He marks, on the literary side, the coming rise of Prussia.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

FREDERICK I. of Prussia lacked the Great Elector's military and administrative ability, but he was a more enlightened patron of art, science, and letters. He founded the University of Halle in 1694 and the Berlin Academy in 1700, and he patronized the philosophers Samuel Pufendorf (1632-94) and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz (1646-1716). Leibnitz influenced Christian von Wolff (1679-1754), Professor of Mathematics in Halle, and through Wolff a rationalistic philosophy spread from Halle in ever-widening circles. Further, Frederick I. was too vain a man not to be affected by the example of Louis XIV., and he encouraged the presence of poets at his Court. Canitz had died in 1699, but other respectable, though mediocre writers, such as Johann von Besser (1655-1729), adorned the Prussian Court, until the accession of Frederick William I. (1713-40) put an end for a period to such frivolities as art and literature.

Meanwhile, three or four poets of merit had appeared elsewhere. Barthold Heinrich Brockes (1680-1747), a native of Hamburg, began as an admirer of Marino, passed to the imitation of French models, and finished as the first important interpreter of English nature poetry in Germany. The first volume (1721) of his *Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott* reveals the influence of Pope, whose *Essay on Man* he translated in 1740.

A translation of James Thomson's *Seasons* followed in 1745. While Brockes combines the didactic aspects of nature and religion, and thus helps to swell the stream that flows from Milton to Klopstock, his fellow-townsman, Friedrich von Hagedorn (1708-54) wrote in a lighter vein. His models are Horace, Lafontaine, Prior, and Gay, and his *Fabeln und Erzählungen* (1738) and *Oden und Lieder* (1742) strike a new note in German literature. Like Canitz, he is aristocratic and refined, but he is neither stilted nor portentously solemn. He has lightness without frivolity, humour without vulgarity.

In the south, the Swiss anatomist and scientist, Albrecht von Haller (1708-77), showed himself akin to Brockes in his outlook on nature and life. A volume entitled *Versuch Schweitzerischer Gedichte* (1732) was followed two years later by his chief work, *Die Alpen*. He had studied in England in 1727 and was familiar with Pope's *Pastorals* and Thomson's *Seasons*. The former seems to have impressed him the more, for he dwells on the didactic aspects of nature rather than on scenic beauty.

With the accession of the brutal Frederick William I. to the throne of Prussia, the nascent literary importance of Berlin was temporarily extinguished. Johann von Besser migrated to Dresden and became the official poet of the Saxon Court, in which capacity he was succeeded in 1729 by another respectable mediocrity, Johann Ulrich von König. Still another of the same type was Johann Valentin Pietsch, Professor in Königsberg and the admired teacher of Gottsched. These writers are mere names in the history of German literature, but they mark a definite break with the style of Marino, which had corrupted poetry for a generation. They laboured honestly, if unsuccessfully, to write serious verse, and above all they were disciples of Boileau, thus helping to create the atmosphere of which Gottsched took full advantage.

The accession of Frederick the Great, momentous as

it appeared in the light of later events, had little effect on the growth of German literature in Berlin. The new king's education had been wholly French, and his passion for French literature and French society had been aggravated into a mania by the malignant opposition of his father. During his residence at Rheinsberg he had at length been able to indulge his tastes freely. His chief companions were French, he spoke French, he read French, he worshipped everything that had matured in the rays of Le Roi Soleil. Destitute of any critical faculty in literary matters, Frederick was dazzled by the brilliance of Voltaire, and he embarked on a correspondence which was his chief diversion until he came to the throne. After the successful conclusion of the Second Silesian War he revived the diversions of Rheinsberg: he wrote French verse and played the flute. He resuscitated the Berlin Academy, repressed by his father, and made the French scientist, Maupertuis, its president. The poet Baculard d'Arnaud and the atheist, D'Argens, were his honoured guests, and from 1750 to 1752 the royal table was graced by the presence of Voltaire.

With this foreign blight resting on the culture of the Prussian capital, German literature was stifled, and its votaries were forced to worship elsewhere. Those whom the savage ignorance of Frederick William I. had driven out of Prussia saw no inducement to return, and Leipzig took the place that Berlin had begun to claim under Frederick I.

Johann Christoph Gottsched (1700-66) was a native of Königsberg, where he attained the position of lecturer in the University. Being of considerably more than ordinary height, he attracted the unwelcome attention of Frederick William's recruiting officers, and fled to Leipzig to avoid compulsory enlistment in the Royal Guards. Here he found congenial environment, became Professor of Poetry and Philosophy, and assumed the rôle of a literary dictator. His first venture was *Die Vernünftigen Tadlerinnen* (1725), a

periodical on the lines of the *Spectator*, followed in 1730 by his *Versuch einer Critischen Dichtkunst für die Deutschen*. In this remarkable work, which was designed to do for Germany what Boileau had done for France, Gottsched took a comprehensive survey of the whole literary field. He laid down principles of criticism and good taste and reduced the art of poetry to a system. Like Opitz, whom he now superseded as a literary authority, he pointed to the excellence of foreign literature as an ideal to be pursued, but, unlike Opitz, he had before him the great epoch of Louis XIV. and he limited his recommendations to the example of France. Although not ignorant of English literature and prepared to admit the worth of imagination and the appeal of "nature," he was resolved in all essential matters to remodel German literature in accordance with the precepts of Boileau.

While literature in general was in a sorry state, the drama in particular was in need of reform. Vulgar farces, fantastic tragedies, known generally as "Haupt- und Staatsaktionen," and silly operas were all the stage had to offer until Gottsched took it in hand. With the aid of Karoline Neuber's theatrical company, he carried out a complete reform of the Leipzig stage. The only models he would accept were the French, and with the aid of his wife and his friends he set to work to translate pieces for the German stage. Between 1740 and 1745 he published six volumes entitled *Deutsche Schaubühne nach den Regeln der alten Griechen und Römer eingerichtet*, which included a few original or semi-original dramas, among them his own sententious tragedy, *Der sterbende Cato* (1731). That a reform of the stage was necessary was plain, and it must be admitted that Gottsched effected an improvement in matter and style and raised the standard of good taste. His mistake lay in limiting his favour to the French dramatists and in professing to recognize in them alone the successful exponents of Greek theory and practice. Nevertheless, his success was immediate and his

admiring disciples founded a periodical, *Beiträge zur critischen Historie der deutschen Sprache, Poesie und Beredtsamkeit* (1732-44), which marks the summit of his prestige.

Opposition to the Leipzig dictator soon made itself felt. Johann Jakob Bodmer (1698-1783) and Johann Jakob Breitinger (1701-76) were two professors of Zürich who had published from 1721 to 1723 a weekly journal on the model of the *Spectator* and *Tatler*, entitled *Discurse der Mahlern*. In its pages they laid stress on imagination in literature rather than on regularity of form, and they professed to find it in English literature, particularly in Milton. Gottsched, on the other hand, demanded the subordination of imagination to rule and saw the only road to salvation in Boileau and the French classics. The first collision between the two parties came when Gottsched reviewed Bodmer's prose translation (1732) of *Paradise Lost*. Bodmer retaliated with an essay on Milton entitled *Vom Wunderbaren in der Poesie* (1740) and in the same year Breitinger tried Gottsched very high with his *Critische Dichtkunst*, which, bearing the same title as Gottsched's *magnum opus*, put forward an opposite view. The issue was now joined, and for several years the "Kampf der Leipziger und der Schweizer" filled the literary foreground of Germany. Gradually the Swiss view prevailed, and Gottsched had the mortification of seeing his friends and allies fall away. Some of his former disciples, Karl Christian Gärtner, Johann Andreas Cramer, and Johann Adolf Schlegel went so far as to found a rival journal, *Neue Beiträge zum Vergnügen des Verstandes und Witzes* (1744-48), generally referred to as the *Bremer Beiträge*, as Bremen was the place of publication. A little school of poets thus grew up in Leipzig in defiance of Gottsched's authority.

Meanwhile, in the neighbouring University of Halle, the views of Breitinger had found favour with Christian Wolff's disciple, Alexander Gottlieb Baum-

garten, whose lectures, first in Halle and subsequently in Frankfort on the Oder, created the study of Æsthetics. In 1743 Immanuel Jakob Pyra carried the anti-Gottsched campaign from Halle to Berlin, and in 1745 the same writer's volume of *Freundschaftliche Lieder,* written jointly with Samuel Gotthold Lange (1711-81), another Halle student, was published by Bodmer. This collection is distinguished by neglect of the Alexandrine and whole-hearted devotion to rhymeless classical metre. In their imitation of the Horatian ode and their combination of Biblical themes with classical form, Pyra and Lange are forerunners of Klopstock. Another student of Halle was Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim (1719-1803), whose *Versuch in Schertzhaften Liedern* (1744) substituted Anacreontic for the Horatian conviviality of Hagedorn.

At the moment when Gottsched was tottering on his self-raised pedestal, when the Anacreontic fashion dominated German verse, when Frederick the Great was filling Berlin with French rationalists, a young man of twenty-four published in the *Bremer Beiträge* the first three cantos of his *Messias*. It was the trumpet call to higher things.

CHAPTER VII

THE CLASSICAL PERIOD, 1748-1805

Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803), a native of Quedlinburg, studied theology at Jena and Leipzig, where he met some of the contributors to the *Bremer Beiträge*. The pietistic son of a militant Lutheran father, Klopstock's mind was attuned to religious themes even before he went to the famous school at Pforta in 1739. Here he learnt to combine an enthusiasm for Homer and Virgil with an active faith in Christianity and an ardent patriotism. The writings of Bodmer and Breitinger, especially the former's

translation of *Paradise Lost,* added Milton to his list of heroes, and he formed the notion of glorifying Germany in a great epic. In the Latin oration with which he celebrated his departure from Schulpforta, he demanded that German poets should produce some great and imperishable work to show the world that Germany was not devoid of genius, and he hinted in the concluding lines at the nature of the work he was himself to undertake. On proceeding to Jena he began to write, first in prose, then in hexameters, and in the spring of 1748 the first three cantos of *Der Messias* were published, with Bodmer's enthusiastic approval. The remaining seventeen cantos appeared at intervals from 1751 to 1773. The scene opens in Heaven, where God the Father and His angels reveal the purpose of the Messiah, whom Satan and Adramelech conspire to destroy. The third canto shows Christ on the Mount of Olives and introduces Judas, the tool of Hell. Then follow Gethsemane and the Betrayal, Caiaphas and Pilate; the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension. Drawing on his imagination the poet creates the interesting figure of a repentant devil, Abbadonna; Portia, the wife of Pilate; and the lovers Semida and Cidli. The merits of the work are, briefly, its grandiose plan and lofty diction, which raise German poetry to a plane never before attained, the lyric beauty of its episodes, and the masterly treatment of a new metrical form—the hexameter. Its weaknesses are its pietistic passivity, its lack of epic continuity, its theological, superhuman outlook, and its vagueness of scene.

As a lyric poet Klopstock is equally important, especially in his *Odes,* collected in 1771, which introduce a rich variety of rhymeless classical forms. His patriotic odes—*e.g., Mein Vaterland, Vaterlandslied*—strike a note barely touched since the songs of Walther von der Vogelweide, and his patriotism extends to the eulogy of German literature in *Der Hügel und der Hain* and *Die beiden Musen.* His later odes show

a growing substitution of Germanic allusions for the commonplaces of classical mythology. This tendency, combined with the elegiac influence of Young and *Ossian* (1762), produced a false conception of German mythology. Klopstock wrote three patriotic plays, *Hermannsschlacht, Hermann und die Fürsten,* and *Hermanns Tod,* which he called "Bardiete," from the *barditus* or Germanic battle-hymn described by Tacitus. Although written in prose, they are interspersed with "Bardengesänge" or "bardic hymns," an innovation which perverted history and infected literature for a generation.

The pseudo-German "bard," thus created, was powerful enough to unite a number of young writers, Christian Heinrich Boie, Johann Heinrich Voss (1751-1826), Ludwig Hölty, and others, associated primarily with the University of Göttingen, in a school known as the "Göttinger Dichterbund," and later as the "Hainbund," from the "Hain" or "grove" which Klopstock had made the symbol of German national poetry as opposed to the Parnassus of classical poetry. They declared themselves as disciples of Klopstock and antagonists of Wieland, whose more frivolous works offended, in their opinion, both religion and morality.

Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813), like Klopstock, was brought up in a religious atmosphere, and he was profoundly impressed by *Der Messias.* Like Klopstock, he became the guest of Bodmer in Zürich, but after 1759 Bodmer's influence on him declined and its place was taken by that of Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, d'Alembert, and Shaftesbury. The morbid pietism of his youth was replaced by a reckless cynicism in religious and moral matters. Fielding, Sterne, and Swift were added to his French models, and his facile pen led the German language a dance which quickened its paces and removed its stolidity. His first novel, *Don Silvio von Rosalva* (1764), in the style of *Don Quixote,* is a contemptuously amusing

satire on unreasoning enthusiasm. To the year 1765 belong the tales in verse, *Comische Erzählungen,* which most offended the disciples of Klopstock. With *Agathon* (1766) he set the fashion of the psychological and pedagogic novel, which reappeared in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* and became a main literary current of the nineteenth century. A didactic novel, *Der goldene Spiegel,* containing his philosophy of government, appeared in 1772, in which year he accepted an invitation to Weimar as tutor to the young duke Karl August and his brother. Here he founded a literary review, *Teutscher Merkur* (1773-89), in which appeared *Die Abderiten* (1774), an elaborate and amusing satire, and a romantic epic, *Oberon* (1780), inspired by *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the old French epic of Huon of Bordeaux.

As a translator Wieland deserves credit for his version of twenty-two plays of Shakespeare—one, *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* in verse, the rest in prose. But familiar as he was with both English and French writers, Wieland revelled in Greek, as few had done before him. His tastes led him, unlike Goethe, into the byways of classical literature, witness his translations of Lucian, rather than along the highways, and in his principal novels he sought to reproduce a Greek atmosphere as he understood it.

More important than Wieland's disciples, M. A. von Thümmel, J. B. von Alexinger, or K. A. Kortum, were his opponents. In 1770 Christian Boie and Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter had founded the *Göttinger Musenalmanach* as a receptacle for original lyric poetry, on the model of the French *Almanac des Muses* (1765). This journal became the organ of the youthful Göttinger Bund, inaugurated in 1772. Of these young men, Voss translated the *Odyssey,* the *Iliad,* and some of Shakespeare's plays. His *Idyllen,* of which the best known is *Luise* (1784), break completely with the Renaissance tradition still maintained by Salomon Gessner (*Idyllen,* 1756), and inaugurate

that more faithful presentation of German country life which was repeated in Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea* before it found a wider field in the "peasant" novel of the nineteenth century. Christian, Count Stolberg and his brother Friedrich Leopold, both personal friends of Klopstock, shared Voss's classical tastes. Christian translated Sophocles, his brother the *Iliad,* some dialogues of Plato, and *Ossian.*

Although not a member of the original Göttinger Bund, Gottfried August Bürger (1747-94) enjoyed the friendship of Boie at Göttingen, and died there as Professor of Æsthetics in 1794, after a life of poverty, excess, and domestic unhappiness. With his famous poem *Lenore* (1773), inspired by a Low German original, Bürger raised the ballad from an obscure popular form to the first rank in lyrical poetry. Encouraged then by the example of Herder, he turned to Bishop Percy's *Reliques* (1765) and produced several translations and a few original poems, of which *Der wilde Jäger* is the best.

While Klopstock inaugurates a new period with a work of sublime imagination and is worshipped by the Göttinger Bund with all the enthusiasm of youth, Wieland appears as a retarding agent, a destroyer of ideals, but gifted with a lightness of touch hitherto unknown in German satire and a humour which Klopstock did not possess. To them are now added Lessing, the champion of cold, impartial reason, and Herder, the enthusiastic explorer of universal literature. On this fourfold foundation—imagination, humour, sanity, and enthusiasm—Goethe and Schiller erected their own enduring monument. In them the genius of German literature found its highest expression.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-81) was a Saxon by birth. After five years at the famous Fürstenschule in Meissen he entered the University of Leipzig in 1746, as a student of theology, which he abandoned first for medicine, then for literature. Proceeding to

Berlin in 1748, Lessing became a journalist and by his strict impartiality, his patient analysis of his material, and his sobriety of judgment, he rapidly established himself as a competent critic. As a dramatist he broke new ground and achieved a striking success with *Miss Sara Sampson* (1755), the first noteworthy example in German of a "bürgerliches Trauerspiel" or tragedy of middle-class life.

In 1759 Lessing founded, with his friends Nicolai and Mendelssohn, a literary periodical entitled *Briefe die neuste Literatur betreffend,* which marked a great advance on all contemporary criticism. One of the most important contributions was Lessing's discussion of Shakespeare in relation to Corneille, Racine, Gottsched, and the tragic theory of Aristotle, a subject afterwards expanded in *Die Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (1767-69). In 1760, the course of the Seven Years' War, which transformed the Francophile despot of Prussia into a national German hero and amplified the patriotic note struck by Klopstock, led Lessing to Breslau as secretary to General Tauentzien. In this employment he found leisure enough to begin the two works by which he is best known; *Laokoon* (1766) and *Minna von Barnhelm* (1767, written 1763), the former an attempt to define the spheres of poetry and the plastic arts, the latter the first great German comedy. In the dramatic sphere *Minna von Barnhelm* ranks as highly as *Der Messias* in the epic sphere. It is the second great landmark of the classical period in German literature.

Ostensibly a companion to the performances in the Hamburg National Theatre, *Die Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (1767-69) became a collection of papers on dramatic theory and practice in general, and, in particular, on the elucidation of Aristotle, the errors of Corneille and Voltaire, and the superiority of Shakespeare. His next play, *Emilia Galotti,* though not such an indisputable success as *Minna von Barnhelm,* is the first German tragedy which endeavours

to combine the best features of English and French practice, and the oldest which has maintained itself on the stage. It is, like *Miss Sara Sampson,* a "bürgerliches Trauerspiel," but it goes further. It depicts the *oppression* of a lower by a superior class. It contains the germ of revolution, a spirit of revolt, and thus leads directly to the frankly revolutionary drama of *Sturm und Drang,* and the social drama of our own day.

The religious controversies in which Lessing from time to time engaged had one happy result—*Nathan der Weise* (1779). In this play, which definitely assigned to English blank verse the precedence hitherto enjoyed by the French alexandrine in tragedy, Lessing preached the gospel of tolerance—all lands produce good men, all creeds contain good elements, all can work together for good.

In 1767, while working as a pastor in Riga, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) made his critical début with *Fragmente über die neuere deutsche Literatur,* the warm, constructive spirit of which is in marked contrast to Lessing's colder, destructive style. Enthusiasm, even to the point of incoherence, is Herder's chief characteristic. He preaches the need for originality, the humiliation of mere imitation. He has ideas on the continuity of poetic inspiration from Homer and Virgil onwards, on the difference between popular and artificial poetry, and behind all his ideas is the relation of poetry to life, to social history, to the evolution of the human race.

With the appearance of the *Fragmente* we have the anterior limit of that remarkable period known indifferently as "Die Geniezeit" and "Sturm und Drang." The patriotic enthusiasm of Klopstock is taken up by Herder and creates first a legitimate desire for originality, and then, reinforced by other factors, a wild impatience of all accepted conventions, whether literary, political, social, or moral. For twenty years, until the appearance of Schiller's *Don Carlos*

(1787), "Sturm und Drang" holds the field, though its chief manifestations are concentrated in the shorter period which lies between Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773) and Schiller's *Räuber* (1781).

That the winter spent by Herder in Strassburg (1770-71) coincided with Goethe's legal studies at that university was a fortunate accident for German literature. To Herder Goethe owed his knowledge of Shakespeare, of Ossian, and of the German Volkslied, and the broad view of poetry as one of the adjuncts of civilization. Jointly with Goethe and Justus Möser, Herder published *Blatter von deutscher Art und Kunst* (1773), containing his rhapsodical essays on Shakespeare and Ossian. Leaving Strassburg in 1771, he held the office of pastor in Bückeburg until 1776, when he obtained a more important ecclesiastical appointment in Weimar. His collection of Volkslieder, the songs and ballads of many nations in a German translation, now generally known by the longer title of *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern,* appeared in the years 1778-79, and marks the zenith of his activity. In the last year of his life (1803) he completed *Der Cid,* a skilful combination of a series of Spanish romances.

Of all the young men in whom the indefatigable Herder kindled the literary fire, the most eager was Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Born in Frankfort on the Main in 1749 of well-to-do parents, Goethe presents the rare spectacle of a genius who never knew want and yet developed his faculties to the fullest. His early education, conducted by his father in person, developed in him a taste for languages and an enthusiasm for the Old Testament and Klopstock's *Messias.* As a student at the University of Leipzig he neglected the law, for which he was destined, mixed much in society, and studied the history of art, to which much interest had just been lent by Johann Joachim Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (1764) and Lessing's *Laokoon.* In Leipzig, too, he wrote his first plays, *Die Laune des Verliebten*

(1767) and *Die Mitschuldigen* (1768), two comedies in alexandrines in the orthodox French style. Proceeding to Strassburg in the spring of 1770 to complete his legal studies, he strayed into the byways of medicine and science and entered an agreeable intellectual circle. Shakespeare, Ossian, and Goldsmith, whose *Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) had just begun its triumphal progress through Germany, were the objects of his adoration, and his own natural gift of song was called to life by his first love, Friederike Brion, daughter of a pastor in the village of Sesenheim. On the completion of his university course Goethe practised for a few months in Wetzlar, but by 1773 he was back in Frankfort as the author of *Götz von Berlichingen,* with which he won immediate fame.

"Sturm und Drang," or "Storm and Stress," is the exaggeration of rationalism. It is the transition from the logical enlightenment and destructive criticism of Lessing to a fervid and impatient enthusiasm for a new age in life, art, and literature. Herder in his *Fragmente* demanded originality, spontaneity, genius in poetry. He claimed attention for Homer, Shakespeare, Ossian, and the Volkslied. At the same time society began to be stirred by the teaching of Rousseau, to whom Lessing had paid tribute in the first number of *Das Neuste aus dem Reiche des Witzes* (1751). The idea of "the return to nature," advocated by Rousseau, blended perfectly with Herder's notions of "natural" poetry, but the new theories of social equality left Herder far behind. While accepting all that Herder preached, "Sturm und Drang" went further. The yearning for originality became a passion for revolution, accompanied by an impatience and contempt of all conventions, whether literary, social, or political. Some less fortunate or worse constituted than the youthful Goethe lost their mental balance. Lenz went mad, and died in exile in Moscow; Schubart's indiscreet pen procured him ten years' imprisonment in the castle of

Hohenasperg. In *Götz von Berlichingen,* with which the productive period of "Sturm und Drang" begins, Goethe depicts the conflict between independence and diplomacy; he endeavours to vindicate the rights of the individual against institutional government. This "Titanism," or zeal to put things right single-handed, is a characteristic of the time. It appears in its intellectual manifestation in *Faust,* the earliest draft of which belongs to the years 1773-75, and in its social manifestation in Schiller's *Rauber* (1781), the last undiluted outpouring of "Sturm und Drang." Between *Gotz* and *Die Räuber* lies a mass of similar but inferior work: Lenz's *Die Soldaten,* Klinger's *Otto,* and *Sturm und Drang* (1776), which gave the name to the whole period, and Wagner's *Kindesmörderin* (1776). All these writers tried to astonish the world both in subject and form. They attacked the existing social and political order, conceived the abnormal as normal, the criminal as heroic, snapped their fingers at Boileau and Aristotle alike, and claimed affinity with Shakespeare. This period of feverish activity did not last ten years. Goethe contributed in 1774 his *Leiden des jungen Werther,* but Werther hardly falls into the same category as Götz or Schiller's Karl Moor. He is more passive than active, lachrymose not titanic. The world does not suit him, but he succumbs to its conditions instead of trying to beat it into another shape. Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloise* and Richardson's sentimental novels are the sources from which Werther springs, not Shakespeare. The book contains little "Sturm" and less "Drang," and its introspection and sentimentality anticipate one side of the Romantic movement.

Goethe's call to the Grand Ducal Court at Weimar in November, 1775, gave a different turn to his ideas. New surroundings, responsibilities, and distractions claimed his attention. He fell under the moderating influence of Charlotte von Stein. *Faust* and *Egmont,* both originating in "Sturm und Drang," lost in

violence and gained in depth by the slowness of their completion. The pristine passion of the early lyrics inspired by Friederike Brion in 1770-71 yielded to a calmer reverence for Frau von Stein and a more contemplative view of Nature, and his two austerely classical plays, *Iphigenie auf Tauris* (1787) and *Torquato Tasso* (1790), gradually took shape. After ten years of unremitting activity in many departments of Court life, Goethe obtained leave to undertake that Italian journey which refreshed his body, and enlarged his mind with the calm contemplation of the Italian landscape and of ancient and modern art. The enthusiasm kindled at Strassburg by Herder had hitherto been limited by lack of experience. Weimar had done much to remedy the defect, but surroundings other than German were needed to perfect his sense of proportion in all manifestations of human activity. In Italy he completed *Iphigenie,* the most truly classical, that is, the most harmonious in subject, form, and language of all his works. Here, too, he worked at *Egmont* (1788), *Tasso* (1790), and *Faust,* which he published in 1790 as a fragment, almost in despair of its completion. No event of his life worked a greater change in him than this Italian journey. He returned to Weimar in 1788 to find himself intellectually isolated. Everything seemed to have stood still in his absence, his friends were absorbed in matters which no longer interested him, and in the literary world men were still applauding Schiller's *Räuber.*

Johann Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), born at Marbach in Würtemberg, had good reason to begin his literary career as a revolutionary. The tyrannical Duke, Karl Eugen, had established a new military school at Solitude, his country seat, and compelled Schiller's father to educate his boy there. Young Schiller had been destined for the Church, but as no provision was made at Solitude for theological studies, he had to take up law, which he exchanged in 1775

for medicine. Karl Eugen's notions of discipline were severe. Military regulations governed the establishment, intercourse with the outside world was restricted, and the importation of ideas of any kind, unless approved by the Duke himself, was forbidden. This atmosphere of repression encouraged the inevitable spirit of rebellion. Beginning as a worshipper of Klopstock, Schiller regaled himself surreptitiously on other fare, *Götz, Werther,* Rousseau, and Shakespeare. His prison-like surroundings were a challenge to his pen, and when he left the Academy, which had meanwhile been transferred to Stuttgart, *Die Räuber* was finished. Published anonymously in 1781, it proved an immediate success, and its first performance at Mannheim in 1782 encouraged Schiller to give up his prospects as a military surgeon and shake the dust of Würtemberg from his feet. In 1785, while struggling to maintain himself as a journalist in Mannheim—he had just founded *Die Rheinische Thalia*—Schiller accepted an invitation first to Leipzig, then to Dresden, extended to him by Christian Gottfried Körner and other admirers of his poetry. To this period of mental repose belong the ode, *An die Freude* (1785), and the completion of *Don Carlos* (1787), his first drama in verse. Like Goethe's *Egmont, Don Carlos* is the product of two moods. The first three acts, in which the interest centres round the domestic drama in the royal house of Spain, had appeared in the *Rheinische Thalia* in 1785. They were conceived in the spirit of "Sturm und Drang" but in the idyllic peace of Saxon villages this mood had passed. The revolutionary poet had become a philosophic poet, and the completed play is not a revolutionary manifesto, but the thoughtful exposition of a theory of government.

Schiller's studies in connection with this play led him to investigate Spanish history more closely, and in 1788 he produced a professedly historical work, *Die Geschichte des Abfalls der vereinigten Niederlande,*

which secured for him the next year, on Goethe's recommendation, the post of Professor of History in the University of Jena. He was now at the beginning of a new stage in his career, and settled down to his historical studies on the one hand and to philosophy on the other. Immanuel Kant's three great volumes, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1781), *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (1788), and *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790) seemed to offer a new survey of the whole field of metaphysics, ethics, and æsthetics. Schiller was stirred by them to fruitful speculation, and produced a number of philosophic essays. His professorial duties led him to write a *Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Krieges* (1791-93), out of which grew *Wallenstein* (1798-99), the grandest dramatic creation in German literature.

Although Goethe had been instrumental in bringing Schiller to Jena, some years elapsed before they met on equal terms. Schiller's dramatic successes recalled a mood which had been hopelessly repugnant to Goethe since his return from Italy. Schiller felt this lack of sympathy in the older man, and shrank from a closer acquaintance. Gradually, as Schiller's philosophical poems and studies revealed a moderation and a maturity of judgment hitherto unsuspected, Goethe's attitude silently underwent a change, and when at last, in 1794, Schiller nerved himself to solicit his co-operation in the establishment of a new literary periodical, *Die Horen* (1795-97), Goethe accepted the invitation with expressions of cordiality and esteem. Thus began a friendship which terminated only with Schiller's death, and bore the richest fruit for German literature.

Compared with Schiller's activity during the years of their personal intercourse, Goethe appears comparatively unproductive. His interests were wider, his activities more diverse, and he had a larger store of fragments uncompleted and plans not yet begun. Apart from the ballads, a few elegies, and *Hermann*

und Dorothea, Goethe published little in the sphere of *belles lettres* before Schiller's death, but he worked quietly and persistently at *Faust.* The introductory poems, *Zueignung, Vorspiel auf dem Theater,* and *Prolog im Himmel* (1797), changed the whole atmosphere of the play. From a mere manifestation of intellectual rebellion, ending in blind depravity, *Faust* becomes a speculation on man's function in the world and his relation to God. Man may err, but if he strives will eventually see the light:

"Ein guter Mensch in seinem dunklen Drange,
Ist sich des rechten Weges wohl bewusst."

Schiller was just too late to secure for *Die Horen* Goethe's psychological novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre,* which appeared in the edition of his collected works in 1795-96. Designed as early as 1777, *Wilhelm Meister* occupied Goethe, in one form or another, until 1829. Judged by modern standards, it is a tedious work, deficient in action and loose in construction. The general atmosphere is one of Richardsonian sentimentality—indeed, the book marks the culmination of Richardson's influence on the German novel—but the unwearying analysis of moods and motives points forward to the autobiographical, introspective novel of the Romantic School. The central idea is a pale reflection of the theme of *Faust:* in the end a well-meaning man will be set in the right path, in spite of his doubts and follies. In addition to the Mignon episodes, which form one of the earliest manifestations of a new "romantic" spirit, *Wilhelm Meister* contains a wealth of information on theatrical affairs, a general appreciation of Shakespeare, and a thorough discussion of *Hamlet.*

The tone of *Die Horen* was too lofty to be popular, and the promoters were disappointed in their hopes. Goethe and Schiller compiled a series of epigrams, entitled *Xenien* (1796), after Martial, in which they

expressed their contempt of contemporary writers and the general literary standard of the age. Sharp replies were soon forthcoming, and Goethe and Schiller passed to more constructive work. Schiller epitomized his philosophical genius in a series of contemplative poems *Der Genius, Die Teilung der Erde, Die Ideale, Der Spaziergang, Das Ideal und das Leben, Das Lied von der Glocke* (1799), and others, and advanced the development of the dramatic ballad with *Der Handschuh, Der Ring des Polykrates, Der Taucher, Die Bürgschaft,* and *Die Kraniche des Ibykus.* Goethe likewise produced ballads—*Der Zauberlehrling, Der Schatzgräber,* and *Die Braut von Corinth;* he took up *Faust* once more, and completed *Hermann und Dorothea,* an idyll in hexameters on the model of Voss's *Luise.*

Turning to the drama, Schiller completed *Wallensteins Lager* (1798), *Die Piccolomini* (1799), and *Wallensteins Tod* (1799). In spite of its length, which claims two evenings on the stage, *Wallenstein* still remains the most effective and popular German tragedy. The theme is ambition combined with indecision. Wallenstein appears at the height of his power. The Emperor is jealous of his general, and is persuaded to diminish his importance by reducing the force under his command. Wallenstein sees the danger, resents the Emperor's distrust, hesitates as to his course of action, is forced into a treasonable alliance with the Swedes, deserted by those on whom he most relies, and perishes by a murderer's hand. With this great tragedy, Schiller left *Don Carlos* far behind, and even surpassed Goethe's *Egmont.* Then followed, on the same high plane, *Maria Stuart* (1800), *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* (1801), *Die Braut von Messina* (1803), in which Schiller introduced the ancient Greek device of a chorus, and *Wilhelm Tell* (1804). Death overtook him on May 9th, 1805, and left his Russian tragedy, *Demetrius,* a fragment.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

THE publication of the First Part of *Faust* in 1808 marks the extreme limit of the Classical Period, and some fifteen years passed before any substantial progress was made with the Second Part. Part of the Third Act had been worked up as *Helena* in 1800, and its classical style was thereby determined, but the remaining acts were only completed between 1825 and 1832, when German literature had become predominantly "Romantic." The high standard of taste set by *Die Horen,* the polemical *Xenien,* the Olympian aloofness of Goethe and Schiller, and the jealousy of smaller men, all contributed to the reaction against the "Classic" spirit in literature. August Wilhelm Schlegel, Friedrich Schlegel, and Ludwig Tieck formed an independent literary circle in Berlin in 1797 and launched a new literary journal, *Das Athenæum*. The essence of their creed was that modern literature should not be modelled on classical literature, but should be left free to take whatever form contemporary conditions might dictate. Schiller and Wieland were the chief objects of their attack; yet it was precisely Schiller who, by his essay *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (1795), had started Friedrich Schlegel at least on the new quest. By the substitution of the word *romantisch,* freely used hitherto in the sense of "fanciful," for *sentimentalisch,* a convenient label was provided for that "modern" literature which the new theorists sought to vindicate. Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* was accepted from the beginning as a specimen, and it was the model for Tieck's *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen* (1798), Friedrich von Hardenberg's ("Novalis") *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (1802), and other "Romantic" novels.

Romanticism has something in common with the

introspection and indecision of *Werther,* but it differs fundamentally from "Sturm und Drang" inasmuch as it is passive rather than active, submissive rather than defiant, mystical rather than rational. They agree in their worship of Shakespeare, but whereas the name of Shakespeare was in 1773 merely a slogan of revolt against dramatic convention, his works now become a field of inquiry for the admirers of "modern" as opposed to "classical" literature. The elder Schlegel, with the assistance of his wife, translated seventeen of Shakespeare's plays, and Graf Wolf Baudissin and Tieck's daughter, Dorothea, translated the remainder. Schlegel's interest in foreign literature was not confined to Shakespeare. Like Herder he ranged east and west with indefatigable curiosity and introduced Cervantes and Calderon, Camoens, and Dante to an appreciative circle of readers, and his lectures *Über schöne Literatur und Kunst* (Berlin, 1802) and *Über dramatische Kunst und Literatur* (Vienna, 1808) are the beginning of the modern study of literary history. His brother, Friedrich, encouraged the study of Sanscrit with his treatise, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808), and also lectured on Ancient and Modern Literature.

Modern European literature and Oriental literature were thus commended to the new generation as substitutes for the classics, but it was the Middle Ages that most effectively roused the enthusiasm of the Romantics. This medieval tendency soon took two forms. On the one hand it encouraged a spirit of learned research into Germany's past; on the other hand it produced a cloying idealization of medieval life, to which Hoffmann and other eccentrics added a morbid interest in the fantastic and the supernatural. In Heidelberg, which became again for a space a literary centre, Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim published jointly a fine collection of old Volkslieder entitled *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (1806-08), which continued the work of Herder within strictly national limits. It was the first positive achievement of

Romanticism and it determined the trend of the best lyric poetry for half a century. In Heidelberg, Romanticism became definitely national in spirit and was thus ready to assimilate the patriotic lyricism engendered by the efforts of Prussia and Austria to throw off the yoke of Napoleon. The literary organ of the Heidelberg group was the short-lived *Zeitung für Einsiedler* (1808), which numbered among its contributors J. P. F. Richter ("Jean Paul"), the creator of the prose idyll (*Quintus Fixlein,* 1796), Ludwig Uhland and the brothers Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, whose *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812) and *Deutsche Sagen* (1816) have an even higher place in popular esteem than *Des Knaben Wunderhorn.*

An independent figure of this time is Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811), whose failing confidence in himself and in Prussia led him to take his own life. Kleist strove to be a classic. He perceived and was emulous of the greatness of Goethe and Schiller, and his life was spent in a vain endeavour to share their fame. In a fit of despair he burnt his unfinished *Robert Guiscard,* in which he hoped to reconcile the art of Shakespeare with that of Sophocles. Of his surviving works *Die Familie Schroffenstein* is a crude but powerful version of the Romeo and Juliet theme, quite in the spirit of "Sturm und Drang," while *Das Käthchen von Heilbronn* is romantically medieval. *Der zerbrochene Krug* is a noteworthy comedy, and of his short stories *Michael Kohlhaas* has a place in the development of historical fiction. In his last and greatest play, *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg* (1810), Kleist thought he had found a theme which would rouse Prussia to a sense of her former greatness. To the country that lay prostrate at Napoleon's feet he held up the picture of the Great Elector, victorious over the invading Swedes. The hour had not yet come, and the appeal fell on deaf ears. Had Kleist lived only two years longer he would have seen that patriotic revival which culminated in the Battle of Leipzig.

Karl Theodor Körner, who perished on that field, wrote patriotic poems which were published posthumously as *Leier und Schwert*. Ernest Moritz Arndt paid with exile for his courageous *Geist der Zeit* (1806), but joined triumphantly in the rise of Prussia in 1813 with his *Lieder für Teutsche* and *Bannergesänge und Wehrlieder*, of which *Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland, Der Gott, der Eisen wachsen liess*, and others have become immortal.

In 1809 Arnim and Brentano settled in Berlin, and the younger Romantic School which grew up around them shared in the patriotic revival led by Arndt. Friedrich, Baron de la Motte Fouqué wrote martial songs, but is now chiefly remembered by his fairy-tale, *Undine*. Adalbert von Chamisso possessed a finer lyrical talent than Fouqué and shared Fouqué's interest in Scandinavian mythology. His voyage round the world in 1815-17 made him the first of the traveller-poets of the nineteenth century. In his novel, *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte* (1814), Chamisso tells the naïve story of the man who sells his shadow to the devil. Equally typical of the Romantic spirit are the Silesian, Joseph, Freiherr von Eichendorff, and the Suabian, Ludwig Uhland. Eichendorff's romance, *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* (1826) is perhaps the most successful specimen of Romantic fiction, and as a lyrical poet he approaches Goethe and Heine. Uhland represents the transition from national to local enthusiasm in German literature and he is therefore generally regarded as the head of a Suabian School. He is the equal of Eichendorff in song, and as a ballad-writer (*Der gute Kamerad*) he takes a place immediately after Goethe, Schiller, and Bürger. Justinus Kerner and Wilhelm Hauff, both Suabians, contributed a few songs in the same popular style, but they were surpassed by Eduard Mörike, author of the charming sketch, *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*, and the formless, unfinished, imaginative, and typically Romantic novel *Maler Nolten* (1832).

Pure Romanticism is distinguished by a naïve idealism; its decay is marked by the intrusion of a cynical realism. Karl Leberecht Immermann, the last of the Romantic novelists proper, published *Die Epigonen* in 1836 and included himself in the class indicated by the title. Here, for the first time, Romantic enthusiasm succumbs to the realities of a sordid world, and we are only one stage removed from the cynicism of Heine. Immermann's decadence was merely inert, but Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Hoffmann was wilfully decadent and exploited the gruesome and the supernatural in a manner never before attempted in German literature and only rarely since. Ghosts, dual personalities, devils, mandrakes, automata, the diseased, the dying, and the dead harrow the feelings and bewilder the senses of the incautious reader. And yet, throughout and behind it all, persists that unworldly devotion to art, that sentimental reconstruction of the Middle Ages, and that vague pursuit of fugitive ideals which stamps Romantic fiction from Tieck to Eichendorff. Another Hoffmann in temperament, Zacharias Werner introduced the tale of terror to the stage with his fate-tragedy, *Der vierundzwanzigste Februar* (1810), which set the fashion in drama for the next ten years.

* * * * *

Among the external causes which contributed to the decline of Romanticism was the ebbing of that great wave of patriotic enthusiasm which had carried Prussia and Austria to victory in 1813. Once the enemy had fallen, the German princes forgot their obligations and withheld the promised liberal constitutions from their subjects. Francis II. and his Chancellor, Prince Metternich, vigorously suppressed all political discontent in Austria and prevailed on Frederick William III. to pursue a like policy in Prussia, and in the atmosphere of disappointment and irritation created by the reactionary Karlsbad Decrees of 1819 literature rapidly acquired a political hue.

From about 1830, when the Paris Revolution agitated the chanceries of Europe, a group of writers became prominent under the name of "Young Germany," and in 1835 the Federal Diet found it expedient to order the suppression of their works, particularly those of Heinrich Heine, Ludolf Wienbarg, Karl Gutzkow, Theodor Mundt, and Heinrich Laube.

Heinrich Heine (1797-1856), viewed as a lyric poet, was one of the sweetest singers of the century; as a man he was less estimable. Few have reproduced the simplicity of the Volkslied as faithfully as Heine in *Die Lorelei, Die Grenadiere,* or *Du bist wie eine Blume.* Nor should we demand austerer pessimism than is expressed in *Ich grolle nicht* if the author were anyone else, but the reader of Heine's earlier poems, even in their more temperate form in *Das Buch der Lieder* (1827), is so often startled by the sudden intrusion of the sardonic or the vulgar that the poet is suspect even when his feelings are probably genuine. Heine maintains, on the whole, the traditions of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn,* and he has the Romantic interest in the Oriental and the exotic, but his petulant cynicism excludes him from the Romantic circle. It is true that he began life, as a Jew, with a great handicap, nor did his formal conversion bring him spiritual or material satisfaction. The rebellious elements of his nature were thus easily roused and found expression in satire and political agitation.

While not directly associated with the "Young German" School, the Austrian writers of the day were equally impatient of the repressive measures of the Metternich *régime.* Only the greatest among them, Franz Grillparzer (1791-1872), preserved his art from the depressing influence of mundane politics. By 1817, when he found himself famous as the author of a terrifying but poetical fate-tragedy, *Die Ahnfrau,* the German drama had come to a standstill. In the field of comedy *Minna von Barnhelm* still remained without a rival. Tragedy was better represented, but only

Heinrich von Kleist had made any attempt to uphold the standard set by Schiller. Goethe's potential, if not actual, tragedies, *Iphigenie* and *Tasso,* had no competitors, and *Faust* was still nothing more than an ambitious, amorphous, unfinished, and half-understood domestic tragedy. The time was ripe for a further advance, and with Grillparzer Austrian drama ceased to be merely local, and even took the lead in the general development of German literature.

After his excursion into the field of Gothic horror, Grillparzer turned, as Goethe before him had turned from "Sturm und Drang," to the legends and poetry of Greece. His *Sappho* excited the admiration of Byron; *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* is the story of Hero and Leander; and the trilogy, *Das goldene Vliess,* remains the finest dramatic presentation of the Argonautic legend in the literature of the world, ancient or modern. Turning to the history of his own country, Grillparzer wrote *König Ottokars Glück und Ende,* the centre of which is Rudolf of Habsburg's rival, King Ottokar of Bohemia, in whom we discern the more modern figure of Napoleon. Spanish drama, in which Grillparzer was widely read, suggested the form and metre of *Der Traum ein Leben,* a kind of miniature *Faust* with an Oriental setting. Spanish influence is also strong in Grillparzer's only comedy, *Weh' dem, der lügt* (1838), a charming tale of Merovingian times. This play was unfavourably received, with the result that the sensitive and disappointed author withdrew entirely from the stage.

By 1840 the ardour of the "Young Germans" had cooled. Karl Gutzkow, who had in his youth offended authority on religious and moral, as well as political, grounds, wrote a respectable and amusing comedy, *Zopf und Schwert* (1843). As a novelist he struck a new note in his ambitious cycle, *Die Ritter vom Geist* (1850-52), which marks the transition from the historical to the social novel. Heinrich Laube was still a politician when he wrote *Die Karlsschüler* (1847), but

from 1850 his energies were absorbed by his post as Director of the Vienna Burgtheater.

It was really a younger generation than that of Heine, Gutzkow, and Laube that fanned the political flames from 1840 to 1848. Georg Herwegh published his fiery *Gedichte eines Lebendigen* in 1841, and was soon expelled from Prussia. Ferdinand Freiligrath sought refuge abroad after the appearance of his *Glaubensbekenntnisse* (1844), but apart from this volume Freiligrath is a Romantic. The *Unpolitische Lieder* (1840) of August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, author of *Deutschland über Alles,* were political enough to lose him his professorship in Breslau. Max Schneckenburger's *Wacht am Rhein,* though written in 1840, had an external, not an internal bearing, and did not become really popular until 1870.

The month of March, 1848, witnessed the outbreak of the Revolution in Vienna and Berlin. Metternich was driven into exile, and the Emperor Ferdinand abdicated in favour of his young nephew, Francis Joseph. Frederick William IV. of Prussia escaped with the promise of a new constitution. After hard fighting in Austria and Hungary the dynasty recovered its position, and by 1850 the force of the revolutionary movement was spent.

* * * * *

Arnim's unfinished *Kronenwächter* (1817) stands on the very threshold of the development of the historical novel, but the decisive impulse came from England. Wilhelm Hauff's *Liechtenstein* (1826) and some of Heinrich Zschokke's *Bilder aus der Schweiz* (1824-26) are among the earliest attempts to apply Scott's methods to the history of Würtemberg and Switzerland. More thorough in his imitation was Wilhelm Heinrich Häring ("Willibald Alexis"), who published *Walladmor* (1823-24) ostensibly as a translation. Then, following Hauff's example, he turned, with

Cabanis (1832), to the history of his own province, Brandenburg. Scott's influence, however, was not the only factor in the growth of the German historical novel. The learned investigation of Old German literature initiated by the earlier Romantic writers also bore fruit. Gustav Freytag (1816-95), the master novelist of the century, studied Germanic philology and kindred subjects under Hoffmann von Fallersleben in Breslau and under Karl Lachmann in Berlin, and the historical sketches, *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* (1859-62), and the grandiose cycle of novels, *Die Ahnen* (1872-80), are the fruits of his Germanic studies. His fame also rests on *Die Journalisten* (1852), the best comedy since *Minna,* and *Soll und Haben* (1855), ostensibly a picture of contemporary society, such as Gutzkow had striven to paint in *Die Ritter vom Geist,* but Freytag still retains, in spite of the commercial atmosphere of the story, the Romantic idealism which Gutzkow lacked. He stands on the boundary between Romanticism and Realism.

One of the most attractive aspects of German fiction is presented by the "Dorfgeschichte," or story of peasant life. Its origin may be sought in Voss's *Luise,* Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea,* and Jean Paul's prose idylls, or still more remotely in the Middle High German *Meier Helmbrecht,* but it springs to life as an offshoot of local patriotism in the Romantic period. Among the earlier examples may be mentioned Johann Peter Hebel's *Schatzkästlein* (1811), Brentano's tragic *Geschichte vom braven Kasperl und dem schönen Annerl* (1817), and Immermann's *Oberhof* (1839). The systematic exploitation of the countryside begins with Berthold Auerbach's *Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten* (1843-54) and the Swiss stories of Albert Bitzius ("Jeremias Gotthelf"). These two idealize peasant life, as Hauff, Alexis, and Freytag idealized the Middle Ages, but the tide soon sets in the direction of Realism. The success of Auerbach and Bitzius encouraged such widespread competition in Germany, Switzerland, and

Austria that hardly a province remains unappropriated to-day. The last stage in the development of the Dorfgeschichte was the transition from literary German to dialect, and in North Germany Fritz Reuter and Klaus Groth gave Low German literature a new lease of life.

* * * * *

By 1850 Realism, by which is meant that close contemplation of the realities of human existence which Romanticism preferred to ignore, had completed its first or political stage in literature and was beginning to take hold of social life. The spirit of the Wars of Liberation had passed, and patriotic ideals were now confused by internal discord. Romanticism had transported the mind to a sphere of wonder, Realism brought the mind back to earth, placed a curb on the imagination, meticulously described the conditions of life, and forbade the evasion of the ugly, the sordid, and the vicious. Literature began to brood, verse languished and prose flourished, the drama lost the joy of art which Grillparzer had given it and borrowed the austerity of the pulpit. It began to state problems and to experiment with solutions.

Friedrich Hebbel (1813-63), a native of Wesselburen in Holstein, began life in abject poverty. His father was a bricklayer, and the future poet educated himself with promiscuous reading while employed as an errand-boy. With the assistance of one or two humble patrons, he managed to pay University fees in Heidelberg and Munich, stinting himself the while of food, clothing, and fuel. Returning *on foot* to Hamburg, he wrote a tragedy, *Judith*, which was performed in Berlin in 1840. Like Kleist, Hebbel shows keen interest in feminine psychology. He ruthlessly states a problem, allows his heroine to be torn by conflicting emotions, provides a solution, and leaves the spectator to accept it or not, as he pleases. The essence of tragedy is, for Hebbel, either a psychological commotion, as in *Judith, Golo und Genoveva,* or *Herodes und Mari-*

amne, or the assertion of a rule of conduct which is either a survival from a past generation or an anticipation of a future condition, as in *Maria Magdalena* or *Agnes Bernauer*. *Gyges und sein Ring* has a double theme: the psychology of Rhodope and the unseasonable modernity of Kandaules. In his most ambitious drama, *Die Nibelungen* (1862), Hebbel gives the epoch his own characteristic definition by depicting the clash of declining paganism and rising Christianity. On the whole, *Maria Magdalena* and *Agnes Bernauer* have enjoyed the greatest popularity. The former, with Otto Ludwig's *Erbförster,* marks the return to the higher spheres of dramatic art of the "bürgerliches Trauerspiel," which had degenerated into the sentimental domestic drama of Friedrich Ludwig Schröder, August Wilhelm Iffland, and August von Kotzebue. The *milieu* is now wholly middle class; there is no conflict with the aristocracy as in *Emilia Galotti* or Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe,* but there are signs of the coming conflict between middle class and working class. *Agnes Bernauer,* on the other hand, is a most precise statement of a political problem. Given the social conditions of the fifteenth century, may the heir to a throne marry the virtuous daughter of a barber-surgeon? Hebbel sacrifices the innocent individual to the interests of the State.

On the heels of the "problem play" of Hebbel came the "problem novel," of which Friedrich Spielhagen (1829-1911) is the first great exponent. *Problematische Naturen* (1860) is based on psychological commotion: the hero is torn between irreconcilable aspects of life. Socialism begins to speak in *In Reih' und Glied*. Another long story, *Hammer und Amboss,* alternates between vivid action and tedious philanthropic disquisitions. In *Sturmflut* Spielhagen handled a topical theme in the orgy of speculation which followed the Franco-Prussian War. Late in life he returned to the psychological problem with *Faustulus* (1897), the title of which epitomizes the contents.

Somewhat akin to the social novels of Spielhagen are Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach's *Unsühnbar* and *Das Gemeinde-Kind,* and Paul Heyse's *Kinder der Welt.*

* * * * *

Under Maximilian II., Munich assumed an importance comparable to that of Weimar under Karl August. His father, Ludwig I., had made Munich the focus of German art. The equally enlightened son devoted himself to the advancement of science and literature and gathered round him a body of distinguished men who, though representing other parts of Germany besides Bavaria, and too diverse in their talents to form a homogeneous "school," were nevertheless bound to one another, as the literary men of Weimar had been bound before them, by a common interest in the highest forms of art. They were men of culture and leisure, with no aggressive "Tendenz" or self-imposed mission to the public at large, and they conscientiously followed their own particular bent with little regard for popular applause. Chief among them was Emanuel Geibel (1815-84), whose *Juniuslieder* (1847) had stamped him as a poet of good taste and careful method before he was called to Munich in 1851. His later volumes, *Gedichte und Gedenkblätter, Heroldsrufe,* and *Spätherbstblätter* maintained the same high standard. Paul Heyse (1830-1914), a keen student of Romance Philology, developed a talent for short stories (*L'Arrabbiata, Meraner Novellen*) in a highly polished style. His subjects are mainly Italian. The only poet of the group who became really popular was Johann Viktor von Scheffel, who gave a fresh impetus to Romantic idealism with his epic *Der Trompeter von Säkkingen,* his historical novel *Ekkehard,* and his lyrical cycle *Frau Aventiure.*

Apart from the Munich group, it is difficult to speak of any kind of "School" or "Movement" until about 1886, when the "naturalistic" wave swept over

Germany; but a few writers stand out, particularly in fiction, as representatives *par excellence* of the districts to which they belong. Gottfried Keller's autobiographical romance, *Der grüne Heinrich* (1854-55), is the last great book that derives its pedigree from *Wilhelm Meister*. Still more famous are his "Dorfgeschichten," *Die Leute von Seldwyla,* and his *Züricher Novellen,* a fine collection of historical sketches. His fellow-countryman, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer (1825-98), was bilingual and long hesitated whether to write in French or German, but his German sympathies in 1870 turned the scale and secured him for German literature. Yet there is little that is characteristically German in his work, for, after having completed his epic, *Huttens letzte Tage,* and his first novel, *Jürg Jenatsch,* a romance of Switzerland in the seventeenth century, he turned, like Heyse, mainly to Italian subjects.

A more isolated talent was Theodor Storm (1817-88), the chief poet of the North Sea coast. His *Gedichte* have the Romantic spirit, and his earlier stories, like *Immensee* (1852), move in the same atmosphere of melancholy resignation. His later novels are more vigorous, and among his short stories *Der Schimmelreiter* (1888) is a masterpiece of dramatic narration. Another North German writer, Theodor Fontane (1819-98), began even more unmistakably than Storm with the romantic tradition, for his first novel, *Vor dem Sturm* (1878), a story of the Napoleonic Wars, is of the type established by Scott and naturalized in Germany by Alexis. By 1887, when *Irrungen, Wirrungen* appeared, Fontane had fallen under the influence of Zola and the French naturalists, and with *Frau Jenny Treibel* (1891) and *Effi Briest* (1892) he passed rapidly to the creation of the modern society-novel. In Austria, Ludwig Anzengruber (1839-89) anticipated much of the naturalism that was imported from abroad in the nineties, transferring the realities of peasant life to the stage with *Der Meineidbauer* (1871) and other plays. From this moment the "lower

classes" acquired rights on the stage which had been reluctantly conceded to the "middle classes" a century before.

* * * * *

The last twelve or fifteen years of the nineteenth century reveal the complete descent of German literature from Romanticism to Realism, from the imaginative to the photographic, from the ethereal to the sordid. The clash of the ideal and the real anticipated in *Die Epigonen,* accepted in *Die Ritter vom Geist,* glossed over in *Soll und Haben,* and deliberately studied by Hebbel and Spielhagen, was as inevitable in literature as in political, social, and industrial life. The growing interdependence of nations, their reciprocal political, social, and economic reactions, and the rapidly waking consciousness of the poorer classes were forces too powerful to leave German literature untouched, especially when the literature of France, Scandinavia, and Russia had already been transformed. To Zola is due the illustration of Darwinian principles in the transmission of morbid characteristics, which is the main theme of his great cycle of novels, *Les Rougon-Macquart* (1871-93). Ibsen used the same idea in *Ghosts* (1881), but it is as a poser of social problems (*Pillars of Society, A Doll's House*) that the great Norwegian reacted most effectively on the literature of Europe. To Zola's meticulous and repellent naturalism Tolstoy adds a relentless exposure of institutional religion. Dostoevsky descends, if possible, to an even lower social plane than Zola, for the scene of his crimino-psychological novel *Crime and Punishment* (1866; German translation, 1882) is laid wholly in the gutter. Since then the resources of the gutter have been thoroughly exploited in German fiction.

Compared with these strong naturalistic currents, the War of 1870 was a mere ripple on the surface. It is a commonplace of criticism to say that Geibel's

Heroldsrufe (1871) was the only volume of true poetry inspired by it. Nevertheless, the political consolidation which ensued greatly strengthened the nationalist element in literature and determined the patriotic, often chauvinistic, tone of many important writers. Both the chauvinistic and the realistic writers derived encouragement from the ruthless "assertivism" of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), who proclaimed a new "Sturm und Drang," denied the validity of conventional morality, and set up in the rhapsodical prose of *Also sprach Zarathustra* (1883) and *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (1885) the Titanic ideal of the Superman.

The naturalistic-socialistic movement begins formally with the establishment in Munich of Michael Georg Conrad's magazine, *Die Gesellschaft* (1885), and the publication of Karl Bleibtreu's manifesto, *Revolution der Literatur* (1886), but the chief productive writers of the School—sometimes called "Youngest Germany" to indicate the advance on the relatively mild revolutionary notions of the "Young Germany" of 1830—were Hermann Sudermann (b. 1857) and Gerhart Hauptmann (b. 1862).

Sudermann began as a novelist, and his first models were Maupassant and Spielhagen. Björnson's stories of Norwegian peasant life may have contributed something to *Frau Sorge* (1887), a well-drawn psychological study with an East Prussian background and some autobiographical interest. As a dramatist, Sudermann won immediate success with *Die Ehre* (1889), which advances the "bürgerliches Trauerspiel" a stage beyond *Maria Magdalena* and *Der Erbförster*. It is, like them, a problem-play, but the atmosphere is industrial and the conflict is now between "middle-class" and "working-class." The conflict in *Die Heimat* (1893), on the other hand, turns wholly within the family. Father and daughter have tragically divergent views on paternal authority and social conventions. The bearing of the play on the feminist movement is obvious, and its striking leading part, Magda, has

given full scope to great actresses like Sarah Bernhardt and Eleonore Duse.

A more varied talent and a finer artist than Sudermann, Hauptmann nevertheless opened his dramatic career with one of the grossest plays of a morbid age —*Vor Sonnenaufgang* (1889), a revolting study of the hereditary effects of alcoholism. The play has a political tendency inasmuch as capitalism is made responsible for the conditions described. Having thus paid his tribute to Zola and Tolstoy (*Power of Darkness*), Hauptmann turned to Ibsen for guidance in his next two plays, *Das Friedensfest* and *Einsame Menschen*. The first belongs to the same pathological category as *Vor Sonnenaufgang*, the second is an acute, if gloomy, psychological study of a weak man—a theme to which Hauptmann frequently returns. With *Die Weber* (1892), originally written wholly in the Silesian dialect, Hauptmann made a great advance. The play is brutal, but not morbid. It deals with a topical problem in the conflict of capital and labour, and its exposition of mass-psychology—the weavers collectively are the "hero" of the play—revealed the author's unsuspected powers. In *Hanneles Himmelfahrt* the romantic dreams of a dying child are shown against the realistic background of an almshouse. *Florian Geyer* is a moderately successful attempt to apply the methods of *Die Weber* to the Peasants' War of the sixteenth century, and in *Die versunkene Glocke* Hauptmann essayed an allegorical "Märchendrama," or fairy-tale play, which has enjoyed a popularity somewhat in excess of its merits. In 1913, as the acknowledged master of German drama, Hauptmann was invited to write a *Festspiel* in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Leipzig, but the lukewarm patriotism of the play, its alleged perversion of history, and its pacifistic tendency were an unwelcome offering to pre-war Germany. Since 1914 he has broken new ground with *Der Bogen des Odysseus* (Ancient Greece), *Der weisse*

Heiland (Mexico), and *Veland* (Germanic saga), but it is now too late to expect that he will either recapture popular enthusiasm or inaugurate any striking advance in dramatic art. Hauptmann can be as lavish with the sordid and the horrible as Zola or Tolstoy, he can be as morbid as Ibsen at his worst, but he shares Tolstoy's boundless pity for the poor and the oppressed, and he pursues unswervingly his own artistic ideals. In short, he is the only writer of eminence among a group whose contributions to literature represent a substantial encroachment on the spheres of the criminologist, the alienist, and the physician.

Luckily for German literature the excesses of naturalism did not ensnare the imagination of the whole people. In Fontane's hands the art of Freytag and Spielhagen, of Keller, Meyer, and Storm adapted itself to social and psychological problems without any lapse from decency. Patriotism, both national and local, love of natural scenery, humour, interest in foreign lands, are blended with the eternal questions of human relationship to produce what we may call the standard German novel. With Fontane may be associated Georg, Freiherr von Ompteda, (*Sylvester von Geier,* 1897), Wilhelm von Polenz, (*Der Pfarrer von Breitendorf,* 1893), the brothers Hans and Fedor von Zobeltitz, Johannes Richard zur Megede, Baron Carl Torresani, Thomas Mann (*Buddenbrooks*), Rudolf Herzog (*Die Wiskottens*), Otto Ernst (*Asmus Semper*), and a host of lesser lights.

Foremost among the literary heroes of German "Junkerdom" is Ernst von Wildenbruch (1845-1909), by comparison with Hauptmann or Sudermann the most inspiring dramatist of his day. He achieved fame at one stroke with *Die Karolinger* (1881), which was first produced at the Court Theatre of Duke George II. of Meiningen. Then with a cycle of patriotic Prussian plays, *Die Quitzows* (1888), *Der Generalfeldoberst,* and *Der neue Herr*, he won the applause sought by, but denied to the unhappy Heinrich von Kleist. Another

outstanding representative of patriotism in literature is Detlev von Liliencron (*Adjutantenritte,* 1883).

Naturalism in literature began as a sincere endeavour to reproduce the realities of life, however crude. It was the appropriate concomitant of socialism in politics, but it degenerated into a mere cult of the abnormal and soon ceased to have a general appeal. As early as 1891, Hermann Bahr, himself the author of *Die Mutter,* one of the crudest of naturalistic dramas, published a manifesto entitled *Die Überwindung des Naturalismus.* In the same year Richard Dehmel (1863-1920) turned the stagnant lyric into the new, if dubious, channel of sensual symbolism with his first volume, *Erlösungen.* He has a feeling for melody and rhythm and can write charming verse when he will (*Kindergarten*), but his usual course leads from the sensual to the unintelligible. More refined in matter, and meticulously so in form, is the æsthete, Stefan George (b. 1868). Characteristic volumes are *Das Jahr der Seele* (1898), *Der Teppich des Lebens* (1899), and *Der siebente Ring* (1907). To the same school belongs Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926), best represented by *Das Buch der Bilder* (1902) and *Neue Gedichte* (1907-08). Max Dauthendey and Hugo von Hofmannstal complete the group of unworldly æsthetes, though both incline more toward Dehmel than towards George. On the whole, the symbolistic movement, with its dependence on foreign decadents, its *préciosité,* its sensuality, and its defective sense of proportion, is reminiscent of the ignominious age of Hofmannswaldau and Lohenstein.

The outbreak of the Great War found German literature in a somewhat unhealthy condition, and its first effects were invigorating. The patriotic element advanced and the decadent element receded. Richard Dehmel turned volunteer and wrote patriotic songs, Gerhart Hauptmann won a measure of favour with *O mein Vaterland!* and lesser writers combined to fill hundreds of anthologies in the first twelve months.

How much of this mass will survive it is too early to say, but it is significant that no new song has established itself beside *Die Wacht am Rhein* or *Der Gott, der Eisen wachsen liess*. The literary fruits of war will probably be found to be in direct proportion to its moral justification. The liberation of Prussia from a foreign yoke in 1813 produced immortal songs, the invasion of a helpless Belgium lacked the element of heroism and will probably prove a sterile theme when re-examined a hundred years hence.

In the novel, normal patriotism found expression in G. Frenssen's *Die Brüder* (1917) and Walther von Molo's *Fridericus* (1918), and in the ephemeral productions of a hundred mushroom writers. The drama was less responsive; indeed, the more notorious war-plays were anti-patriotic or at least pacifistic. Fritz von Unruh, whose *Offiziere* (1912) had revived the spirit of Wildenbruch and Kleist, was converted to pacificism by his own experience of the horrors of war. The same change came over others. Dehmel's journal, *Zwischen Volk und Menschheit* (1919) was published in a spirit very remote from that in which it was begun, and Thomas Mann's *Zeitgeborene Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (1918) was an unwelcome anti-climax to the whole-hearted loyalty of his historical dissertation, *Friedrich und die grosse Koalition*.

The disastrous end of the war opened the floodgates of criticism and abuse, and "Junkerdom" was submerged by a torrent of revolutionary indignation. Heinrich Mann's savage caricature, *Der Untertan*, strips both aristocrat and *bourgeois* of every shred of moral or physical dignity. Oswald Spengler's *Untergang des Abendlandes* (1918) announces the collapse of all Western civilization. The "Expressionists," the most recent and most obscure practitioners of symbolism, are pacifistic. They reject the whole ethical, philosophic, and artistic outlook of the pre-war world, and seek to express the relation of man to the Absolute. Their work must await the judgment of time.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following list of titles will put the reader into touch with authoritative literature.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES.—K. Breul: *Handy Bibliographical Guide to the Study of the German Language and Literature* (Hachette, 1895); supplementary titles in the same author's *Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages* (Cambridge, 1910), in *The Year Book of Modern Languages* (Cambridge, 1920), and in the classified lists of the *Modern Language Review* (Cambridge University Press); B. Q. Morgan: *Bibliography of German Literature in English Translation* (Madison, 1922).

HISTORIES OF LITERATURE.—J. G. Robertson: *A History of German Literature* (Blackwood, 1908). W. Scherer: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur* (Berlin), to 1832 only. English translation by Mrs. Conybeare (Oxford, 1885). A fine individual study. Continued by O. Walzel, 1918. F. Vogt and M. Koch: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur* (Leipzig and Vienna). Sound text and magnificent illustrations. Kuno Francke: *Die Kulturwerte der deutschen Literatur in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 2 vols. 1910, 1923; J. W. Nagl and J. Zeidler: *Deutsch-österreichische Literaturgeschichte* (Vienna, 1926-27).

ANTHOLOGIES.—F. Max Müller: *The German Classics*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1906). Designed as a companion work to Scherer's *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*. H. G. Fiedler: *The Oxford Book of German Verse* (Oxford, 1911, enlarged edition, 1927). M. Bern: *The German Lyric since Goethe* (Hachette, 1926). K. Breul: *The Romantic Movement* (Heffer, Cambridge, 1927). See also the volumes on early writers in the *Sammlung Göschen*.

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
BILLING AND SONS, LTD., GUILDFORD AND ESHER