

NATURALISM  
in  
GERHART HAUPTMANN'S DRAMAS.

-by-  
EVELYN MORRIS.

BEING A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS.

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA.

APRIL, 1932.

## CONTENTS.

### PART I. DEVELOPMENT OF NATURALISM.

- (a) Foreign Influences.
- (b) The Movement in Germany.
- (c) Early Life of Gerhart Hauptmann.

### PART II. CHARACTERISTICS OF <sup>Hauptmann's</sup> ~~THE~~ NATURALISTIC DRAMAS .

- (a) Naturalistic Themes.
- (b) Naturalistic Characters.
- (c) Naturalistic Technique.

## NATURALISM and GERHART HAUPTMANN.

### PART 1.

"Naturalism was the term Emile Zola seized upon and, transforming it from its traditional scientific sense, made into a war-cry for the new literature and drama.\*" This aspect of literary realism reached its climax about 1895 and was the expression in literature of ideas and tendencies then prevalent.

About the middle of the last century Charles Darwin uprooted all methods of investigation by instituting a study of phenomena in their development and this spirit of investigation permeated every phase of life. A series of scientific experiments and their practical application gave rise to industrialism and a rapid transformation of daily life from rural communities to huge industrial centres was directly responsible for the rise of socialism and its consequent problems and discussions.

These problems and discussions constitute the basis for the naturalistic movement in literature and with the quickening of the popular pulse, a nervous tension and sensitivity is introduced.

The first to transfer Darwin's scientific methods to literature was Emile Zola, who observed, gathered and experimented with characters and situations as the scientist with his laboratory specimens.

---

\* Matthew Josephson-Zola and His Times.

Zola was born in Paris, in the year 1840, the son of a civil engineer, and, because of the latter's continual changes and travelling, the boy's childhood was, for the most part, spent at Aix-La-Chapelle. Here were founded the youthful friendships which for many years remained the only abiding source of pleasant memories recalling joyous, carefree hours.

The first note of tragedy in a hitherto blissful existence was struck when Émile was but six years of age. His father died suddenly, leaving very little provision for his family. The widow made repeated sacrifices to give her son the benefits of academic training but he profited little, and steadily the meagre family fortune dwindled away.

While still quite young, Zola found himself shoulder to shoulder with the Bohemian section of Paris, where, slowly but surely, the illusions of beauty and romance to which his youthful mind clung frantically, were forced aside in the face of stark reality. Squalid living, poverty and hunger became constant companions and in the general holocaust of his illusions, he was left destitute of all religion and philosophy. The uncertainty which pervaded his reason at this time never quite left him, although life changed considerably for him afterwards.

Aid came from without. Through the influence of an old friend of his father, Zola was saved from Bohemia and began the journalistic career which, step by step, placed him in greater prominence in the world

of literature. His first production, a novel, "Thérèse Raquin", significantly shadowed Balzac and followed the impersonal method used by Gustav Flaubert and the Goncourt Bros. The former's "Madame Bovary" had appeared in 1857 but after this one manifestation of Naturalism, Flaubert left the field and later expressed regret that his name had ever been associated with this novel from his pen. Zola picked up the ideas, and in "Thérèse Raquin", portrayed characters completely dominated by the pre-determined maladies of their nerves and blood. In answer to those who shrank away from his mutilations of humanity, he said, "I have simply done on two living bodies the work that surgeons do on corpses." Zola, in his writings, even went so far as to chronicle his own life, thoughts and inner struggles. He was wise enough to realize the necessity for keeping to contemporaneous events as subjects for his naturalistic novels, for here alone it was that he could successfully observe, collect and experiment.

Naturally he met with opposition since his ideas were revolutionary. Declaring "aujourd'hui, les naturalistes arrivent et déclarent que le vrai n'a pas besoin de draperies; il doit marcher dans sa nudité," he could not help but meet with the disapproval of generations of deeply rooted conventional morality. Nothing daunted, however, he continued with "Élargissez donc le chemin et laissez passer l'humanité en marche.-- On ne peut pas exclusif, si l'on ressuscite le passé c'est tout le moins qu'on laisse vivre le présent."

No doubt Zola's writings were motivated by a great human sympathy and in consideration of this fact, his name is linked with that of his contemporary, Leo Tolstoi.

In proceeding to a consideration of the Russian, we approach the other extremity of European thought. Zola's solution for problems of humanity was based upon the principle of work, that of Tolstoi upon resignation. Their correspondence shows their wide divergence of opinion in this respect. Zola had said, "A man who works is always good"--but Tolstoi replied, "Work makes man evil and cruel, not good as Zola says...We need peace... We must stop working and find again our lost path. This can only be attained by non-action and reflection. For the only reality lies in the ideal...We must love, in order to have happiness on earth, without distinction of family or race. And to do this, we must stop this feverish and vicious activity and change our conception of life." His injunction to humanity was "Love each other." This, however, seemed rather vague to the Frenchmen-- "How can we institute such non-action, such a universal strike as Tolstoi advocates?" he queried. "Humanity advances, groping, as always. Because we are groping now, must we abandon everything, cease advancing? The end and hope of man is truth, to work toward truth is the soul joy." But Tolstoi counters, "I know well that it is impossible to stop all the wheels of society at once and supplant them. What I should like is that we cease to consider as immutable the way in which we live

and penetrate to its immortality. I wish to abandon the arts, science, metaphysics as we know them to-day, because they deceive us. There exist not a single science or art which can procure for the greatest number of people, the greatest sum of happiness possible. Our sciences bring comforts only to the privileged classes... We have no time to reflect upon the means of ending the suffering, physical and moral, of great numbers.

Zola considered Tolstoi's idea that man is good and love latent within him as merely the principles which led through Rousseau to the revolution and the establishment of the two empires. He said "The nature of man has made society what it is...I wish to believe that our progress is toward the good...We cannot go back on our steps. It is a biological law. Life is not a matter of our wills."\* In this last sentence, Zola summed up conclusively one of the eminent ideas of the new movement.

These two, then, so greatly different, had yet one object before them. Each hoped to aid humanity to transcend its present status.

Leo Tolstoi was twelve years the senior of Zola, and unlike him, was born an aristocrat. While still a child, he lost both his father and his mother but no sacrifices were necessary for his education and training. He proved, however, an indifferent scholar. As a youth, following the general ideas of his associates, he abandoned religion, considering it merely a foolish

---

\* Matthew Josephson---Zola and His Times

practise for the insensible and uncultured, for those who were incapable of thinking for themselves.

University life at Kazan and social life in Moscow added little incentive to hard mental application so Tolstoi was proceeding along the accepted routine of life, when an incident occurred which set him thinking about the inequality of the social order. After having enjoyed himself one evening at a party, he came out to find his coachman nearly paralyzed with cold. Struck by the realization of the difference between his life and that of his servant, there took initial shape in his mind the questions which caused him so much thought and pain during the greater part of his life and to which he gave forcible expression later in his writings.

Unlike Zola, Tolstoi was well received as a literary man early in life, having already gained the reputation of a brilliant writer on his return from his service in the Crimean War. It was during this period that he developed decided opinions against militarism which grew steadily more pronounced. Also unlike Zola, he was not forced to view the gruesome side of life by being thrust violently into association with it.

Too, the Russian's married life was happy, marred only by the objection of his wife and family to his giving away all his money and property. Thirteen children were born to him, five of whom, however, died in youth. On the other hand, Zola's marriage proved rather unfortunate, his only children being born out of wedlock.

Tolstoi's literary powers were expended somewhat in



the field of the novel but he also contributed to the naturalistic drama and his greatest picture of the Russian peasant is contained in "The Power of Darkness."

As Zola suffered materially at the hands of society and the government for his plain writings, so Tolstoi expected persecution. He was mistaken. The government left him personally quite unmolested but other means were adopted which caused him much agitation. Some of his books were prohibited, others censored beyond recognition and people who had aided him materially were banished from the country. Crosby has summed up Tolstoi admirably in the following, "Peasant nobleman, an aristocrat born into the ruling class of an autocracy, who condemns all government and caste, veteran of two wars who proscribes all bloodshed, keen sportsman turned vegetarian, a land-lord who emancipates, man of wealth who will have nothing to do with money, famous novelist who thinks the time wasted which was engaged in writing most of his novels, a rigid moralist, one of whose books at least (The Kreutzer Sonate) was placed under the ban of the American Post Office." This is the man whose teachings and living were so religiously simple and wholesome.

Tolstoi at first derided the drama but finally came to consider it a fitting vehicle for his social ideas. In the presentation of life as it existed, and of the individual crushed by his environment, he took his place among the dramatic naturalists but there is also present in Tolstoi an idealism which he introduces into his writings. "The Power of Darkness" is, however, incredibly sordid,

showing life motivated by the lowest conditions and human beings prompted to perpetrate the vilest of crimes logically and without a shadow of immorality and it is without doubt, one of the most powerful indictments against the passive acceptance by the upper classes of the existing conditions among the more unfortunate.

Tolstoi was deeply revered by his fellow countrymen, the actor, Constantin Stanislavsky of the Moscow Art Theatre, recording that many who knew him would speak of him when life seemed overly hard and unbearable, "There, in Yasnaya Polyana, lives Leo Tolstoi and the love of life would come back to us." Zola was never spoken of thus, yet the ones who knew him intimately never found him harsh or unkind.

These two personalities, then, combined and separately, gave great force to the movement swiftly gaining momentum. There must now be added the influence of Scandinavia whose contribution issued from the pen of Henrik Ibsen. Here we find, to a certain degree, concrete specimens and technical examples of the ideas set forth by France and Russia. Tolstoi offered a detailed analysis of the sombre and attempted some sort of a solution but Ibsen, while setting forth, clinically, a much closer diagnosis, says "my vocation is to question, not to answer".

Henrik Johann Ibsen was born in 1828 to a family of the great middle class from which he drew nearly all the characters of his dramas. His birthplace was Skein, Norway. He has been styled "the Norwegian Seer" but it

has been conclusively proved that there flowed in his veins not one drop of Norwegian blood. Moreover he spent the greater part of his life in voluntary exile, living in Italy and Germany. School and academic training held no attraction for him and, at sixteen, he expressed the desire to study art. Financial exigency forbade and he was finally apprenticed for five years, to an apothecary in Grimstad.

Several early attempts at dramatic production failed and from his association with the theatres, at one time as art director and another as assistant dramatist, he gained only technical experience. He married happily but was forced to support his wife and himself on the meagre returns from his art work.

Ibsen's dramatically productive career divides easily into three parts and these divisions correspond closely to the trends of modern literature--Romanticism, Realism and Symbolism.

His first attempts were for the purpose of re-awakening Norway to a consciousness of the wealth of national folk literature in her possession but his efforts were met with no enthusiasm and, by 1864, he was thoroughly disgusted with the reception his works were receiving at the hands of his countrymen.

The continued rebuffs served to loosen the hold of Romanticism upon him, and, in the year 1877, he brought forth the piece which began his realistic career. "The Pillars of Society" was received whole-heartedly in Germany where it immediately served the needs of those

who were searching for technical examples of the new ideas.

Ibsen was interested primarily in ideas and their presentation in dramatic form but the artistic creator was so strong within him that he gave expression to the problems occupying great minds of his time--sociological issues and the woman question. This fundamental theme was the revolt of the individual against conventional discipline--and he put up a logical defence against forced conformity to traditional convention in "A Doll's House" and "Ghosts". In the latter he proceeded to set forth not perhaps a probable, but certainly a possible result from a woman's quiet conformity to social niceties.

Ibsen's dramas are "packed" with profound reasonings and thought, for he confined his problems to the drama and consequently there is contained in them the gist of his polemic treatises. The whole organization of sociological procedure based on collective hypocrisy is attacked in "An Enemy of the People" and in "Ghosts", he introduced a subject at which religious fanaticism and social conventionalism at once threw up their hands in horror.

Ibsen thus led the way in dramatic representation of current ideas and we may sum up the progression of the movement to this point with the following--Zola's documentary novel with his sordid depictions of the life of the lower classes; the further development of his theme in Tolstoi's gruesome picture of the Russian peasant in novel and drama; and, finally the presentation of vices persisting in the middle classes and the struggle of the individual against organized society voiced by Ibsen.

IN GERMANY.

The movement now swings to Germany and we are brought face to face with the question "Where were these dramas first portrayed?" "How did they gain production where a steel chain binds the majority to age-old institutions and conventions?" But the age which produced the revolutionary writers provided ways and means for the presentation of their works.

Michael Georg Conrad of Munich spent some time in Paris when the new ideas were gaining headway and, very much impressed by the doctrines and writings of Emile Zola, returned home and began reviews of the great Frenchman and his works in a periodical which began its publication on New Year's Day, 1885, under the name "Die Gesellschaft".

The following year a society was formed in Berlin, comprising socialistic individualists and natural scientists banded together in an endeavour to discuss the new literary ideas and further the new aims. Ibsen, Tolstoi, Dostoevsky and Turgenev were under continual discussion and no doubt hopes were raised for the presentation of their most revolutionary works upon the German stage. It is not until later, however, that there came to the group the young man who was to be known as the greatest of naturalistic writers--With a group of friends, in May, 1887, Gerhart Hauptmann joined the "Verein Durch".

This same year, in France, efforts were being put forth to forward the production of the new dramas. A young man by the name of Andre Antoine, giving up his job at a gas works, founded a private organization for the presentation of plays to an audience of registered members. In this way, the censor was eluded and the realistic projects of the century were freed

from obscurity. The Paris Théâtre Libre was opened on March, 30, 1887, with Leon Hennique's "Jacques Damour". Antoine had worked very hard, coaching actors and actresses who were used to the classical dialogue and stiff restrained movements in the new roles which required as much naturalness as possible.

With the new drama a new school of acting, as well as a new stage technique was inaugurated. This same year, Antoine and his players visited Berlin and were received with great favor by all those in sympathy with the new theatre. Discussion was rife everywhere. The members of the "Verein Durch" were particularly interested and owing to the efforts of many within the circle, plans were considered to follow in Antoine's footsteps. It was not, however, until April 5, 1889, that the "Verein Freie Bühne" was organized upon a plan identical with that of the French Théâtre Libre. Many interesting people were connected with the organization, among others Maximilian Harden, afterwards famous as the editor of "Die Zukunft"; the critics, Theodore Wolff and Paul Schlenther; the Bros. Heinrich and Julius Hart, already noted for their publication, "Critical Duels" in 1885; and the publisher S. Fischer. The dictatorial powers were fortunately invested in the hands of Otto Brahm, later director of the German theatre (1894) and of the Lessing theatre (1904) in Berlin. Brahm, an able producer, in a period of ten years, presented ten plays of Henrik Ibsen and twelve of Gerhart Hauptmann. Thus a new stagecraft was definitely established. The "Verein Freie Bühne"

at the period of its greatest florescence, boasted over a thousand members. In the initial year there were five foreign and three native plays produced, among the former, Ibsen's "Ghosts", with which it opened on September 29, 1889, and Tolstoi's "Power of Darkness". On October 20 of this same year, the first drama of Gerhart Hauptmann was produced, "Vor Sonnenaufgang". Six months later, there appeared the "Familie Selicke" of Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf which, in 1891, was published under the title of "Neue Gleise".

Other organizations of like order rapidly sprang up, for example the "Deutsche Bühne" founded in 1890 by Bleibtreu and others; the Berlin "Freie Volksbühne" founded in July 29 of the same year and which had upwards of twelve thousand members about 1912; the Berlin "Fresko-Bühne" in 1891, and, two years later, an organization was founded in Hamburg which opened with the presentation of Gerhart Hauptmann's "Vor Sonnenaufgang". Student organizations were also added to the list in Berlin, Munich and Vienna.

Although Gerhart Hauptmann is the greatest name in connection with the naturalistic drama, he was not, however, the first even in Germany. He was preceded by Arno Holz (1863-1929) who represented the movement in its extreme form. In the winter of 1887-8 he, with his collaborator, Johannes Schlaf, wrote a collection of studies entitled "Papa Hamlet" under the pseudonym of Bjerne P. Holmsen. This collection is only significant because of its form and its introduction of every-day speech and phonographic representation of the halting dialogue and conversation, there being nothing in the content to merit notice. A Norse name was chosen because of the wide influence Ibsen and Björnson were exercising on

the public opinion of the time. Holz, it was, who coined the expression, "Art has the tendency to become Nature again" wherein he set forth, somewhat clumsily, the difference between the old doctrine of art as a strife after beauty and truth and the new ideas which seemed only a strife after the ugly and gruesome, truthful or not. Unfortunately, the life of Holz was attended by misfortune and he produced his works under the most adverse conditions. His pupil and friend, Gerhart Hauptmann, reaped the benefits of the teacher's earlier investigation and application and received the applause awarded more perfect examples and productions.

GERHART HAUPTMANN.

Gerhart Hauptmann was born in the Silesian mountains at a health resort called Obersalzbrunn. The date is November 15; the year, 1862. His father was the son of a Silesian weaver who had managed to break away from the loom, and, becoming a waiter, had gradually fitted himself for the management and later ownership of an Obersalzbrunn hotel called "Zur Preussischen Krone". The father of the dramatist inherited this at a prosperous time when it was patronized not only by German but also by Polish nobility, and Robert Hauptmann was a most popular and greatly esteemed "Gastwirt". He was a connoisseur of wines, a good conversationalist and very well-read--consequently many pleasant hours were passed with his wealthy guests in the discussion of subjects of popular interest.

The dramatist's Mother came from a family named Straehler, who were strict adherents to the Moravian faith, two strong-



holds of which were not far removed, at Gnadenfrei and Herrnhut. Of three sons and one daughter born to Robert and Marie Hauptmann, the youngest, a son, was baptized on New Year's day 1863---Gerhart Johann Robert. Like his older brothers and sister, he attended the Obersalzbrunn school where he distinguished himself in nothing but writing compositions and telling stories. This period was followed by four years spent in Breslau at a secondary school where the embryo dramatist met his first real sorrows. He disliked city life and detested school, consequently made little progress. The few lyrical exultations, which he gave forth up to this time, were appreciated only by Carl Hauptmann, who realized his brother's unhappy state but was incapable of directing his energies into any happier channel. Gerhart spent his spare pennies at the theatre here in Breslau but any connection with it, in his mind, was still far away.

Misfortune for his parents about this time brought happiness to the boy. Due to the falling off of trade, Robert was forced to take Gerhart from school. He was the only one financially dependent on the family at this time. His mother's sister Julie had just lost her only son Georg, so Gerhart was sent to cheer the Schubert household. Their home was in the country and here, for two years, the youth was in contact with forces which made his weary soul grow strong again. Music was a part of daily life now. Aunt Julie sang and her sister, Auguste, played her accompaniments. Beethoven was the dearly beloved of the family but Bach and Handel were also favorites. There it was that Gerhart came under the mystical and pietistic influences which show themselves later in his works.

Here he also learned that realism often intervenes even in the first sweet hours of courtship. Walking in the garden one day with his heart's desire, the reverie was suddenly broken by uncomprehending urchins who thrust every day reality before his very eyes in the guise of stones and pebbles proceeding over the garden wall. However, for the most part, his life here was free from little worries and irritation.

In 1880, Gerhart, knowing finally that he could never content himself with becoming a farmer, proceeded on October 6 once more to Breslau, this time to study art---particularly sculpture. But even here, pursuing supposedly the line he most desired, he was deficient in interest and attendance and was only saved from rustication by the kindness of one of his professors, Robert Haertels by name. His brother Carl, however, remained his most trusted and understanding counsellor and critic. The restiveness of his soul was so pronounced during this period that he finally left school 'on account of his health' and the teachers believed him a consumptive.

Gerhart proceeded to Jena where Carl was already studying and there heard lectures in philosophy and natural sciences, the greatest influence at this time being Haeckel, the zoölogist. His art studies he also kept up during the winter. There Hauptmann enjoyed for the first time the nearer comradeship of a circle interested in current events. Darwin was the hero of the group but art and philosophy were widely discussed. This year proved one of profit for the youth and it was perhaps unfortunate that his interest waned during the

summer and he consequently, did not return the following year.

In the Spring, Gerhart proceeded to Hamburg, where his brother Georg was established in the mercantile business. After a brief visit, he left on a cargo steamer to visit the Mediterranean countries. The course pursued was that of the Byronic hero, Childe Harold, and like him, the impressions received were a peculiar blend of the beautiful and the sordid. Now, for the first time, Hauptmann is brought face to face with the horrid reality of humanity in a background of idealistic nature. At Marseilles, he left the boat, and continuing by train along the Riviera, at Genoa met Carl, who had come to Italy via the Alps. The two then went to Naples and later passed six weeks at Capri, pleasant happy weeks in congenial society. Carl then returned home but his younger brother delayed long enough to contract malaria at Rome.

The result of this voyage was an epic "Promethidenlos", wherein the author portrays himself in the hero role of Selin and, showing the uncertainty which was present in his soul, gave to Selin a tragic end at sea. Sordid reality began to impress him as Zola, Tolstoi, and Ibsen were early impressed by forceful observation of the poorer side of life.

He returned home, but the following year found him again at Rome where he established an atelier and studied art in earnest. But the climate seemed unsuitable to him and he fell ill. This time he was nursed back to health by Marie Thienemann whom he subsequently married. She belonged to the same family from which both his older brothers, Georg and Carl, had taken their brides.

The marriage took place in Dresden and after an extended wedding trip, the couple settled in Berlin where Gerhart attempted to unite plastic art and poetry by becoming an actor. The life of the city soon stifled him and he fled again to the countryside, spending a while at Rügen where the sea air and peaceful life aided in rebuilding the run-down nervous system.

In the autumn of 1885, the Hauptmanns settled at Erkner, a pretty suburb of Berlin, where for practically four years, he remained undecided as to a career, having literary, scientific, artistic, philanthropic and socialistic interests. During this time, there were three sons born to him, Ivo in 1886, Eckart in 1887, and Klaus in 1889, this last being the great year when literature triumphed with the publication and production of his first play "Vor Sonnenaufgang".

The Moravian impressions of his youth deeply ingrained in him an intensely religious spirit but due to the tumult of his mind at this period, he pronounced himself an atheist. He was living here, at Erkner, when he became a member of the "Verein Durch" and the first commemoration celebration was held at his suburban home. Here he came in closer contact with Zola, Tolstoi and Ibsen and the individualistic tendencies of Nietzsche which provided the impetus for his later so-called family dramas. The influence of Zola is particularly shown in the episodic story "Bahnwärter Thiel" which Hauptmann published in the revolutionary periodical, "Die Gesellschaft", and which later formed the nucleus of his drama, "Fuhrmann Henschel".

Naturalism was gaining headway on German soil with rapid

strides and when Arno Holz brought his sketches, "Papa Hamlet", and the drama "Die Familie Selicke" in manuscript form to the Erkner house early in 1889, Hauptmann realized at last his ground and returning from a visit to his parents, during which he had worked with fevered haste, he brought with him his first completed play. It was dedicated to the imaginary Bjarne P. Holmsen to whom he owed the instigation to industry and production.

Up to this time, his works may be summed up as follows: an attempt at lyrical poetry, "Im Nachtzug" (1888); a play "Das Erbe des Tiberius", lost; "Promethidenlos", his poem after the fashion of Childe Harold, the publication of which was recalled and suppressed by its author who recognized its deficiencies; "Das Bunte Buch", bits of verse on varied subjects, whose printer had failed before completing its publication; and portions of an autobiographical novel (never finished) which showed his widening knowledge of the world and its conditions and the growing intensity of his powers of observation.

Now came the production which put an end to his immature attempts and marked the beginning of German naturalism in its proper sense. The storm which met it, recalls to mind a like instance in the first half of the century when Victor Hugo placed "Hernani" on the boards. This first work of Hauptmann sounds the keynote of sympathy with the poorest of the poor which continued an inherent part of his nature and was always present in his writings.

Following this, there appeared in 1890 "Das Friedensfest" dedicated to the first who gave unstinted praise to his previous

play. This was Theodor Fontane. In this play, he presents with greater precision, the problem of heredity which he had touched on in "Vor Sonnenaufgang". In a few hours, in the same room, Hauptmann introduces, develops and brings to a close, a tragedy of human life and existence. It may be compared to Ibsen's best plays in dramatic intensity and romantic concentration. Linked with this, as a second family drama, there appeared soon after, "Einsame Menschen" wherein the deciding factor is no longer heredity but a portrayal of conditions of life into which a human organism is thrust and against which it struggles in hopeless frenzy. The element of environment is stressed throughout but an element of optimism is introduced at the end.

The date of greatest importance in the history of German naturalism is, however, 1892, in which Gerhart Hauptmann embodied all the current revolutionary processes in a drama of massed souls where the only hero is the spirit of repression which pervades the whole. The setting of "Die Weber" or "Die Weber ein Schauspiel aus den vierziger Jahren", as it was originally written, is in the author's native Silesia and introduces us to a class particularly known to him through family history and his own unfailing intuition.

He continued this naturalistic policy with "Kollege Krampton" and "Der Biberpelz". Then came a break. In 1893, the mystical influences of his early life blended with his realistic tendencies and the result was "Hanneles Himmelfahrt". The trend of his mind and thought towards idealism is shown here in its genesis and the new element presages something quite different since, at this time, Hauptmann stood for "consistent

naturalism".

Suddenly Hauptmann left Europe and spent the summer of 1894 in New York and the surrounding country. Experiences at sea were reflected in "Atlantis", a novel which appeared in 1912 and which contains a description of a shipwreck handled with unerring psychological exactitude.

In 1896, his effort to create a second "Götz von Berlichingen" by bringing his hero from the past of Germany, proved a disastrous failure and the disappointment he felt was given expression the same year in "Die Versunkene Glocke". This was unlike anything he had previously written with the one exception of "Hanneles Himmelfahrt". It proved one of his greatest works. The same year, he also wrote a sequence of six scenes adapted from Grillparzer's novel, "Elga", and "Helois", a dramatic fragment of the author's poetical confession--his worldly woe is at the bottom of his longing for heaven. Another dramatic fragment, "Hirtenlied", followed two years later, and he then returned to a strictly naturalistic presentation with "Furhmann Henschel". In the first twelve years of the century, there followed in rapid succession "Schluck und Jau", based on Shakespear's "Taming of the Shrew"; "Michael Kramer", a double tragedy; "Des Rote Hahn", a sequel to "Der Biberpalz"; "Der Arme Heinrich"; "Rose Bernd"; "Jungfern vom Bischofsberg", a midsummer night's dream with its setting in the Thuringian mountains near the Thienemann house; "Und Pippa Tanzt", wherein is embodied his conception of the ideal love problem; "Gabriel Schillings Flucht"; "Kaiser Karl's Geisel" and "Griselda". Of these, the most strictly naturalistic are "Die Ratten" and "Rose Bernd".

Domestic troubles came to a head with divorce toward the end of his "thirties". Later, he married an actress and violinist, Margarete Marschalk. One son was born of this union.

Hauptmann's nervous disposition is present in his writings and his sensitive nature was quick to rearrange experience and impressions into literary form. There were three experiences which combined to lead Hauptmann into realistic channels. One was his Mediterranean voyage where, on all sides, he saw pictures of squalor, vice and hardship in dire contrast with the beautiful Italian scenery and climate. Previous to this, at Jena, his introduction to physiological, economic and sociological discussions had awakened him theoretically to the practical reality before him. The final impetus was given him by his associates at Erkner and so by 1889, we find him thrown by the force of existing influences and circumstances into the field of naturalistic literature and the phase best suited to his particular talents proved to be ---- the drama.



With scientific and humanitarian matters thus compelling interest to such a degree during the latter half of the nineteenth century, everywhere the artist was brought into direct communication with the social and democratic movement of the times. The social problems still unsolved were beginning to interest all departments of liberal thought. The ideas so occupied the greatest thinkers of the age that there could be but one path for the literary man--to aid in the enlightenment of humanity as a whole, bringing facts of existence to light in an unprejudiced manner that they might be viewed by a populace formerly all too prone to pass its existence in complacent self-contemplation.

The naturalist in literature now reflects conditions as they are, as man has made them, and for the first time, subjects are treated which are definitely interwoven with the innermost lives of the masses.

The themes are wide and varied. The naturalist excludes positively nothing from his pages; nothing is considered too gruesome or degrading. Problems hitherto discussed only in pathological surveys are now seized upon as fitting topics for the drama and the novel. The great stress laid upon heredity and environment as the deciding factors of the lives of individuals was responsible for this...The influence of these factors was most significant upon the lower classes--where living conditions emphasize the bestial element in humanity, practically obscuring the spiritual. The physiological manifestations being of major importance, the pure naturalist deals but slightly with the psychological. Cross sections of life and society were attempted and the method

strove to be solely objective. The literary aim was strict reproduction of the details, no matter how sordid, of contemporary life.

Ibsen, in this respect, does not belong to the group of pure naturalists. He startled the world with a presentation of interesting ideas but his plays deal with the middle class and contain great psychological studies side by side with the working out of a definite principle. When he said "My vocation is to question, not to answer", he struck the keynote of his dramas--a revelation of conditions as they are--offering no solution. He has been accused of being destructive on this point. On the other hand, he is presenting ideas which provoke thought in the mind of the audience or reader. The thought may develop into a discussion of the main idea or into a discussion of the characters who work out the idea. In any case, interest is aroused.

Ibsen deals conclusively with the outcome of heredity and environment but he keeps to the class who have been taught to think and who thus present their own problems. As a man of his day, he was intensely interested in the question of the hour--woman's emancipation. He did not believe in a complete discard of all womanly duties but considered that women, as an individual, should be allowed the privilege of developing her own character. She should not be shoved from one place to another as a toy or amusement. Her life should have the alternative of developing characteristics which would be of some use to the world and particularly to those with whom she might come in contact. The problems of the individual are dealt with in "Ghosts", "The Doll's House"

and "Rosmerholm". In the latter, however, he shows that a too pressing emphasis upon the 'ego' leads to disaster. Rebecca West, regardless of everyone else, strives for the fulfillment of her own individuality and finds at last she cannot grasp the very prize she has sought, when it comes within her reach.

Social hypocrisy is another topic in which Ibsen was primarily interested. He deals with it in "An Enemy of the People", where Dr. Stockmann finds not only the well-springs of the town polluted but also the well-springs of the entire social order of the community.

Ibsen became more thoroughly convinced as he developed that the majority is never right. The minority takes the leadership. The problems, as they are treated, are too far in advance of the public opinion. Consequently, by the time they have been accepted by the people as a whole, they are no longer interesting to the progenitors. The leaders have gone on presenting new truths which are again but slowly accepted.

Arno Holz, in Germany was of firm conviction that the naturalistic policy was a definite mission and Conrad wrote that the function of a poet was to act as "proctector, preserver, leader, consoler, pathfinder, guide, doctor and priest of mankind". Thus is Naturalism directly opposed to the theory, "Art for Art's sake", and the devotees of this socialistic and didactic drama staunchly maintain that the drama should teach or prove something. The maxim is set forth by Shaw in one of his prefaces regarding a particularly didactic drama-"It is so intensely and deliberately didactic and its subject is esteemed so dry, that I delight in throwing it at the heads of the wiseacres who repeat the parrot cry

that art should never be didactic. It merely goes to prove my contention that art should never be anything else. \*

Zola pursued the naturalistic policy throughout his works. His contribution, however, was directly to the novel. His theories, on the other hand, are those afterwards immediately applied to the drama. Zola, in his cycle of twenty novels, (Rougon Maquart) reproduced pictures of Paris, the characters being transmitted to the next generation in a novel which followed. He left nothing to the imagination portraying everything as he had seen it during his early life, not particularly as he had experienced it. Zola did, in one of his works, put down the personal details of his married life omitting practically nothing but, for the most part, kept to a portrayal of situations viewed outwardly.

Tolstoi is even further away. His picture of sordid life is given in as much detail but the author is no longer shoulder to shoulder with life but seems to view the scene through a telescope, seeing vividly, without coming into contact with it. In this way more of the author's own ideas are introduced. His picture is framed. The situation is more localized.

Gerhart Hauptmann now develops the theories of Zola, Tolstoi and Arno Holz: but presents everything through his own nervous temperament. In his first play, he shows his interest in current affairs. He brings forth in "Vor Sonnenaufgang" an example of the results of heredity and environment on various characters. The particular theme treated here is, however, alcoholism. The scene is laid

---

\*Preface to Pygmalion--G. B. Shaw.

in the Silesian mountains, in a locality the characteristics of which were well known to Hauptmann. The subject is clearly set forth. The young idealist, Loth, expresses ideas on the evils of alcoholism and gives clearly his reasons for abstinence. when he is at dinner with the Krause family. This is his argument:-

Loth. Der existiert allerdings. Sie, Fräulien!--und Du, Hoffmann! weisst wahrscheinlich nicht, welche furchtbare Rolle der Alkohol in unserem modernen Leben spielt... Lies Bunge, wenn du dir einen Begriff davon machen willst.--Mir ist noch gerade in Erinnerung, was ein gewisser Everett über die Bedeutung des Alkohols für die Vereinigten Staaten gesagt hat.--Notabene, es bezieht sich auf einen Zeitraum von zehn Jahren. Er meint also! der Alkohol hat direkt eine Summe von drei Milliarden und indirekt von sechshundert Millionen Dollars verschlungen. Er hat dreihunderttausend Menschen getötet, hunderttausend Kinder in die Armenhäuser geschickt, weitere Tausende in die Gefängnisse und Arbeitshäuser getrieben, er hat mindestens zweitausend Selbstmorde verursacht. Er hat den Verlust von mindestens zehn Millionen Dollars durch Brand und gewaltsame Zerstörung verursacht, er hat zwanzigtausend Witwen und schliesslich nicht weniger als eine Million Waisen geschaffen. Die Wirkung des Alkohols, das ist das Schlimmste, äusserst sich sozusagen bis ins dritte und vierte Glied. -Hätte ich nun das ehrenwörtliche Versprechen abgelegt, nicht zu heiraten, dann könnte ich schon eher trinken, so aber ...meine Vorfahren sind alle gesunde, kernige und, wie ich weiss, äusserst mässige Menschen gewesen. Jede Bewegung, die ich mache, jede Strapaze, die ich überstehe, jeder Atemzug gleichsam führt mir zu Gemüt, was ich ihnen verdanke. Und dies, siehst du; ist der Punkt: 'ich bin absolut fest entschlossen, die Erbschaft die ich gemacht habe, ganz ungeschmälert auf meine Nachkommen zu bringen'.\*

The extent to which the evil may go is set forth by the author in this play in the exaggerated picture drawn of the son of Hoffmann, who has developed a craving for alcohol at the tender age of three, inheriting this vice from his parents. Its influence is also evident in the utter depravity of the Krause family, the depiction of which is revolting in the extreme. With the discovery of coal on their land, great wealth

\* Gerhart Hauptmanns "Vor Sonnenaufgang". P. 36.

is given them but they are at a total loss to know what to do with it. They are quite unprepared for the idle hours which accompany their luxuries. Physical energy, previously expended in hard labor, now finds expression only in immoral living and heavy drinking. The first is exemplified in Frau Krause, the second in her husband. The picture is, no doubt, somewhat exaggerated and the incidents overdrawn. The expenditure of money in the fashion mentioned in the play is too great folly for even ignorant people who have little basis for valuation and it is certainly not in keeping with the insistence on the "strictly true". However, it is a successful naturalistic piece--following the new policy in theme, form and structure, and with the presentation of this drama, Hauptmann was heralded as the leader of the new school. He still ranks as the greatest naturalist. The subject of alcoholism is dealt with again to some extent in "Fuhrmann Henschel" and also touched in "Die Ratten".

With the rise of the proletariat to prominence as dramatic material, the literary field was considerably broadened. The squalor of the fourth estate and the misery in connection with it is brought out in all its glaring reality. Hauptmann dealt with the lower classes in his first play and he deals with them in "Die Weber" and later in "Fuhrmann Henschel", "Rose Bernd" and "Die Ratten". In this last play, he attempts to do what one of the characters declares to be practically impossible. Hassenreuter says:

"Ja, siehst du; daran gewöhnt man sich: was so hier in diesem alten Kasten mit schmutzigen Unterröcken die Treppe fegt und überhaupt schleicht, kriecht, ächzt, seufzt, schwitzt, schreit, flucht, lallt, hämmert, hobelt, stichelt, stiehlt, treppauf treppab allerhand dunkle Gewerbe treibt, was hier an lichtscheuem Volke nistet, Zither klimmert, Harmonika spielt---was

hier an Not, Hunger, Elend, existiert und an lasterhaften Lebenswandel geleistet wird, das ist auf keine Kuhhaut zu schreiben.

In this play he also works out the principle that a charwoman or dustman may be as fitting protagonists for a tragedy as 'Lady Macbeth' or 'King Lear'.

In Frau John, he developed the tragedy of a woman in whom the mother instinct has been thwarted and shows to what end she will go in the attempt to fulfil her desire, of whatever nature it may be.

The naturalist keeps fairly close to the field of contemporary issues for it is here alone, that he can represent exactly, real conditions of society. The one great exception is Gerhart Hauptmanns "Die Weber" in which he 'photographs' conditions of Silesia in the 'forties' and presents a strikingly lifelike picture. It must be remembered however, that Hauptmann had an advantage here. The subject is intimately connected with his own life and consequently, happenings related by his father, and grandfather and his own unfailing intuition served to span the breach which lack of observation might have caused. In the remainder of his naturalistic plays he deals solely with life which was quite familiar to him. He centres his efforts, for the most part, on dramas of Silesia and Berlin.

Another topic of wide discussion in the 'nineties' was the problem of divorce. Ibsen dealt quite freely with it in several of his plays and Hauptmann verges on the question in "Einsame Menschen". Here the individual is presented in a mentally unfavorable environment but the question raised is that of divorce. In answer to those who maintain that Johannes

Vokerat, the principal character of this play, should sacrifice all desires and remain at home with his wife, the reply is--Why should he have sacrificed himself?--Why not divorce as a solution which would procure the greatest happiness for the greatest number? By remaining with Kathe, he could not hope to make her happy and he and Anna would certainly be miserable. Marriage with Anna is the logical alternative and divorce must proceed.

Conflicting ideas are usually the basic theme of the naturalistic drama. Hauptmann deals pre-eminently with such subjects. In his first play, he touches the conflict of Capital vs. Labour. The quarrel is between miners and their employers and the injustice under which the workers labour is clearly indicated. In "Die Weber", the author further develops this theme and, this time, the attention is focussed upon the laboring classes. Every phase of their wretched existence is brought to light and a glimpse of the capitalist outlook explains the hopelessness of the situation. Even the uprising, which takes place in Act 4 and continues in the following, ends on a note of despair. It is definitely shown how incapable they are, as a class, of effecting any lasting aid for themselves. But it is evident that Hauptmann hopes to justify their actions and point to thinking people that the laboring classes do not commit such follies merely to cause disturbance but are driven to them by force of circumstance.

Another great conflict is contained in the Parent vs. Child controversy. This is, of course, an age old question but for the first time the author attempts to justify the child's attitude in the face of older ideas; Sudermann gives



adequate expression to this theme in "Die Heimst". Magda returns home, after enjoying a cosmopolitan freedom, to find that her father expects her still to live according to the conventional, narrow ideas yet in vogue in the society of which he is a part. Naturally trouble follows. The end is tragedy. For this, Sudermann was severely criticised.

The greatest conflict was, however, that of the individual against society. Ibsen dealt with it in "A Doll's House" and "Ghosts"; Sudermann in "Es Lebe Das Leben"; Hauptmann in "Einsame Menschen" and to a certain degree in "Rose Bernd". An attempt was made in every case, to justify the individual in following the natural instincts of right and wrong. The superficial code of honor dependent upon subservience to popular opinion, is held up to ridicule.

At this time the question of the conflict of the sexes, induced by the new feminist movement, was attracting more and more attention. In earlier literature the conflict had been between the course of true love and the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune'; now became a question of the actual opposition of one sex to another. This was one of the themes of the naturalists, with the Swedish Strindberg showing an almost fanatical hatred of women in his novels and plays, and Ibsen, his Norwegian contemporary, setting forth their case more or less dispassionately in his dramas. Satires on the double morality code are abundant. Why society should impose upon its biological complements codes so varied and unequal was a question beginning to puzzle the thinkers of the day. Ibsen contributed his share in the presentation of facts which might further emphasize the injustice of such a course. Why should

conventional propriety admit a destructive force which cannot be overcome? Why must Oswald Alving's father be allowed complete freedom to destroy not only his own life but also that of his son while his wife is conventionally refused the privilege of rescuing herself from so ghastly a situation? Hauptmann has perhaps unwittingly included the presentation of this idea in "Vor Sonnenaufgang".--Hoffmann proceeds along his course, hardly censored by public opinion, and his wife, who couldn't possibly be worse than he, is harshly criticised by Dr. Schimelpfennig and later by Loth. In "Rose Bernd", Streckmann is merely reproved for a continued round of debauchery while Rose is hounded out of life by public opinion for a single intrigue. It was about time literature took up the problems which might not otherwise present themselves to society as a whole.

Behind every problem, every discussion, every question considered by the naturalists, there are the guiding forces of heredity and environment. Incessant emphasis on one or the other or both combined is very likely one of the reasons for the short life of the naturalistic literature. The outlook is pessimistic. In "Vor Sonnenaufgang", Hauptmann combines the two, in "Das Friedensfest" he emphasizes environment, introducing, however, a note of optimism at the end. He shows that aid may come from without but he does not say that it will always be successful. Rather, he inclines to skepticism on this point. In "Die Ratten", the stress is again on the 'milieu' as is it also in "Die Weber". The heredity theme, however, is present in the latter though it is only a reference to a character not present and who plays no actual role in the drama.

The subject matter may then be summed up thus: a depiction of the contemporary lower classes, with particular emphasis upon the sordid and ugly; nothing eliminated; discussion of all questions of importance; and above all an attempt at exact portrayal of details.

#### CHARACTERS.

With the rise of Naturalism, an entirely new character is introduced. It has nothing whatever in common with the character of either Classicism or Romanticism. In the first place, the new characters are drawn from the lowest class of society, the underworld, the workers--from a group hitherto considered unworthy of notice in the pages of literature. Witness Hauptmanns "Fuhrmann Henschel", Hanne Schal, Rose Bernd, August Keil, der alte Hilse, Frau John, her husband and brother, and all those in "Vor Sonnenaufgang" excepting Loth, Schimmelpfennig, and Hoffmann.

The naturalistic characters, particularly those of Hauptmann, have been accused of being 'weak'. The accusation is justified in the cases of Alfred Loth ("Vor Sonnenaufgang") and Johannes Voöckerat ("Einsame Menschen"). On the other hand, Henschel attempts to solve problems to the best of his ability and finally gives up only in the face of a power too great to combat--something he cannot understand. Where is the weakness in Hanne Schal? A dogged persistence is maintained to the bitter end and tragedy lies in the fact that such energy is misdirected. The aim is not worthy of the effort. Overpowering force of circumstance is alone responsible for Rose Bernd's sad fate. Here is portrayed a girl who is attempting to work out her destiny quite alone. There is no-one to

whom she may turn for aid, the only door open to her, that of Frau Flamm, she may not enter. The strength of that character is amazing. Frau John is also drawn with bold, hard strokes. Life finally conquers but she resists to the last. Ida Büchner in "Das Friedensfest" shows great strength of character. She is willing to help her husband fight free from the influence of his early environment, a task requiring colossal courage. No! the very thing for which Hauptmann has been censured, his characters, is the force which will make his naturalistic pieces live long after the 'photographic' representation of details has been condemned to oblivion. A new fate directs the lives of the characters. No longer are they dependent upon the whims and caprices of half-human gods, whose veiled portents are explained by equally vague interpretations. Nor are they 'masters of their fates' or 'captains of their souls'. Their physical attributes, actions, habits, their life itself is predisposed by the generations which precede and tempered by the 'milieu' into which they are cast. This new fate is more terrible to the modern reader because it is more plausible. Decidedly pessimistic, if viewed in one way; instigating strife against odds and instilling a force of combat into the individual, if viewed in another.

The characters are quite simple. Of character development there is little or none. Psychological conflict is absent for the most part, or merely suggested by the physiological reaction to certain conditions or situations. By outward manifestation, the soul within is laid bare. Character action takes the place of dramatic action. Hauptmann does not portray types. No longer is an abstract characteristic paraded in the

guise of a concrete character. The nearer Hauptmann's characters come to a depiction of a type, the more clearly is the individual delineated. There is only one Rose Bernd, although there may be other girls thrust into circumstances ~~equally~~ unfortunate. Where would you find another Hassenreuter, Frau John or Hanne Schal? Hauptmann is an individualist through and through, even in the depiction of his characters.

#### FORM.

The new stage-craft is also simplified. The plot is not complicated. A simple fable serves as story interest. Comedy and tragedy inhere in the character. The conflict grows from a struggle of the characters against predisposing forces. Dramatic complication but rarely proceeds from action. "For the life of man is woven of 'little, nameless, unremembered acts' which possess no significance except as they illustrate character and thus, link by link, forge the chain which is identical with character".\* The naturalist, in his attempts to give, in the drama, as close a presentation of life as possible, withdraws from the Aristotelian principle that every tragedy must have a 'beginning, middle and end'. As life comes shadowy from life, he sees no artistic beginning justified and as the play of life extends into eternity, an artistic ending is unnecessary. This explains the apparent lack of conclusion in many of the dramas from this school.

Hauptmann rejects the whole tradition of structural technique set forth by Freytag in his "Die Technik<sup>te</sup> des Dramas". There is no climax. The play attempts merely to  
-----

\* Ludwig Lewisohn---The Modern Drama.

give a 'slice of life'. As life proceeds, affected by many incidents, all of which serve to wear down idealism and romantic fantasy, so is that life now presented on the stage. No great incident serves as a turning point for the entire drama. In "Die Weber", for instance, the only possible excuse for a climax might be toward the end of the second act when Moritz Jäger succeeds in raising the Baumert household to a sense of their burdens and the revolutionary song begins. But this could not constitute a definite climax because Act 3 shows another set of people and merely repeats the action of Act 2. In Act 4 there is a change. The revolt is in process but the last act again presents a household where the new ideas have not gained a foothold. Nor do they in this case. Der alte Hilse dies true to his own convictions that the revolt is wrong. The play closes on a pessimistic note. The structure of this naturalistic piece may be set down as five one act plays strung together solely by the mood prevailing throughout.

There is little action in a naturalistic play. Every detail of character is noted but no violent issues proceed to unfold themselves before the audience. No wholesale slaughter takes place upon the stage and very few deaths or suicides. Helene picks up a dagger at the end of "Vor Sonnenaufgang" and a maidservant, running across the stage screaming, is sufficient indication of her suicide; the shot of a gun is heard at the end of "The Wild Duck"--Hedvig has killed herself; Fuhrmann Henschel takes his life in the room adjoining the one presented on the stage; even before young Alving's end, the curtain is lowered. There are, of course, a few exceptions to this general rule. Hanneles' life takes wing before

the audience and Ibsen presents death in "John Gabriel Borkman" and "When We Dead Awaken". But for the most part, the unusual and specifically sensational is avoided.

One of the greatest innovations of this recent school of the drama is that of an effortless dialogue. Blank verse, or even stilted prose, gives way finally to an exact reproduction of the halting, hesitant, broken speech of every day existence. Short speeches are broken and rambling; fragmentary bits of conversation appear due to the broken sequence of thought usual in discussion. All dialect is rendered with phonetic accuracy. Authentic accents and intonations are caught and also set down and habitual peculiarities are presented. In Act I of "Vor Sonnenaufgang", we are introduced to Frau Spiller's ---m-mms---, Wilhelm Kahl's stuttering and the various dialects employed by Frau Krause, Loth and Hoffmann:

Frau Spiller (mit unterwürftigem, wehmütig geziertem moll-Ton, sehr leise:) Der Baron Klinkow haben genau dasselbe Buffet--m--.

Helene, (zu Frau Krause): Mama! wollen wir uns nicht erst setzen, dann...

Frau Krause (wendet sich blitzschnell and trifft Helene mit einem vernichtenden Blick; kurz und herrisch) Schickt sich das ?

H.H. (Frau Krause im Begriff sich zu setzen, erinnert sich, dass das Tischgebet noch nicht gesprochen ist, und faltet mechanisch, doch ohne ihrer Bosheit im Ubrigen Herr zu sein, die Hände.)

Frau Spiller (spricht das Tischgebet):  
Komm, Herr Jesu, sei unser Gast.  
Segne, was du uns bescheeret hast.  
Amen.

(Alle setzen sich mit Geräusch. Mit dem Zulangen und Zureichen, das einige Zeit in Anspruch nimmt, kommt man über die peinliche Situation hinweg.)

Hoffmann, (zu Loth): Lieber Freund, du bedienst dich wohl? !  
Austern?

Loth: Nun, will probieren. Es sind die ersten Austern die ich esse.

Frau Krause(hat soeben eine Auster geschlürft. Mit vollem  
Mund: In der Saisong, mein'n Se woll?  
Loth. Ich meine überhaupt.

(Frau Krause and Frau Spiller wechseln Blicke.

Hoffmann;(zu Kahl, der eine Zitrone mit den Zähnen auspresst);  
Zwei Tage nicht gesehen, Herr Kahl! Tüchtig Mäuse  
gejagt in der Zeit?

Kahl. N..n..ne!.

Hoffmann,(zu Loth): Herr Kahl ist nämlich ein leidenschaft-  
licher Jäger.

Kahl.D..d..die M..mm..maus, das ist 'n in...in..infantes Am..  
am..amfff..fibium.

Helene(platzt heraus): Zu lächerlich ist das; alles schiesst  
er tot, Zahmes and Wildes.

Kahl. N..nächten hab ich d..d..die alte szss..sau ou ins t..  
tot g..g..geschlossen.

This phonographic representation of daily speech was  
a direct following of principles set down by Holz and Schlaf  
in "Papa Hamlet".

In the matter of presentation, simplicity is the watch-  
word. The play is no longer for the purpose of reminding us  
of the stage but of life. For the first time in literature  
there are introduced incidents which have no real significance  
in the development of the play but which add to the appear-  
ance of actuality. In "Einsame Menschen" for instance, a bee  
buzzes into the room purely for the purpose of contributing  
atmosphere. In the same play the maid lets fall a tray of dishes  
the accident merely contributing to the picture of middle  
class suburban life. Such incidents are put in by the natur-  
alistic author to help portray life as it is.

As Ibsen progressed his stage contracted. The setting  
is usually simple and nearly always an interior. Nature as  
classified according to botanical specimens, plays no role



in the modern drama. Nature to the literary naturalist comprises humanity and its destiny. The artist is essentially passive and therefore does not interpret life.

Action of the play is by preference concentrated to a few hours. Five acts of "Vor Sonnenaufgang" cover a period of only thirty six hours. This is by no means a rule. The naturalist demands freedom in this field also. The destiny of Rose Bernd requires several months to work itself out. The classical unities of time and place are employed only where they serve the purpose of the author.

There is no division of acts into scenes. Changes of scenery merely distract attention from the true centre of interest, which is the soul of man-- the soul of man at a crisis.

Ibsen picks up his story at a point corresponding to the fifth act of a Shakespearean play and then, with a lengthy exposition that continues through the greater part of two acts proceeds swiftly in the third act to the catastrophe. Hauptmann goes even further, sometimes expanding his exposition to a full five acts, as in "The Weavers", which is entirely a revelation of conditions with nothing in the nature of a climax or catastrophe.

The naturalistic author is the 'lord' of all his production. He brooks little aid from director, actor or stage-hand in the interpretation of his idea. Elaborate stage directions show exactly what he wants and what he is attempting to portray. The mood is given and every detail prescribed according to his ideas. The actors and actresses are given no long, impassioned harangues, monologues and asides to

aquaint the audience with their mental states. Everything must be expressed physiologically just as the author has seen fit to present it. This is rather hard on the interpreter.

The actress who plays the part of Rose Bernd must possess the characteristics of a chameleon to faithfully reproduce the author's requirements:

Rose ist abwechselnd totenblass und rot geworden. Man merkt ihrem Wesen schwerste innere Erregungen an, die oft so stark sind, dass es mehrmals den Anschein hat, als wollten sie durchbrechen. Nachdem auch Bernd verschwunden ist, erscheint das Mädchen zu einer unheimlichen Blassestartt.

Gesture, mood and tensity serve in the place of all the old devices. Note the elaborate stage directions at the beginning of Act 2 in Hauptmann's first naturalistic piece.

Morgens gegen vier Uhr.

Im Wirtshaus sind die Fenster erleuchtet, ein grau-fahler Morgenschein durch den Torweg, der sich ganz allmahlich im Laufe des Vorgangs zu einer dunklen Röte entwickelt, die sich dann, ebenso allmahlich, in helles Tagelicht auflöst. Unter dem Torweg, auf der Erde sitzt Beipst (etwa sechzig jahrig) und dengelt seine Sense. Wie der Vorhang aufgeht, sieht man kaum mehr als seine Silhouette, die gegen den grauen Morgenhimmel absticht, vernimmt aber das eintönige, unterbrochene, regelmässige Aufschlagen des Dengelhammers auf den Dengelamboss. Dieses Geräusch bleibt während einiger Minuten allein hörbar, hierauf feierliche Morgenstille, unterbrochen durch das Geschrei aus dem Wirtshaus abziehender Gäste. Die Wirtshaustür fliegt krachend ins Schloss. Die Lichter in den fenstern verlöschen. Hundebellen fern, Hühne krähen laut durcheinander. Auf dem Gange vom Wirtshaus her wird eine dunkle Gestalt bemerklich; sie bewegt sich in Zickzacklinien dem Hofe zu; es ist der Bauer Krause, der wie immer als letzter Gast das Wirtshaus verlassen hat.

In order that the mood may be defined more clearly, the hour and the weather are given. Several incidental happenings are presented to impress the audience with the fact that they are viewing a scene which might occur in real life. The act proceeds with long stage directions

ceeds with long stage directions interspersed throughout. These directions with Hauptmann are, however, strictly impersonal. They never approach the direct comment or argument which is met with in Shaw.

Owing to the author's desire that the actor or actress should assume even the physical characteristics of his creations, there is introduced the great vogue of 'type' casting. Roles are no longer given to actors because they are adaptable. As nearly as possible, the exact physical type must be secured. Even then, the author sometimes finds that the character differs greatly from his idea of it. As an example of the definiteness prescribed, there is Hauptmann's presentation of Bruno Mechelke in "Die Ratten":

Noch bevor beide Frauen den Gang erreichen, tritt Bruno Mechelke langsam forschend aus der Tür links und bleibt stehen. Bruno Mechelke ist eher klein, als gross, hat einen kurzen Stiernacken und athletischen Schultern. Niedrige weichende Stirn, bürstförmiges Haar, kleiner runder Schädel, brutales Gesicht mit eingerissenem and verarbtem linken Nasenflügel. Die Haltung des etwa neunzehn jährigen Menschen ist vornübergebeugt. Grosse plumpe Hände hängen an langen, muskulösen Armen. Die Pupillen seiner Augen sind schwarz, klein and stechend. Er bestelt an einer Mausefalle herum.

Evidently, then, the naturalistic author must be held by no fetters. Freedom is the watchword of the modern trend-- freedom to depict with accuracy the life existing in a contemporary world; life in any stratum, life in its totality, from birth to death, in any circumstances. One thing alone restricts the naturalist--his subservience to the principle instituted by the scientist that all phenomena are dependent on that which precedes and that contact which they make in

this life. Heredity and environment are the basic principles and the naturalist is a strict adherent to this rule.

Thus the new ideas brought forward by science are picked up by literature and presented to the world as art. Valid arguments may be advanced to uphold this movement in spite of its insistent treatment of the sordid and repulsive, but it makes little contribution toward the attainment of happiness which many consider the goal of human existence. Thus, though it has an abiding place in the history of literature, the movement itself was not of long duration.

Even Hauptmann wearied of his original aim--to present only the true--and as early as 1893, combined with sordid realism the dreams and fantasies of idealism in "Hanneles Himmelfahrt". Thereafter, though he returns occasionally to the naturalistic, it is only for a momentary expression, and his last really naturalistic piece, "Die Ratten", appeared in 1911. The struggle between the ideal and the real, or 'strictly true', ends with the majority, even of the naturalists, in favor of the former, indicating that man will always find it necessary to seek escape from reality either in idealism or romanticism.

FINIS.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ARNOLD. R. F. Das Moderne Drama. Strasburg 1912.
- ANDREWS. C. The Drama of To-day. J. B. Lippincott Co. Philadelphia 1913.
- BARTELS. A. Gerhart Hauptmann. Berlin 1906.
- BAB. J. Neue Wege zum Drama. Oesterheld and Co. Berlin 1911.
- BYTKOWSKI. S. Gerhart Hauptmanns Naturalismus und Das Drama. Leopold Voss, Hamburg 1908.
- CAMPBELL. T. German Plays of the Nineteenth Century. (Introduction and Notes) F. S. Crofts and Co. N. Y. 1930.
- CHANDLER. F. Aspects of Modern Drama. (second ed.) Macmillan Co. N. Y. 1916.
- CROSBY. E. H. Tolstoi and his Message. Funk and Wagnall's Co. N.Y. 1903.
- DICKENSON. T. Chief Contemporary Dramatists. Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston 1915.
- DOELL. DR.O. Die Entwicklung der naturalistischen Form im jüngstdeutschen Drama. Halle a.S. Hermann Gesenius. 1910.
- GÜNTHER. M. Die soziologischen Grundlagen des naturalistischen Dramas der jüngsten deutschen Vergangenheit. Thomas and Hubert. Weida i. Th. 1912.
- HANSTEIN. A. Das jüngste Deutschland. Leipzig 1911.

- HALE. E. Jr. Dramatists of To-day. Henry Holt  
and Co. N.Y. 1911.
- HENDERSOM. A. European Dramatists. Stewart and  
Kidd Co. Cincinnati 1914.
- HOLL. K. Gerhart Hauptmann; His Life and Work.  
A. C. McClurg and Co. Chicago 1914.
- JOSEPHSON. M. Zola and His Times. Garden City  
Pub. Co. Inc. Cincinnati 1928.
- KLENZE. C. From Goethe to Hauptmann. Viking  
Press. N.Y. 1926.
- LESSING. O. Masters in Modern German Literature.  
Dresden 1912.
- LEWISOHN. L. The Modern Drama. B. W. Heubsch.  
N.Y. 1915.
- LITZMANN. B. Das Deutsche Drama. Leopold Voss.  
Leipzig 1912.
- MÄRKER. F. Zur Literatur der Gegenwart. Albert  
Langen, München 1921.
- MAUDE. A. Tolstoi and his Problems. (second ed.)  
Constable and Co. London (no date)
- OEHLERT. R. Zola als Theaterdichter. Emil  
Ebering. Berlin 1920.
- RABL. H. Die dramatische Handlung in Gerhart  
Hauptmanns Webern. (diss) Max  
Niemeyer, Halle 1928.
- ROESSLER. E. The Soliloquy in German Drama.  
Columbia Univ. Press. N.Y. 1915.
- RÖHR. J. Gerhart Hauptmanns dramatisches  
Schaffen. Dresden and Leipzig 1912.

SCHLENTHER. P. Gerhart Hauptmann. S. Fischer  
Berlin 1912.

STANISLAVSKY. C. My Life in Art. (Trans. from the  
Russian by J. J. Robbins) Little,  
Brown and Co. Boston 1929.

STERNBERG. K. Gerhart Hauptmann. Wilhelm  
Borngräber. Berlin 1910.

WIEHR. J. (in) Journal of English and Germanic  
Philology. Vol VI. pp 1-71. pp 531-575.

WITKOWSKI. G. German Drama of the Nineteenth  
Century. Henry Holt and Co. N.Y. 1909.

WOERNER. U. C. Gerhart Hauptmann. Alexander  
Duncker. Berlin 1901.

WULFFEN. E. Gerhart Hauptmanns Dramen. P.  
Langenschreit. Berlin 1911.

ZOLA. E. Le naturalisme au Théâtre. Les  
theories et les exemples. Paris 1912.

#### TEXTS

HAUPTMANN. G. Einsame Menschen. Henry Holt and  
Co. N.Y. 1930.

HAUPTMANN. G. Dramatic Works. (Vol. 1-5.) Trans.  
by L. Lewisohn. B. W. Heubsch. N.Y.  
1912.

HAUPTMANN. G. Gesammelte Werke. S. Fischer.  
Berlin 1913. (Band 1, Band 2 pp 9-53;  
371-448, Band 3 pp 375-461, Band 4 pp 425-  
539)

IESSEN. H. Plays. Revised and edited by William  
Archer. (Vols. 7-9) N.Y. 1911-1916.

TOLSTOI. L. Anna Karenina. Trans. by Constance  
Garnett. N.Y. (no date)

TOLSTOI. L. Plays. Grant Richards. London 1903.