

earliest, naïve state: its subjection to the utilitarian law of burgher traffic prevents this relation from expressing itself purely; the public pays and demands, demands without judgment or knowledge; the mime-takes his pay, and, observing with swift and accurate instinct the public's lack of judgment, for profit's sake he gives it—not what is wholesome for it, but, like the pampered child, what tempts its palate. Hence that confusion which, given an evil tendency, may lead the Theatre to the ruin of the Folk's best moral qualities, of the best artistic qualities of Art itself. We see that ruin almost reached. But upheave this root-defect, or at least reduce it to the smallest possible power of harm, and that relation—in whose naïvest form the æsthetic instinct of the Folk-spirit speaks out as a genuine social need—will offer the unique, the incomparable starting-point, replaceable by none besides, for the highest conjoint operation of the spiritual and moral forces of a people's soul and of its leading minds.—After all the evidence from our prior inquiries into the ethical, as the æsthetic import of this relation, we may now conclude by taking in eye the possibility of a remedy for that root-defect, which we have just exposed, in the organisation of the modern Theatre itself.

XV.

The principle of our imagined reform of the German Theatre, in the sense of the German spirit, we will found upon one and the same relation, repeating itself in divers spheres: it is that which we have discussed at length in the relation of poet to mime, which proves itself identical in that of the cultured Emeritus to the public proper, and in its grandest aspect as that of the King to his Folk. Here the realistic force of Need, there the ideal power of supplying that which is unreachable by the highest demands of Need. The greatest relation, that of King to Folk, embraces all the relations like it; wherefore, when

it is a question of bringing all these forces into conjoint action, the stimulus must issue from the King. Just as he gives the finishing touch to the utilitarian law of every social and State organisation, by securing it through his 'mere motion' the attainment of what it could not reach *in proprio motu (in seiner reinen Konsequenz)*, so his authority must intervene wherever the law of usefulness has arrived at this point; and it therefore is presupposed, once and for all, that this point shall be reached through fittest organisation of the unhindered burgher forces of the State. Yet we are not to figure this relation as a chronologic one, but as a synchronistic, an architectonic equipoise. The view that the Useful must *first* be established, and it will *then* be time to think about the Beautiful, leads with much certainty to the second tendency never setting in at all; for it is to be anticipated that the first will by then have usurped the whole architecture of the State, as we have styled it, and consequently will have absorbed the store of force reserved for the second. No: both tendencies have to work side by side, though always so that the first shall be the motive force, which propounds the problem, the second the conclusive force, which solves it. An example will make this clear. A city requires an aqueduct: this is a need whose satisfaction implies a useful end, concerning the whole city; should the burgher commune be hindered from completing the building of its conduit through failing funds, for instance, that would mean a defect in the commune's Expedience-organisation, and in the interest of its most vital principle, that of common usefulness to the town, the defect would have to be remedied by the commune's own exertions; to appeal directly to the King would be a humiliating confession of inefficient organisation, on the part of the town-commune. Whereas this one particular city, if its financial means are exhausted at the moment, should seek its natural helpers in the other cities of the land; together with these to enter an organised alliance of communes, in which all municipal utilitarian-interests should become a question of joint concern, and in

power whereof all local and partial detriments should be remedied in accordance with the law of reciprocal aid and guarantee—as, for instance, in the case of fire- and life-insurance companies,—this would be the way beseeeming every good organisation within the State itself. To the King there is only one appeal to make: to see to it that the aqueduct shall be *beautiful* of plan, and, just as it is useful, shall also be an ornament to the town. On the other hand, if the King wanted to erect in this selfsame town a sumptuous building designed for purely æsthetic ends, and to throw its cost on the town-community, the latter would be perfectly justified in accounting that a tyrannical proposal, a mockery of the utilitarian object of its whole organisation: nevertheless, as the King had provided for the beauty of its conduit, it would not place any mere utilitarian hindrances in his path, on the score, forsooth, of this building's serving no directly useful end.

Now the Theatre, as we have seen, owes its origin to a need experienced by citizen Society, that of recreation and distraction after the strain of business toil. The actual utilitarian ground for retaining the Theatre would be adduced by all the town with great alacrity, were one to want to close its theatre for good, or even to diminish the number of performances. In this matter, as in everything else, we start from an existing practical relation. It is possible that Radical utilitarians may wish to see this relation entirely done away with, as harmful *per se* to the commonwealth—against which, to be candid, we should have nothing to advance if the Theatre were bound to keep unchanged its present tendence, and even to develop a still greater power of harm. However, as we have not placed ourselves on the utilitarian-radical, but the ideal-conservative standpoint, let us hold fast to this one proved fact, that the Theatre, as a place of entertainment for the burgher population of a city, owes its origin and maintenance to a genuine need. It being a question, then, of meeting this need with services of that high character which the Theatre is proved pre-eminently capable of, but which cannot be

compassed in the sheer utilitarian traffic between Public and Mime, no reasonable doubt can arise as to the right, nay, the necessity of intervention on the part of the highest power in the State, aiming as it should at the Ideal. In fact this right and this necessity are fully recognised already, in the standing compacts between State and Crown: only, by neither side could the object of placing a Court-theatre upon the royal Civil List be plainly spoken out, because this particular State-endowment sprang from quite another principle than the rest. When the newer Constitutions were framed, and the finances of the State were regulated by fixing the formerly voluntary contributions of the Crown at their previous average figure, as the definite quantum of a royal Civil List, one also took the sum set down at that particular date in the accounts of the Royal Household for the maintenance of a Court-theatre and fixed it as a permanent allowance to be made for the same purpose in the future. Here there was no ulterior thought of the meaning and true requirements of dramatic art, but merely an existing factor in the royal establishment was acknowledged, and retained, as befitting the dignity of the Crown. Through application of this sum to the superior equipment of a theatre in the chief city of the land, the King enters into a distinct relation with the public of that city; but, after as before, the public pays for admission to this theatre, and remains at bottom in a primitive, naïve attitude towards it, that of seeking entertainment in return for entrance-money. We will abide by this given relation too—again in an ideally conservative sense—though it has merely sprung from circumstances without reflection; and we now will ask how it is to be made the best of, in promotion of German dramatic art, since we have seen that its pursuance hitherto has led to the positive ruin of that art.

Let us put the question thus: in what manner can one effect such an ennoblement of the general taste for theatric representations as needs must be the meaning of the royal Grace bestowed upon the Theatre?

Plainly, through nothing but an improvement in the

character of the representations themselves. The public is willing to fall in with everything that offers satisfaction of its natural root-needs; excellent performances of admirable works it always receives with heightened mood and glad acknowledgment. But, with much justice, it rebels against the presumptuous attempt to teach it in an abstract, didactic fashion. An imitation of the American game of culture, which sends the servants to scientific and æsthetic lectures while the masters spend their dollars on the windfalls of the European stage, has not as yet found favour with the German public. As touching this public, the only doubt is whether it will be possible to accustom it, by the excellence of what is offered, to a more abstemious, a rarer enjoyment thereof. For only by a moderation of the quantity of theatrical performances, on the other hand, could one hope to influence the standard of their quality; for simple reason of the leisure needful to mature and give effect to technical laws and their requirements, to say nothing of the present difficulty in imagining a worthy repertoire of adequate variety. Now as, in spite of the ideal goal we have set before us, we hold by our motto of not letting ourselves be carried into the suggestion of any sort of formally Radical tactics, to meet the aforesaid evil we should merely wish to see an adoption of palliative measures such as would recommend themselves to everyone as being in the true, and even the commercial interest of a number of theatres subsisting in one city side by side; and these measures must necessarily result in a reduction of the sum-total of theatric representations.

Upon this path, however, were progress never so willingly helped onward in all quarters, it yet might lead to merely feeble possibilities of raising the general spirit of theatric doings: a decisive transformation could be compassed only through the force of a sufficiently-repeated *example* of the effect of doings excellent in every respect. This is impossible of attainment in the daily intercourse of Theatre and Public, particularly upon a basis of commercial interests—at least, impossible with the existing relations of

German theatres in general. That example can be given only upon a soil exempt from all the needs and necessities of a daily traffic, upon a soil which nowhere can be found but in the sphere of what we have termed, in a broader sense, the royal Grace. Its primary condition is, that each and everything shall be *out of the ordinary*; and, in the first instance, that can be ensured by nothing but a greater rarity. We do not propose to stop and characterise this out-of-the-ordinary-ness through a criticism of the unsuccessful efforts already made in that direction, as this is not at all the place to specify the technical requirements for the realisation of our idea: we will merely mention that all previous so-called "model performances" ("*Mustervorstellungen*") have never really quit the soil of daily traffic of the stage, have simply distinguished themselves by a heaping-up and setting-together of ordinary theatric virtuositities, and as such have been accepted. On the contrary, the truly regal performances we mean, to be given at rarer intervals, would bear the following characteristic marks. Once for all, only such dramatic works would there be represented as really make it possible to evolve and perfect a hitherto entirely-lacking *German style*, on the field of living Drama: by this Style we understand *the attainment of thorough harmony between the stage-representation and the truly German poet-works performed, and the raising of that harmony to a fundamental law*. Through a most careful employment of existing histrionic talents, to be assembled expressly for this purpose, and starting with the representation of existing truly German works, one would advance to the instigation of new works adapted for a like standardising of Style. The commercial tendence in the intercourse of Theatre and Public would here be wholly done away with: the spectator, led no longer by the need of distraction after the day's exertions, but by that of collection (*Sammlung*) after the distractions of an infrequent holiday, would enter the special art-building—remote from his wonted nightly haven of entertainment, and opened only for the purpose

of these un-ordinary, these 'exempt' performances—he would enter it to forget, in a nobler sense, the toil of life, for sake of life's supernal ends.

We have hinted enough, to permit the kindly reader to judge for himself the influence and ultimate effect of our invoked Example, upon theatric art, upon the spirit of our poets, on the spirit of Art in general, and thereby on the fashioning of a Life which shall truly bring the German soul to show.

As cap to our now-ended inquiries, we beg to be allowed a brief, but broader survey.

When Prussia was setting about the overthrow of the Bund, she spoke of her *German calling*. Now that Bavaria is bracing herself to turn her new position to honourable account, her statesmen make no less appeal to the incumbence of a German calling. What may that calling be? Surely it is the meaning of her Ministers, to form of her a model German State; whereto she is alike compelled by the coterporaneous pressure of her inner social needs, and qualified by her position on the map, hemmed in, but central and secure. And what spirit alone can serve to mould this German model State, to make of it a pattern for the others?—When the Prussian Crown drove three old princely houses from their ancient homes, it advanced the utilitarian plea*: with the utmost, wellnigh appalling energy, it laid bare thereby the inmost spirit of the Prussian system, that creation of Frederick the Great's which we characterised before. To what goal would it lead Bavaria, if in the progressive organising of her State she dogged the footsteps of the Prussian State? Necessarily, to a point where both would meet some day, and

* Schleswig-Holstein, Hanover, and Hesse-Nassau; the annexation had been ratified by the Prussian Landtag about a year before these articles were first published, i.e. late in 1866.--TR.

clash with one another: the stronger utilitarian plea would then prevail once more; and on which side must the verdict fall? Were it not therefore an end utilitarian above all others, that the Bavarian State in all its organisations should keep steadfastly in eye that beyond all ends of utility there lies a high Ideal; and that only in so far as Bavaria approaches that Ideal, can she still fulfil a German calling by the side of Prussia? If the Prussian Crown has to keep sharp watch from above, lest anywhere or anywhen it should lose sight of the utilitarian law; and if it must even trim its Grace to fit the mandates of that law: would not Bavaria have to pursue its utilitarian object from below, and carry it to such a lofty pitch, that the fulfilled utilitarian law should permanently ensure the Crown the freest exercise of Grace? Even Prussia must, and will, perceive that it was the German Spirit, in its rebound against French despotism, that gave her once the power she now directs by nothing but utilitarianism: here, then, will be the right point at which—for the weal of all—a happy guidance of the Bavarian State may bring the two together. But, this point alone: there is no other prospering. And this is the *German Spirit*: about which it is easy to talk and boast in nothing-saying phrases; but which is visible to our sight, and sensible to our feeling, only in the ideal uprise of the great authors of German Rebirth in the past century. And to give this Spirit a fitting habitation in the system of the German State, so that in free self-knowledge it may manifest itself to all the world, is tantamount to establishing the best and only lasting Constitution.

