

Hauptmann's Relation To
Christianity

by Irene May Garrett

1914

A thesis submitted to the department of German
of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment
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*Thesis under the direction of
H. O. Kruse.*

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Hauptmann's Relation to Christianity.

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Hauptmann's Relation to Christianity.

Introduction.

A study of the contemporary German dramatist and novelist, Gerhard Hauptmann, presents a very interesting question with regard to his religion. The most important thing about a man is his religion: this is true not only in the old-fashioned, theological sense which in the past viewed this life only in regard to its future salvation or damnation, but it is also true in the broader, more scientific sense in which the term is used today. The conception of religion has changed tremendously since the days when being religious was synonymous with being a Christian. A few of the definitions of religion given nowadays illustrate this changed conception. Religion is said to be a sense of the bigness of things, or a reliability on the ultimate dependibility of the universe, or as Huxley says, it is "a reverence and love for the ethical ideal and the desire to realize that ideal in life." Professor Ward's position is that religion is the substitute in the rational world for instinct in the subrational. A still broader definition is that it is man's attitude toward the universe or that it is "the whole of man as a knowing, feeling and willing being." If we accept this last definition we see how broad is the field from which we must draw in determining a man's religion: everything that he ever did or wrote would be significant, the whole of his intellectual, emotional and volitional life would have to be studied to arrive at an adequate conclusion to the problem.

1. Hoffman, Sphere of Religion.

As such a study of Hauptmann's religion is too great a task for the limits of this paper, we propose to restrict the investigation to an inquiry as to the way he fits into a certain definite form religion has taken, namely Christianity. Thus a more definite treatment is possible, for whereas all his works, whether or not containing any direct reference to formal religion or theology, would be equally significant in determining his religion, we are able to select a few works which treat more directly the dogmas and ideals of Christianity. These works are four in number: two dramas, "Einsame Menschen", and "Die Versunkene Glocke", and two novels, "Der Narr in Christo", and "Atlantis".

Even yet the problem is not entirely simplified for it is nearly as hard to come to an agreement as to what is meant by the term Christianity as by the term religion. Are we to take as our standard Apostolic Christianity, 8th. Century Catholicism, 17th. Century Protestantism, or 20th. Century Higher Criticism? I shall try to select from all the manifold forms that Christianity has taken certain general characteristics which seem always to have marked it and given it distinguishing features among the religions of the world. And these characteristics may be divided into three groups: 1, those concerning God, 2, those concerning Jesus, and 3, those concerning man.

1. The most common Christian conception of God has been that of a personal father who is all powerful and all knowing and who rules the universe and us his children in it by love. Connected with the idea of God is also that of fatalism and predestination. In spite of the Calvinistic strain in Christianity, fatalism seems to be a pagan, oriental view of life rather than a Christian one.

2. The personality of Christ has of course been the very

core and center of Christianity. He has usually been regarded as in some miraculous way the son of God and at the same time God himself.

3. With regard to man the Christian ideal for this life has always been altruism, self denial and repression as opposed to the strong individualism and egoism of such pagan people as the Greeks. In contrast with the pagan joyousness of living Christianity has always, ^{tended} to foster a pessimistic view of this life, regarding it as a vale of tears, a hardship to be endured when necessary and to be avoided by a life of asceticism whenever possible. Connected with the conception of man's purpose on this earth is that of the ultimate end of life. Christianity has always held to a firm belief in the personal immortality of man, in most cases the actual physical resurrection of the body from the grave.

In the remainder of this paper we shall take up each of the four books of Hauptmann before mentioned and see what light they throw on his conception of God, Jesus and man as compared with the Christian idea on these points. It is necessary, however, first to say a few words about the man himself in order to show the place he occupies in literature and the importance of such a study as this in connection with him.

Gerhart Hauptmann was born in 1862, Nov. 15, at Ober Salzburg in Silesia. His ancestors had been weavers, but his father had risen to the position of substantial inn keeper in the little village. Hauptmann was a strange, wayward child, a dreamer with a passionate fondness for nature and was little understood by his elders. One important circumstance of his early life ^{was} ~~is~~ the atmosphere of pietism and mysticism with which he was surrounded, especially when he went to live with his uncle

who was a strict Moravian. At the University of Jena he became steeped in the prevalent Darwinism and the materialism thus acquired may be traced through his later works side by side with the idealism of his early pietistic training. He was a long time finding himself. Before he was married at the age of 22, he had wandered through Europe with a copy of Childe Harold in his pocket and had tried in turn being a sculptor, a zoologist, an actor and a poet. The names of the men by whom he was influenced in this early period of his life account for the direction his genius took; Bruno Wille, the socialist, Arno Holz, the author of Papa Hamlet, Tolstoi, Zola and Ibsen. No wonder that he started out with the extremely naturalistic drama "Vor Sonnen aufgang."

His other important works in their order of succession are Friedensfest 1890, Einsame Menschen 1891, College Crampton 1892, Die Weber 1892, Der Biberpelz 1893, Hanneles Himmelfahrt 1893, Die Versunkene Glocke 1896, Fuhrmann Henschel 1898, Michael Krämer 1900, Der rote Hahn 1901, Der Narr in Christo 1910, Atlantis 1912. In 1912 he won the Nobel Prize for the best idealistic writing and is today one of the best known of living German writers. At present he does not seem to be receiving the same unstinted admiration, the zenith of his popularity having been reached about the time of his "Versunkene Glocke", but he is still a widely discussed writer. The curious mixture of idealism and naturalism in his works is especially puzzling to critics. Franke says of him, "He is one of those fascinating men whose character seems to baffle all attempts at rational analysis. He is at the same time the most modern of the moderns and the most devout worshipper of the tra-

ditions of the past, an iconoclast and a dreamer, a pantheist and an inspired interpreter of medieval Christianity, a socialist and an upholder of personal freedom, an impressionist painter of the most uncompromising kind and a lyric poet of the deepest feeling and the most delicate sensibility."

From such a description of the poet it would indeed seem a difficult task to get at his religion. As a matter of fact it is always peculiarly hard to find out a dramatist's beliefs because of the impersonal nature of his works. He is not concerned with putting his own thoughts on record; indeed he has no opportunity to do so, he must speak only through the mouths of his characters. The problem for the student is to decide when and through which characters he is giving expression to his own thoughts and opinions. It is by no means always the hero who represents the dramatist's own views; oftentimes the author is in sympathy only in part or not at all with his hero. The best that the critic can do in that case is to record the beliefs of the various characters and then give his own personal opinion as to how far these are an expression of the author's views. This, then, is what we shall have to do with regard to the two dramas of Hauptmann "Einsame Menschen" and "Die Versunkene Glocke." It may seem as if it should be an easier task to gather the author's views from a novel, but in Hauptmann's case this is not true because even when he writes novels he writes like a dramatist, in a manner almost wholly objective and impersonal, keeping his own self in the background. Thus in "Der Narr in Christo" and "Atlantis" we have our hero's beliefs analysed for us with microscopic exactness, but then Hauptmann stands aside and never once tells us what he himself thinks.

I

Einsame Menschen.

This drama, written in 1890, deals with the old problems of the three cornered relationship, in this case the relation of two women and one man to one another. John Vockerat is a young, gifted, but as yet unrecognized scientist who has withdrawn to a secluded place on the Muggel Sea to write his first work on psycho-physiology. His parents are visiting him at the time of the story, good old pious people, devout believers in the religion of the past. His wife, Kitty, who is in a convalescent state after the birth of their first child is a sweet little thing devoted with heart and soul to her husband but with little firmness or decision of character, and with little understanding for his scientific studies. His parents have tried to bring John up to the honor and glory of God but he has turned from their careful teaching to the study of Darwin and Hæckel, much to the distress of the good old people who believe that he has thereby forgotten his God and endangered his soul's salvation. In spite of the attempts John has made to free himself intellectually, his orthodox upbringing still has something of a hold upon him. He consents to the baptism of their child Philip, not because the ceremony means anything to him, but in order to satisfy the wishes of his parents.

On the morning of this baptism a stranger comes to the house. Miss Anna Mahr, a student in the University of Zurich has come in search of Mr. Braun, a former schoolmate of hers, who happens to be calling at the Vockerat home. Miss Mahr proves at once to be the very congenial spirit for which John's soul has been starving. She has been in the house only

a few hours when he determines that she must stay for a longer visit. She understands him at once as no one else has ever understood him. She takes an interest in his new books; he reads her chapters from it. She extends her visit day after day; she and John go walking together, go boating on the Müggelsee together, read together, talk together and enjoy a mutual comradeship without once realizing how all this is hurting little Kitty. John only scolds Kitty for not appreciating Anna Mahr and for not trying to improve the opportunity of associating with a woman of such superior intellectual attainments as Miss Mahr. And Kitty tearfully confesses her ignorance and her narrow mindedness and promises to try to learn from Miss Mahr. But John and Anna are not allowed to go on undisturbed in this ideal platonic friendship for the elder Vockerats soon feel it their duty to point out to John the sin in his relationship to Anna and they try to get him to send her away. He, convinced that their relation is morally unimpeachable, grows all the more stubborn in his insistence that Anna shall stay. His parents follow him about with awful warnings of the judgement of God until at last the inevitable parting is forced upon them. Anna goes away: whether to the north or to the south she will not tell him and he drowns himself in the Müggelsee.

In this drama the old and the new ideas of religion are set in sharp contrast. The elder Vockerats still hold to the old fashioned conception of God as a loving father to whom they can pray and who always answers their prayers. Their trust in God stays with them till the very end. After Miss Mahr has left and before John's death has been learned of, Mr. Vockerat says to Kitty, reproaching her for her lack of faith, "Ich habe meinen

Glauben wieder und meine feste Zuversicht. Der liebe Gott hat seltsame Mittel und Wege, verirrte Seelen zurückzuführen. Ich glaube, Käthchen, ich habe seinen Rathschluss durchschaut.."

Frau Vockerat in conversation with Fraulein Anna says of her son:

"Er is ja 'n guter Junge. - Aber wenn man'a recht bedenkt: was nützt denn das alles! Was nützt denn alle Gute! Und wenn er noch so gut ist: Seinen Gott hat er halt doch verloren.----- Das ist gar nicht leicht. Das könn 'n se wirklich glauben, Fräulein! für 'ne Mutter ---- für Eltern - die ihr Herzblut möcht ich sagen drau gesetzt haben, ihren Sohn zu einem frommen Christenmenschen zu erziehen." And she further says to her son: "Du glaubst doch einmal nicht an den lieben Gott. Du hast doch auch wirklich keine Religion."

Johannes. Religion, Religion! Ich glaub' allerdings nich', dasz Gott so aussieht wie'n Mensch, und so handelt, und einen Sohn hat und so weiter.

Frau Vockerat. Aber Johannes, das musz man glauben!

Johannes. Nein, Mutter! Man brauch' das nich' glauben und kann doch Religion haben. Wer die Natur zu erkennen trachtet, strebt Gott zu erkennen. Gott is' Natur!

The contrast between Johann and Braun is marked. Whereas Braun is a lazy, harmless fellow who drifted into complete atheism, boredom and indifference on all matters, it was with Johann a struggle that cost him his heart's blood to tear himself away from the beliefs of his fathers. And the trouble with Johann lies in the fact that he does not stand fully and free in the new position. The constant inconsistency between the conventionalities of life and his beliefs is so irksome, so disturbing to his sensitive nature as to be almost unbearable at times.

As on his study walls portraits of Darwin and Haeckel hang beside pictures representing biblical scenes so it is in his own mind, his feelings are with the past, his intellect with the future. Johann was attempting to carry out the modern theory of individualism, but failed because he lacked strength. There need have been nothing wrong in his relation to Fräulein Wahr if the two had been strong enough to keep their relation on an ideal plain. But the narrow minded zeal of the older people forced the idea of guilt upon them and they felt that they must separate. Schleuther says in this connection that the man who is strong enough to carry out his aims arrives successful at the goal. So did Goethe, Darwin, Fechner: Kleist, on the other hand, Byron, and Johann Vockerat went under because they were not strong enough to be Übermenschen. And yet at the end of the play does Johann not win a sort of triumph after all? He has gained freedom even in embracing death. He is at last able to throw aside all compromise and, rather than go on living the life of conflict between the old and new he will give up life itself.

How far does Hauptmann sympathize with Johann Vockerat in his attempt at self realization, self expression and individualism as contrasted with Christian self abnegation and altruism? He shows how inadequate is such a system of faith as held by the elder Vockerats. But does he have any more sympathy for the independent agnosticism of Johann? A writer in the Athenaeum for April 6, 1901 thinks that "both mental attitudes seem alike insignificant and unavailing, so evenly are the scales balanced". On the contrary it seems to me that Hauptmann's sympathy is on the side of Johann even though he has him fail because of the blundering, unwise way he takes to reach his ideal.

II.

Die Versunkene Glocke.

Die Versunkene Glocke is a genuine fairy story of the most charming type, enveloped in an atmosphere of mysticism and idealism. "Ein Märchen drama" Hauptmann calls it and says the scene of the story is in the mountains and in a valley below. We may suppose the story to have taken place, if we think of such thing as time and place in this pure fairy world, somewhere in his own Silesian mountains during the Middle Ages. The story itself is simply told. Meister Heinrich, a bell founder in a small village among the mountains, has built a wonderfully clear sounding bell to be hung in the spire of a chapel erected on the mountain summit. The notes of this master bell are intended to chase away the mountain elves, wood sprites, trolls and dwarfs that infest these regions and cause great annoyance to the good Christian people dwelling in the valleys below. But the mountain spirits naturally resent the intrusion of these chapels and one malicious Waldschrat has lain in wait for Heinrich as he was carting his bell to the summit and by jerking out a spoke from the wheel of the cart, has hurled the bell together with its maker down the mountain side. The bell falls into the lake below, but Heinrich was able by clinging to projecting bushes to save himself and climbed upward again groping his way through the forest in aimless despair now that his greatest life work has been destroyed. Chance brings him to the entrance of the hut of old Wittiken where he sinks down exhausted and is found unconscious by Rautendelein, a strange mixture of elf and maiden. A mutual love is awakened in their breasts at this meeting but Heinrich is soon carried off down to the valley by the Vicar,

the Schoolmaster, and the Barber who have come in search of him. When he is gone Rautendelein finds a tear which has fallen from her eye and for the first time she learns what sadness is, and she starts out to follow the rills down into the land of men. Disguised as a servant she enters the house where Heinrich lies close to death attended by the faithful wife Magda. Rautendelein's skill restores him to health; her kiss opens his eyes to the hidden mysteries of earth and air, and he leaves wife and children to follow her up to the mountain top again. Here at last he can live the life his soul desires with Rautendelein as his inspiring genius. He plans to create a remarkable work of art such as no one ever conceived before, a chime of bells that shall ring out over the country and summon all men to worship in the church of universal brotherhood. Here he completely forgets his former life, his wife and children that he has deserted and he defies the warnings of the good old village priest who comes full of concern about the state of his soul. But this ecstatic state does not last; he is troubled by dreams by night and his work does not progress as he had hoped. His desertion has driven his wife to drown herself in the lake into which the bell fell, and in a vision he sees his two children toiling up the mountainside, bearing an urn containing the mother's tears. His spirit is now broken and his soul torn by remorse. As he hears the bell, touched by the dead wife's fingers, give out a solemn tolling he curses Rautendelein and rushes down into the valley, only to find that he cannot do without her. He comes back up the mountain to get her but finds that in his absence she has wedded the Nicklemann. There is nothing left for him to do but die; from the hand of the old Wittiken he receives the draught which ends his struggle.

Such a bare outline of the story can give no conception of the richness of poetic fancy, the sweetness and delicacy of the poem, nor does it give any idea of the symbolism in which the play abounds. Every reader agrees that the poem is symbolic but no agreement has ever been arrived at as to the interpretation of the symbolism. Some find in it great socialistic teachings, others find that it advocates individualistic ideas. The political or economic significance of the work does not seem to me as important as the religious. Let us see what views are expressed on the three points of Christian doctrine, God, Jesus and man.

In this play as in *Einsame Menschen* we find the old orthodox church view of God contrasted with the view of liberal free thought and science. But there is a marked difference in the treatment of the former position. The elder Vockerats are represented as sincere, devout people, free from cant or hypocrisy and demanding our respect even though we smile at their naive faith. On the other hand the Vicar in *Versunkene Glocke* is represented with all the vices attendant on narrow minded stupidity. He parades his self-righteousness before Rautendelein "You can not harm me," he says, "My heart is pure and true." He hardly makes a speech in which there is not some pious reference to the Deity, which we feel, however, to be only professional cant. "Ganz unerforschlich sind des Höchsten Wege, dazu auch wunderlich." he says concerning Heinrich's fall, and he has words of comfort, tiresome platitudes about God's holy will with which he tries to cheer Magda. The Vicar's view of the world is a dualistic one in which God and the powers of darkness are at war with each other. He shows this belief in speaking of

Heinreich; "Im Dienst des Höchsten stieg er in die Berge,|| wo finstre Mächte ungebrochen hausen||und Kluft und Abgrund trotzen wider Gott.|| Im Dienst des Höchsten ist er auch gefallen;|| im Kampfe wider tück'sche Höllengeister." When about to enter the Wittiken's hut he overcomes his fears of the evil one with these words:

²"Und ist's der Teufel selbst,|| der dort sein Nest hat: frisch! Und drauf und dran!|| Wir wollen ihn mit Gottes Wort bestehen;||denn selten war des Satan's List so hell||am Tage, wie dies mal, -----"

When we remember the time at which the story is supposed to take place we are not surprised that the Vicar's world is peopled with evil spirits at war with God for the Christian theory to account for the presence of evil in the world has always been a dualistic one, and this was especially true in the middle ages.

Heinrich's conception of God on the other hand is something quite different. The first bell which he made and the loss of which caused him so much suffering was intended to proclaim afar the praises of the Creator. At that time Heinrich was a good respectable citizen and husband, submissive to the guidance of the priest and of the church. People spoke of what an exceptionally good Christian he had always been. But the new Weltanschauung which he arrives at on the mountain top under the influence of the nature spirit Rautendelein and which he wishes to symbolize in the new temple and chime of bells the sound of which will drown the voice of all the church bells and call together the multitudes for the worship of their mother the sun, this is a very different view of things. When the Vicar comes up to the mountain top the second time to reclaim him, Heinrich mistakes for a time his mission and begins wel-

coming him to the heights.

"So erweist sich's doch,
dass Ihr Beruf und Kraft und Liebe habt.
Durchbrechen seh ich euch mit fester Faust
die mörderischen Stricke der Bestallung
dem Menschendienst entfliehn, um Gott zu suchen."

But Heinrich soon finds out his mistake: The Vicar has not come
to join him but to get him to remember his duties in the valley.
Then Heinrich makes a futile attempt to get him to understand
the nature of the new gospel he will bring to men. He launch-
es forth in rhapsodic praise to the sun God.

"Urmutter Sonne! dein und meine Kinder
durch deiner Brüste Milch emporgesäugt --
und so auch dieses, brauner Krum entlockt
durch nährend-heissen Regens ew'gen Strom:
sie sollen künftig all ihr Jubeljauchzen
'gen deine reine Bahn zum Himmel werfen.

O Pfarrer, dieses Fest! - ihr kennt das ^Ggleichniss
von dem verlorenen Sohn --: die Mutter Sonne
ist's, die's den verirrtten Kindern schenkt.
Von seidnen Fahnen flüsternd überbrauscht,
so ziehn die Scharen meinem Tempel zu.
Und nun erklingt mein Wunderglockenspiel
in süssen, brünstig, süssen Lockelauten,
dass jede Brust erschluchzt vor weber Lust:
es singt ein Lied, verloren und vergessen,
ein Heimatlied, ein Kinderliebeslied,
aus Märchen brunnentiefen aufgeschöpft,

gekannt von jedem, dennoch unerhört.

Und wie es anhebt, heimlich, zehrend-bang,
bald Nachtigallenschmerz, bald Taubenlachen-
da bricht das Eis in jeder Menschenbrust,
und Hass und Groll und Wut und Qual und Pein
zerschmilzt in heissen, heissen, heissen Tränen."

Heinrich claims to teach a higher morality than the narrow-minded Vicar is capable of conceiving and a different sort of belief from the conventional church doctrine. Heinrich has fled mankind to seek the one true God and this god he has found in a sort of Sun-worship. The God that the people know and worship in the valley is not to him the true God. To him God is not the personal father of Christian theology but a God-spirit infused through the universe, permeating everything as does the sunlight. "Open the windows - light and God stream in," he says. The health giving, life bringing mother Sun is his God. His peculiar oath in which he swears by cock and swan and head of horse instead of by some holy symbol in the Christian church shows that Heinrich has become a "Sonnenanbeter." For him any thing in nature is just as sacred as the symbols of a conventional religion.

With regard to the conception of Christ in this book, aside from the conventional view held by the Vicar, we find only one reference to him. Heinrich says when the new religion which he heralds shall have done away with all the pain and hate and woe;

¹"so aber treten alle wir an's Kreuz
und, noch in Tranen, jubeln wir hinan
wo endlich, durch der Sonne Kraft erlost,
der tote Heiland seine Glider regt
und strahlend, lachend, ew'ger Jugend voll,
ein Jungling, in den Maien niedersteigt."

²Baker in a note on this passage says it means even Christian-
ity's cross will be done away with and the sacred tragedy
adjusted. The need of Christ as Savior of the world will no
longer exist. Does this expression of Heinrich's in a burst
of religious fervor indicate anything in regard to Hauptmann's
views of Christ? Certainly no more than Heinrich's outburst
to the sun would

1 . p. 105.

2. Baker: Versunkene Glocke, p. 184.

prove Hauptmann to be a Sun worshiper.

Various conceptions of man are set forth in this play. The Nickelmann says man is a curious thing, half belonging to this world and half no one knows where. "der Mensch, das ist ein Ding,|| das sich von ungefähr bei uns verfinng:
Von dieser Welt und doch auch nicht von ihr.
Zur Hälfte - wo? wer weiss! - zur Hälfte hier.
Halb unser Bruder und aus uns geboren,
Uns feind und freund zur Hälfte und verloren.
Weh' jedem, der aus freier Bergeswelt
sich dem verfluchten Volke zugesellt."

^{2.} The Waldschrat says of Heinrich he is
"ein Zwitterding, halb Tier, halb Gott,
der Erde Ruhm, des Himmels Spott."

The Vicar's conception of man and this life is ridiculed to great effect by the old Wittiken in these words:

^{3.} "Spoart ihr doas Rāda!. Eine Prädicht kenn ich.
Ich wiss, ich wiss: de Sinne, doas sein Sinda
De Erde iis a Soarg. D'r blaue Himmel
d'r Deckel druf. De Sterne, doas sein Lechla,
de Sunne iis a grusses Luch ei's Freie.
De Welt ging under, wenn ke Foarr nicht wär
und inse Herrgott is a Popelmoan.
A seld' arm' Rutte nahma, ihr verdient's
Schloappschwänze seit'r, doas is's wetter nicht."

When Magda is grief stricken over her husband's injury the pastor offers the professional comfort of future salvation, telling her that when God in his all wisdom shall see fit to call Heinrich forth it will be to endless bliss. But this

sort of conventional cant proves entirely ineffective in cheering the stricken wife in a time of real grief.

With Heinrich the main problem appears as the attempt of a mere mortal to reach divine perfection. His first fall he regards as symbolic of failure and so discouraged is he over it that he declares he would rather die than try again only to be sure of a second failure. All this is because his old religious conceptions have been shattered. When he goes to live with Rautendelein, the embodiment of free wild nature, on the mountain top, then his personality begins to develop. He is battling for strong individualism. He no longer feels any obligations toward his wife and children. When the Vicar pictures to him his poor wife sitting lonely while the children drink their mother's tears he answers,

1.
"Könnt ich sie trochnen, Pfarrer, diese Tränen -
wie gerne wolt ich es tun! doch kann ich's nicht.

In Kummerstunden grübelnd, fühl ich ganz:
es jetzt zu lindern, ist mir nicht gegeben.

Der ich ganz Liebe bin, in Lieb' erneut,
darf ihr aus meines Reichtums Ueberfülle
den leeren Kelch nicht füllen, den mein wein -
ihr wird er Essig, bittere Gall' und Gift.

Soll der der Falkenklaun statt Finger hat,
'nes kranken Kindes feuchte Wangen streicheln?
Hier helf Gott."

And in answer to the Vicar's warning that the other people in the valley will rise up in arms against him who has outraged their faith, he declares:

2.
"Ihr schreckt mich nicht! Schlägt mir der Schmachkende
dem ich mit Krügen kühlen Weines nahe,

so Krug als Becher, beides aus der Hand --

nun denn: verschmachtet er, so ist's sein Wille,
vielleicht sein Schicksal: ich verschuld es nicht.

Auch bin ich selbst nicht durstig, denn ich trank."

But discouragement comes to him in the form of the Nickelmann,
who appears to him in his sleep and whispers:

"Lass ab! Vergeblich ringst du, denn du ringst mit Gott! Gott
rief dich auf, mit ihm zu ringen -

und nun verwarf er dich, denn du bist schwach."

The old Wittiken speaks to him in much the same strain at the
end.

"Vorbei iis halt vorbei und aus iis aus:

uff deine Hichte werscht du nimmeh steiga.

Ma koan dersch soan: du woarscht a groader Spross,
stoark, doch nicht stoark genug. Du woarscht herufa,
ock blus a Auserwahlter woarschte nich."

Yes, many are called but few are chosen and Heinrich was not one
of those who was destined to transcend the limits of man and
gain divine perfection. Heinrich may well be compared to
Nietzsche's Uebermensch who in order to attain the highest per-
fection, stood beyond the pale of good and evil and hardened
himself against the demands of his social conscience.

Nietzsche in his philosophy objected to the disease of self-re-
nunciation seen in the sacrifice of the noble for the ignoble.

"Spare not thy neighbor, the great love for the coming race de-
mands it." is Nietzsche's cry.

Is not Heinrich's life a struggle to attain this very
same ideal? To be sure he fails because he is human and be-
cause he is a child of his age, but it seems to me that Haupt-
mann is in sympathy with him and would show by his failure not

that the end he was striving for was wrong but that he lacked strength. Heinrich blames the people for his wife's death and declares that their narrow mindedness did more harm than his own mistakes. It seems to me that Hauptmann too believes this to be true.

III

Der Narr in Christo.

The work which would seem from the nature of its subject matter to throw most light on Hauptmann's religious beliefs is strangely enough the most baffling of all. "Der Narr in Christo" which was published as a novel in 1910, having appeared previously as a serial in Die Neue Rundschau is the story of a young man who begins by being entirely absorbed in the great truths of Christianity and ends by identifying himself completely with the author of that movement. Two other works of Hauptmann which show his deep interest in the Christ personality should be mentioned here. Many years before, Hauptmann wrote a short sketch called Der Apostel which deals with the same theme. Hauptmann actually knew in his native home in Silesia such a young man who believed himself to be Christ and who went about the country first proclaiming it. This material, which Hauptmann used in Der Apostel he afterwards developed in Der Narr in Christo so that it is not necessary for our present study to consider the earlier, less developed work. Another work, "Hannele's Himmelfahrt" gives a child's dream picture of Christ, but it is so mystical and romantic, so obviously a childish fancy, that it seemed impossible to find anything of Hauptmann's own belief in this work.

There have been many attempts to picture the life of Jesus in modern surroundings, such as the "Passing of the Third Floor Back," "The Servant in the House" and the novel "The Son of Mary Bethel." The vital point of interest in such works is always what is the author's purpose in such a presentation? To answer this with regard to Hauptmann's novel we must first know the story.

Emanuel Quint is the illegitimate child of the wife of a carpenter. He is born into a home of the utmost poverty and reared in misery and shame, but he is a strange child of very little help to his father in the carpenter shop and spending his time instead in reading his little Bible and meditating with himself. One Sunday morning he appears in the market place of his village and begins calling the people to repentance for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Of course he is arrested for uttering such blaspheming and is brought before the Amtsvorsteher and the Pfarrer who delivers to him a lecture on "Gehorsam gegen die Obrigkeit," and sends him back to his home. Quint, however, soon leaves his home for the Silesian forests where he meets two brothers who take him to see their father who is sick with a fever. The young fool is able by his presence to calm the old man and put him into a deep sleep from which he awakens completely healed. Thus Quint is on the way to becoming an unconscious impostor. The Sharfs are weavers who have led a hard but Godfearing life in which the world of the Bible was much more real to them than the world about them. It was easy then for them to associate Quint with their cherished hope in the second coming of the Messiah. The parallelism between the life of Quint and that of Jesus is kept up throughout the book.

Martin Sharf, one of the brothers, wishes to strike at the soldiery in Quint's behalf but is rebuked for the attempted use of violence. Quint soon meets another man, Nathanael, who, like John the Baptist, baptises Quint. Then he goes up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. For several weeks he lives alone up in the mountains eating only fruits and roots of herbs. Here the tempter tells him to go forth proclaiming himself the son of God and performing miracles but Quint fears that would be blasphemy, he succeeds in crowding out for the time being the idea that he is Jesus and returns to the valley to visit the Sharf family. The fact that they are expecting him strengthens his foolish belief in his divine mission. He accosts them with these words, "Whom do ye say that I am?" and they answer "The anointed of the Lord." His next miracle is to heal a poor girl named Marbha who was subject to cataleptic fits. Up in the mountains he meets a smuggler Josef upon whom he has an almost hypnotic influence for good. With the smuggler he goes to a hut where an ancient woman long past one hundred years old is waiting for death and yet cannot die. In Emanuel's presence her soul peacefully leaves her body and it is henceforth counted among the miracles of Quint that he released the old woman from life. Soon he has gathered quite a little band of followers with whom he wanders over the hills begging for alms, never taking money, several times almost stoned to death, yet never offering resistance. One quiet evening the little band of fools and poor men are gathered about the Birnbaum listening to the words of their master. He tries to explain what he means by the indwelling Christ but they take him literally, they understand him to mean he is the Savior himself; they see miracles, stars

fall, the earth shakes and the heaven is red as blood. Just at this point of fanatic excitement a band of drunken ruffians from a tavern nearby falls upon them and scatters them in all directions. Quint who had received an injury to his lungs is taken care of by a wealthy noble woman who lodges him with the gardener of her estates. Here he enjoys several months of quiet rest, and here it is his custom on holiday afternoons to gather the children of the neighborhood about him and take them out into the fields where he talks to them, holding a little one on his lap. In the meantime his followers have set up a community in an old mill, call themselves the Talbrüder and live out of a common purse given to Martin Sharf. They make out very interesting articles of faith which declare that they believe the revelation of the mystery of the Kingdom of God to be near at hand and that they believe that they, the members of this assembly, will not die until the Lord fulfils his promise to make it known to them. When later Quint, impelled by a longing to rejoin his followers, leaves the gardener's cottage, the young daughter Ruth who is completely under his spell leaves her home to follow him. He takes her back to her parents but the people's wrath is inflamed against him. His life now follows closely that of Christ. He goes to Breslau the capital of the province where he finds his Mary Magdelene, a sinful woman to whom he speaks forgiveness. He washes feet, kisses the hand that smites him and at last is betrayed by his Judas, the Bohemian Josef, who ^{has} enticed Ruth away to a horrible death under such circumstances as to make suspicion rest on Quint. Quint would like to shoulder the guilt but this final triumph of the cross is denied him. His innocence is proven and he is set free. Then, with his reason completely

shattered, the poor fool wanders over the country calling himself the Savior and asking for admission at many doors but always turned away until at length he finds death in the Alpine snows.

This is but a bare outline of the outward events of his life but to get at a better understanding of his character we shall trace the steps by which this delusion became fixed in his mind. When he is first rebuked and sent home for preaching in the market place he lays no claim to being the son of God. He has only a proud sense of satisfaction that at last he is deemed worthy to suffer for the gospel of Jesus Christ. For, says Hauptmann, "Quint, wie alle Narren, nahm seine Narrheit für Weisheit und seine Schwachheit für Kraft." Then he went to the home of the Scharf brothers to perform a miracle after which it was said of him, "Das innere Feuer, das Emanuel zu seiner ersten Zeugnisablegung getrieben hatte, und das er für das Feuer des heiligen Geistes nahm, brannte fort, auch nachdem er die Brüder Scharf verlassen hatte. Er zweifelte nicht daran, dass der Heiland in ihm war, durch ihn mit der Kraft des Wunders gewirkt und seinen Apostelberuf auf diese Weise bestätigt hatte." Then there followed a time of humiliation when he wished to be called the follower of Jesus in no other sense than that of his smallest lamb. He held a very curious opinion of the Lord's prayer which he prayed every day. Gradually he came to look upon this prayer as really no prayer but the whole teaching of Christ collected in a few sentences. A few quotations from his meditations on this prayer will show his conception of God.

"Vater unser, der du bist im Himmel. Geheiligt werde dein Name!"

Dies war gebeten, nicht für den Bittenden, sondern für Gott. An wen waren diese Worte gerichtet? An einen höheren Gott als Gott? Quint glaubte sie an den Geist gerichtet: an den Gottgeist welcher im Menschen ist." "Versuche uns nicht! Es war ein schrecklicher Gott, an den man die Bitte, uns nicht in Versuchung zu führen, richten musste, und Quint empfand, wie der Heiland versucht hatte, eine furchtbare Gottesvorstellung ihrer Härte und Furchtbarkeit zu entkleiden. Geheiligt und geliebt sei dein Name, nicht mit Grausen und mit Entsetzen genannt: so klang es durch das Gebet hindurch. Wir rufen in dir, was Liebe ist, und was wir rufen, ruft in uns die Liebe. Soweit war der Tor auf Gutem Weg; aber er ging über diese Erkenntnis hinaus. Er entthronte den persönlichen Gott und glaubte, dass Jesus ihn entthront habe und an seine Stelle den Geist gesetzt, womit sich sein Verhängnis ankündigte."

The extent to which he considers himself the son of God in this early stage of his ministry is explained to his apostles in the following words: Jesus der Heiland, ihr nennt ihn wahrhaftig mit Fug den Gottessohn. Gott aber ist Geist! Jesus ward aus dem Geist geboren! Es sei ferne von uns und von euch etwa anzunehmen, Gott sei ein Leib und es habe ein irdischer Leib seinen leiblichen Sohn hervorgebracht. Was aus dem Geist geboren ist, das ist Geist. Tretet in die Geburt des Geistes, so seid ihr in der Wiedergeburt! Geist ist der Vater, Geist ist der Sohn und auch ich bin vom Geist wiedergeboren! Wohl an ich zögere nicht, euch dies zu verkünden: wer aus dem Geiste wiedergeboren ist, der ist Gottes Sohn. Ich bin Gottes Sohn so verstanden. Aber auch ihr, ein jeder von euch, kann durch die Wiedergeburt eben das werden, was ich bin, ihr alle könnt

Gottes Kinder sein." In another place he declares, "Christ heisst nichts anderes als Christus sein," thus showing how completely he identifies not only himself but all Christians with Christ.

Further on he denies that Jesus ever raised from the dead except into eternal life and when reminded that he is contradicting the Holy Bible he makes answer that the Bible was written down by erring human hands. The letter is in the book but the spirit is in him and the spirit is more than the letter.

Bruder Nathanael who had baptized him lost faith in him and felt it his duty to warn him that he had turned from the narrow path of salvation to the broad way of destruction. Nathanael says he has heard that he claimed to be the Son of God and Quint replies by asking "Shall I baptise you with the holy spirit?" Nathanael then tried to get him to pray but he answers that when one is in God and God is in him one does not need to pray. The disciples did not pray when Christ was with them except the Vater Unser which was not so much a prayer as a spring of living water.

Quint's teachings become more extreme and daring as he nears the end of his career. In a conversation with Benjamin he expresses himself thus in answer to the young man's question as to what one must do to be perfect. "Tut Gottes Werke!" "Wie kann ich, ein Mensch," sagte Benjamin, "Gottes Werke tun?" "Dadurch dass du vollkommen wirst wie Gott!" "Vollkommen werden wie Gott," sagte Benjamin, "das hiesze ja doch nichts Geringeres, als aus einem Menschen zum Gotte werden!?" "Und nichts Geringeres" erwiderte Quint, "ist der Beruf des Menschensohns."

Quint is forced into a position where he must deny the miracles of Christ or ~~say~~ say they are no more miracles than the lily blooming in the field. Concerning Jesus' ^{alleged} raising from the dead and walking on the waters he says: "Wer einen Menschen vom leiblichen Tode erweckt, was tut er dem? Er schenkt ihm den zweiten Tod! Wer auf dem Meere zu gehen begehrt, der weisz nicht, wie der Geist Gottes über und in den Wassern, in und über den Himmeln schwebt! Wüsztet ihr, was ich weisz, ihr bedürftet des Glaubens nicht!"

after

Quint never claimed until ^{he} he had lost his reason, to be Christ in his physical body but only in his spiritual nature. This is what his disciples could not understand and they always took him for the actual, reincarnated Christ.

There are various possible ways of interpreting this story. First, it may be looked upon as a sermon against our twentieth century god^{less}ness, and, by showing how far the world is even yet from understanding the spirit of Christ's ministry, to ask the question "Would the real Jesus fare any better if he should return after all these centuries with his purity of heart and unworldliness?" This view seems to me an entirely inadequate conception for the reason that Quint's life, no matter how closely it conforms to that of Christ in external circumstances, could hardly be regarded by a true admirer of Christ as a worthy portrayal of their master. No, I think that any faithful Christian who believed Quint was intended to represent Christ in 20th. century surroundings would find it nothing short of blasphemy. The fact that Quint is constantly spoken of as a Narr, that his reason completely leaves him at the end, that he is in truth nothing but a beggar and an Obskurant, an enemy of knowledge and progress, that he is utterly indifferent to the

political and social problems of his age, all these things make it impossible to regard him as a reincarnated Christ-ideal.

Another possible interpretation is that Hauptmann wishes to hold Christ up to ridicule by saying he is like Quint, the fool, the unconscious impostor and deceiver, and to show how the New Testament deification of Christ could have come about in the same way as Quint's apotheosis, through the credulity of a few ignorant followers. The careful enumeration of incident after incident in the fool's life identical with that in Christ's would lend weight to this theory. Or it may be that Hauptmann although not making Jesus out to be a fool may yet wish to demonstrate the inadequacy of his teachings to deal with the questions and conditions of life twenty centuries after his death. A fourth possible interpretation of the work is that it is simply and purely a pathological document, an attempt to describe literally and accurately the development of a religious paranoiac.

The interpretation that is put upon the book as a whole will of course determine one's opinion of Quint's character. To some he appears as a stainless, winning, superhuman personality whose poise and tenderness are a rebuke to every wrong act. To others he appears as feeble minded, mountebankish egotistical individual endowed with just enough shrewdness to exploit some melodramatic incidents in his life.

To me either of these interpretations seems too extreme. It seems to me that Hauptmann wishes to show a character in which qualities of strength and weakness are combined, by no means a villainous character but just as little a perfect one. I think he is attempting a sympathetic and natural interpretation of the life of Christ. One sometimes hears it said that
L. Eur. Lit. p. 52.

Jesus was either God himself or else the greatest impostor the world has ever known. Perhaps Hauptmann set out to show in this book how an exceptionally pure, simple minded and religious man could, because of the great love he bore for the people, relieve their sickness and distress in such a way as to seem miraculous to the credulous minds of his day, and how such a man could in the course of natural development gradually come to consider himself a prophet and ultimately a Christ. Hauptmann may mean to show, using Quint as an analogy, how Jesus developed into the belief that he was the Christ and the Son of God.

IV.

Atlantis.

Atlantis, one of his latest novels, written in 1912, is the story of a great ship, the Roland, which sinks in mid ocean in a manner strikingly like that of the Titanic a year later. The chief interest in the story is the keen psychological study of the character of Frederick von Kammacher the hero of the book. Frederick is a young German physician, about thirty years old, of cultured and refined ancestry, a man whose senses are keenly alive to life in all its varied abundance, and one skillful in analysing his own mental states. "The lives of unusual men from decade to decade, enter dangerous crises" says Hauptmann. And it is passing through one of these crises that Frederick finds himself at the opening of the book: his whole being has been shaken with a tremendous experience and he feels as if his ~~whole~~ past lay behind him as belonging to the life of an entirely different person. The progress of this emotional crisis and

the final reestablishment of his normal balance of mind and thought is traced with the keenest psychological analysis. Two bitter experiences had conspired to bring about the present state of Frederick's mind: his wife had become a raving maniac and had to be taken to an insane asylum, and he had failed in the scientific investigations to which he had been devoting all of his life. Just at the time of deepest grief and discouragement he had become inflamed with a passion for a young dancing girl, Ingigerd Halström and upon learning that she had set sail with her father for America on board the German ship Roland he, moved by a sudden incontrollable impulse, engaged passage on the same boat. In the intimacy which follows on board the steamer Frederick soon undergoes a disillusionment, his feelings for the little dancer change to those of revulsion and disgust and yet, strong man that he is he still feels himself strangely under her spell. Then comes the terrible storm at sea and the sinking of the Roland from which only a few passengers are saved, among them Ingigerd and Frederick. Thus Frederick finds himself in New York with the fatherless Ingigerd thrown entirely on his protection. But so unworthy does she prove herself to be of all respect that finally the last smouldering flames of his passion are extinguished and he is free. But not yet completely so; the poison has still to be purged from his very life's blood. This is accomplished by delirium and a fever which come upon him in the country where he has gone for rest and for a visit with his old time friend Dr. Schmidt. He is nursed out of his illness by Miss Burnes, a young sculptor whom he met soon after his arrival in New York, and in her he finds upon his recovery what his life with his poor insane wife, what his passion for the little danc-

ing girl could never give him, the comradeship of souls. A cleansed and new made man, rebuilt in every sinew and tissue he begins life with Eva Burns.

The chief value in this novel lies in its wonderful psychological analysis of mental states. Only incidentally is anything brought in which has a bearing on the question of Hauptmann's theology. And yet, slight as is the material it is significant in placing Hauptmann with regard to Christianity.

Here as in other of Hauptmann's works, old fashioned orthodoxy is represented by the parents of Frederick. But the father's pious letter urging him to rely on God calls forth from the son only a laugh of "great compassion and of great bitterness."

Frederick began by being an ultra-altruist. He refused the military career offered him by his father to take up medicine which seemed to satisfy his ideal of a life of service. But he had been disillusioned and had gone over to the other extreme of intense individualism. Stirner's "The Individual and his Own" was the book in which he found companionship at the opening of the story.

He gives expression to this radical individualism in advocating reform for women. "The maternal instinct must be the vital germinal spot of each reform in women's rights," he declares. A woman's natural right is the right to her child and it is the duty of every woman to give birth to children, with or without the sanction of a man, without regard to so called honor. The consciousness that they are the mothers of humanity should make them invincible. Such an extreme application of the principle of self realization is certainly opposed to the Altruism of Jesus and to the other-worldliness advocated by the early

Christian Fathers.

Another character in the book gives expression to extreme individualism. Frederick's medical friend Peter Schmidt was "one of those who disavow the Garden of Eden and declare the next world to be a myth, yet are firmly convinced that the earth may be developed and will develop into a paradise and that man may be developed and will develop into the divinity of that paradise." "No man possessed firmer belief than he in the triumph of good, and no man rejected religious beliefs with greater horror." In him "a sort of adjustment, or rather fusing, of the fundamental tendencies of those two great personalities- (Marx and Darwin) was in process, though the Christ-Marxian principle of the protection of the weaker gave way to the natural principle of the protection of the stronger; and this mirrors the result of the profoundest revolution that has ever taken place in the history of mankind." What does Hauptmann, here speaking in his own person, mean by the profoundest revolution in the history of mankind? Does he not mean the protection of the stronger, the survival of the fittest, the establishment of a race of *Übermenschen* this to be brought about by race eugenics, by a teleologic improvement of human types. The passage quoted above is also anti-Christian in the saying the next world is a myth and that this world can be developed into a paradise of which man shall be the divinity. The Christian conception is of this world as a vale of tears escape from which is the thing most eagerly to be sought by man.

In contrast with the refined, idealistic individualism of Frederick and Peter Schmidt we are shown the rash, brutal individualism of Hahlström. He declares that America holds the

preeminent position it does because of its immorality. The most successful person in America is the greatest rascal. Europe's salvation lies in becoming like America in the matter of morals. ¹ "When did geniuses ever do anything morally? Even the creator of heaven and earth did not know how to. He produced an ^{im}imoral world. Every high form of human intellectuality has thrown ethics overboard.

Which of these three characters, if any, express Hauptmann's views? It seems to me that he is very much if not wholly in sympathy with DR. Schmidt and Frederick, and the conclusion of the book seems to show how Frederick after all the storm and stress of his mental struggle has at last found his way into a sane and healthy individual self realization.

What ideas of God are set forth in the book? ² As Frederick starts out on his trip the thought occurs to him that God would never decide to take such a selection of noble, faithful men and drown them in the sea like blind puppies. But later his conception of God has changed for he says when he hears that the "Roland" is actually sinking, "Very well, the invisible powers, whose playthings we human beings are, will now completely expose their brutality." He never prayed, not even at the time of the great disaster.

At various times throughout the book Frederick plays with a belief in destiny yet never seems to really accept it until toward the end. The farmer whose life he had saved by performing a delicate operation, in overwhelming him with gratitude, told ³ how he always relied on God and how God had sent him the right man at the right time. "Frederick now realized the profound motive that destiny had had in sending him on his

¹ p. 87.

² p. 16.

³ p. 412.

fearful trip." Miss Burns too believed that predestination had brought her to his bedside at the time of his great sickness.

Conclusion.

In conclusion we say that we have found Hauptmann to be of a very religious nature and intensely interested in the points of Christian theology. In each of the four works examined a conflict has been found between orthodox Christianity and modern free thought and scepticism. In *Einsame Menschen* the conflict appears between the elder Vockerats and their son Johann. In *Versunkene Glocke* it is between the idealist Heinrich and the materialistic Pfarrer. In *Atlantis* the issue is between Frederick and his parents, between his own past life and his present, between Dr. Schmidt's extreme views and those of conventional Christianity and between the bigoted Puritanic president of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children of New York and the play house managers. In each of these three stories Hauptmann seems to take an interest in holding up to view the weaknesses in either position, in balancing the scales equally. And yet it seems certain that his sympathy is in each case more with those characters which represent the new position. In "Narr in Christo" the question is somewhat different. There is to be sure not the same clearly defined issue between the old and the new. However, when at the end of the book Quint is led to conceive of Christ as a spirit dwelling in us instead of a personality, and of God as the divine side of man's nature, then he is presenting a view which is incomprehensible to those who hold to a literal interpretation of Christian theology.

Thus we see that Hauptmann in each work has in a general

way presented the new view in the most favorable light. What can we say with more definiteness as to the extent to which he is a Christian in belief and spirit? As has been explained before, because of the dramatic nature of his writing, it is not possible to assert anything with authority with regard to his religion, but I shall review the opinions which I have come to as a result of my study.

Concerning his conception of God he has a purely impersonal view of God as a force in nature and in man, in no wise the anthropomorphic Father of Christian theology. From the Narr in Christo we might even infer that God is but the divine side of man's nature but if Quint is to be regarded as a religious monomaniac and the story a study in abnormal psychology, then of course Quint's views on God or Christ or any other subject would prove nothing with regard to Hauptmann's. Further, Hauptmann does not believe in the old fatalism but in scientific determinism. He does not have a dualistic conception of God since he does not believe in evil powers at work against good.

Concerning Jesus he took an entirely rationalistic view of his character believing him to be a man like other men.

Concerning man in this world he is intensely optimistic, with a firm belief in man's ability ultimately to reach his ideals however he may fail through lack of wisdom as in Heinrich's and Johann's cases. He advocates strong individualism and egoism as opposed to the altruism that abnegates and represses self. With regard to Hauptmann's view of immortality, we find strange^{ly} enough in all these four books only one reference to the subject aside from the Vicar's professional cant in Ver-sunkene Glocke and that is the statement that Dr. Schmidt did

not believe in it. The fact that he remains silent on this subject would seem to imply that he regards it of little importance compared with this life.