Kampf und Krieg im deutschen Drama von Gottsched bis Kleist. Zur Form- und Sachgeschichte der dramatischen Dichtung by Max Scherrer

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Kampf und Krieg im deutschen Drama von Gottsched bis Kleist. Zur Form- und Sachgeschichte der dramatischen Dichtung. Von MAX SCHERRER. Zürich: Rascher und Comp. 1919. 8vo. 428 pp. 6 M.

The scope and purpose of Dr Scherrer's book may be seen from the following quotations, the one from his Introduction, the other from the brief summary of 'Ergebnisse': 'Die folgende Untersuchung unternimmt es,...das dramatische Reich zu mustern und versucht, aus der wechselnden Verfassung der dramatischen Heere und der dramatischen Kriegführung Einblicke in den Wandel der dramatischen Form zu gewinnen.' 'Die Einzelforschung hat sich höhere Ziele zu setzen als nur die Durchhackerung einer bestimmten Materialmasse. Sie darf von ihren Gegenständen nicht lassen, bis sie ihnen jene Einsichten in den Gang der Dinge im ganzen abgewonnen hat, die sich der treuen Auffassung planvoll begrenzter Phänomene am sichersten zu erschliessen scheinen. Hier sollte in der Darstellung von Kampf und Krieg ein Kapitel dramatischer Geschichte durchschritten werden und die Sonderfrage zum Okular für scharfe Betrachtung ihres allgemeinen Laufes dienen.' It may be added that 'Kampf und Krieg' is a formula used by the author to cover all types of physical combat (whether actually represented on the stage or imagined as occurring behind the scenes) from a frustrated duel or an unresisted arrest to large-scale battle or the storming of a fortress; so that in spite of the restricted scope of the investigation, there is a very large mass of material to be dealt with.

Dr Scherrer has carried out his investigation not only conscientiously but with evident zest; and his book contains much that is valuable, suggestive, and even stimulating. What he has, unfortunately, failed to do, is to present his results in a form that does him justice. His style tends to be affected, and is often unnecessarily involved; and such readability as the book would have retained, in spite of these failings, is further marred by the necessity of constant reference to foot-notes, and an irritating tendency to repetition arising from the general arrangement. This arrangement is, no doubt, largely due to the fact that the book has grown out of a doctoral thesis which itself forms the first of the four sections into which the book is divided: (i) Von der französischen Form zum nationalen Schlachtfestspiel (i.e., from Gottsched to Klopstock); (ii) Shakespeare und das Kampfstück des Sturm und Drangs; (iii) Die Verfestigung der Form; Stildrama, Kampftheatralik und Theatralisatire (the least homogeneous of the four parts, dealing as it does with Klinger's maturity, Goethe's classical period, the later 'Ritterstücke,' Kotzebue, the theatre version of *Götz von Berlichingen*, and Tieck); and (iv) Das deutsche Kriegsdrama in seiner Blüte (Schiller's classical period, Heinrich von Kleist, and, strangely enough, the second part of *Faust*).

In spite of its faults Dr Scherrer's book deserves to be recommended. He shows a thorough knowledge of his subject and the critical literature bearing on it, and ability to discriminate between what is superficial and

what is essential. His detailed discussions and analyses of the 'Kampf und Krieg' elements in such outstanding works as Klopstock's *Hermanns Schlacht*, Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen*, Schiller's *Räuber*, *Wallenstein* and *Jungfrau von Orleans* are excellent. Considered separately, they are of real value for the study and appreciation of the dramas in question; taken together, they give a fairly good, though necessarily incomplete, general view of the main lines of development. It is curious, by the way, that though Dr Scherrer discusses very fully the attitude of other dramatists towards war, he refrains from a similarly clear exposition of the ethics of warfare as expressed by Kleist in his *Hermannsschlacht*. The main text of the book is followed by three appendices on 'Die Waffe,' 'Die Wunde,' and 'Das Pferd,' a select bibliography, and a full and useful index.

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