LITERATURE, 1832-1880

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I. INTRODUCTION

Among the critical trends which can be observed in current work on 19th-cent. German literature, the existentialist approach still predominates. Even among critics who do not pursue this approach rigorously, a tendency is apparent to use existentialist terminology or to relate the object of criticism almost exclusively to the problems of the present time, conceived in existentialist terms. While much orthodox textual criticism is, of course, in progress, relatively little interest has been shown in the purely formal aspect of literature. Among the authors who attracted most attention were Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, Heine, Keller and Meyer and in addition, the activities of the Raabe, Stifter, Storm, and Droste Societies are evidence of a lively interest in these writers. The year saw the appearance, for the first time since the war, of the Jb. der Hebbel-Gesellschaft. Among the general public, interest in the major 19th-cent. writers appears to be widespread, if one is to judge from the number of reprints of their works which appeared. Progress was made with the various collected critical editions now in preparation and new editions of Droste-Hülshoff, Grillparzer, Meyer, Mörike, Storm and Uhland were published.

2. GENERAL WORKS

The 2nd vol. of Hermann Schneider's literary history, Geschichte d. dt. Dichtung. Nach ihren Epochen dargest., Bd. 2, Bonn, Athenäum, appeared during the year, and covers the period from the middle of the 18th cent. to the close of the 19th. Prof. Schneider discards conventional literary classifications,
such as those drawn from cultural history, and considers that literature has its own epochs, independent of historical forces. He detects two outstanding epochs of this kind in German literature, to which he gives the names 'mittelalterliche Klassik' and 'neuzeitliche Klassik' respectively. His 2nd vol. is concerned with the various stages of the 'zweite Klassik'. Although in his treatment of the 19th cent. he seems occasionally to be guilty of faulty emphasis—the scanty reference to Büchner is an example—he throws new light upon many familiar movements and figures by the parallels which he draws between medieval and modern literature.

In *Amerikanische Dichter u. d. dt. Literatur*, Goslar, Volksbücherei, J. Wesley Thomas clarifies the interrelations between American and German literature from the colonial period to the 20th cent. The greater part of the study is devoted to the 19th cent.

A survey of the general state of German literature in the mid-19th cent. is given in J.-J. Anstett's 'La littérature allemande en 1850', *Les Langues Modernes*, xliv, 6. He stresses the absence of any predominant school or literary capital and points out that only the survivors of the Young German movement had anything approaching a literary programme.

In 'Franco-German literary relations: a survey of problems', *CL*, ii, 1, Henri Peyre outlines a plan of campaign for dealing with this neglected field and indicates subjects for research. He stresses the relationship of Taine and Renan to Germany and points out that no adequate attempt has yet been made to assess the influence of Hegel and Marx upon France.

Much light is thrown upon the cultural situation in Germany in the 1830's by S. S. Prawer in 'The Schiller-cult in "Biedermeier" times', *MLR*, xlv, 2. After an investigation of the tendencies leading up to the 'Schillerfeier' of 1859, he concludes that Schiller became the centre of a cult on the part of a public seeking moral substitutes for its lost religious faith.

The *Jb. d. Ges. f. Wiener Theaterforschung, 1949–50*, hrsg. Ed. Castle, Wien, Selbstverlag, is devoted to an article by Ed. and Margaretha Castle on 'Des Hamburger Schauspieldirektors Fr. Ludwig Schmidt Reise nach Wien im Jahre 1829'. The yearbook also contains a list of approved dissertations of the