

DIE JOURNALISTEN

In his autobiography Freytag writes: "In the quiet village" (Siebleben, the author's summer home in Thüringen), "under the shade of ancient lindens, in 1852, I recovered my interest in creative work. My lot had been cast with the fraternity of journalists and my mind was stored with many pictures of queer specimens whom I had known. So I naturally appropriated for the purposes of my old trade this bit of humanity with which I felt so much sympathy. The models for the various rôles were to be found everywhere among my associates, and the action, the election of a representative in the legislature, in which my journalists had to take part, was a familiar episode.

"I wrote the comedy, Die Journalisten, in the three summer months. Never before had I completed so quickly the outline of any piece; and in working out the details I was gratified to see that my skill in dramatic expression, acquired long before, was unimpaired. When in the autumn I carried the completed piece to Leipzig, I thought that after my wife my colleague Schmidt must be the first to pass judgment on it. I submitted it to him and had the satisfaction of winning his approval."

The comedy won also the approval of the public and has continued to do so. Its success was legitimate. Freytag's private study of the principles of dramatic composition had now been supplemented by careful observation of actual performances on the stage. Moreover, he had found a subject of real and permanent interest.

The action proceeds rapidly in sharply marked stages, so that the interest never flags. The persons presented