

do not represent a steady progress, but a fluctuating degree of excellence. Throughout we have found certain constant forces and pervading tendencies.

I. His material has been made thoroughly his own. The plot of the novel has been first assimilated and has then taken a new shape. The fact that the same material is so often used for a schwank or mastersong before being made into a Fastnachtspiel proves this. He has made the freest use of his material. In some instances he has adhered closely to his source; again, he adds and omits largely, cuts and concentrates, or rounds out and expands his material.

II. The moral tendency is strong. This is seen most plainly in the epilogues, but is found also in certain situations and speeches, and in his consistent omission of the obscene.

III. The tendencies of these thirteen plays are dramatic. The plots selected are those with plenty of action; the "motivierung" is careful; often in his more serious plays, a character is strongly sketched, and the directions to the actors show him to be a practised stage-manager. The result is, for the age, an unusual degree of excellence.