

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Dostoyevsky Smith Willis
Baum Henry Kipling Doyle Henry Willis
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Nietzsche Turgenev Balzac
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Gogol Busch
Darwin Thoreau Twain
Potter Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato Scott
Kant Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
London Descartes Cervantes Voltaire Hesse
Poe Aristotle Wells Bunner Shakespeare Cooke
Hale James Hastings Richter Chambers Irving
Doré Chekhov da Shaw Benedict Alcott
Swift Dante Pushkin Newton
Wodehouse



tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, tredition offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. tredition is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: www.tredition.com

TREDITION CLASSICS

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series. The creators of this series are united by passion for literature and driven by the intention of making all public domain books available in printed format again - worldwide. Most TREDITION CLASSICS titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades. At tredition we believe that a great book never goes out of style and that its value is eternal. Several mostly non-profit literature projects provide content to tredition. To support their good work, tredition donates a portion of the proceeds from each sold copy. As a reader of a TREDITION CLASSICS book, you support our mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion. See all available books at www.tredition.com.



The content for this book has been graciously provided by Project Gutenberg. Project Gutenberg is a non-profit organization founded by Michael Hart in 1971 at the University of Illinois. The mission of Project Gutenberg is simple: To encourage the creation and distribution of eBooks. Project Gutenberg is the first and largest collection of public domain eBooks.

**The Lonely
Way - Intermezzo - Countess
Mizzie Three Plays**

Arthur Schnitzler

Imprint

This book is part of TREDITION CLASSICS

Author: Arthur Schnitzler

Cover design: Buchgut, Berlin - Germany

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg - Germany

ISBN: 978-3-8472-2429-7

www.tredition.com

www.tredition.de

Copyright:

The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations, such as Project Gutenberg, worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

THE LONELY WAY:

INTERMEZZO:

COUNTESS MIZZIE

THREE PLAYS BY

ARTHUR SCHNITZLER

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

EDWIN BJÖRKMAN



NEW YORK
MITCHELL KENNERLEY
MCMXV

COPYRIGHT, 1915, BY MITCHELL KEN-
NERLEY

INTRODUCTION

Hermann Bahr, the noted playwright and critic, tried one day to explain the spirit of certain Viennese architecture to a German friend, who persisted in saying: "Yes, yes, but always there remains something that I find curiously foreign." At that moment an old-fashioned Spanish state carriage was coming along the street, probably on its way to or from the imperial palace. The German could hardly believe his eyes and expressed in strong terms his wonderment at finding such a relic surviving in an ultra-modern town like Vienna.

"You forget that our history is partly Spanish," Bahr retorted. "And nothing could serve better than that old carriage to explain what you cannot grasp in our art and poetry."

A similar idea has been charmingly expressed by Hugo von Hofmannsthal in the poem he wrote in 1892—when he was still using the pseudonym of "Loris"—as introduction to "Anatol." I am now adding a translation of that poem to my own introduction, because I think it will be of help in reading the plays of this volume. The scene painted by Hofmannsthal might, on the whole, be used as a setting for "Countess Mizzie." For a more detailed version of that scene he refers us to "Canaletto's Vienna"—that is, to the group of thirteen Viennese views which were painted about 1760 by the Venetian Bernardo Belotto (who, like his more famous uncle and model, Antonio Canale, was generally called Canaletto), and which are now hanging in one of the galleries of the *Kunsthistorische Hofmuseum* at Vienna. The spirit of those pictures may be described, I am told, as one of stately grace. They are full of Latin joy in life and beauty. They speak of an existence constantly softened by concern for the amenities of life. It is just what survives of their atmosphere that frequently makes foreigners speak of Vienna with a tender devotion not even surpassed by that bestowed on Paris or Rome.

An attempt to understand the atmosphere and spirit of modern Vienna will carry us far toward a correct appreciation of Schnitzler's art. And it is not enough to say that Vienna is one of the oldest cities in Europe. It is not even enough to say that it preserves more of the past than Paris or London, for instance. What we must always bear in mind is its position as the meeting place not only of South and

North but also of past and present. In some ways it is a melting-pot on a larger scale than New York even. Racially and lingually, it belongs to the North. Historically and psychologically, it belongs to the South. Economically and politically, it lives very much in the present. Socially and esthetically, it has always been strongly swayed by tradition. The anti-Semitic movement, which formed such a characteristic feature of Viennese life during the last few decades, must be regarded as the last stand of vanishing social traditions against a growing pressure of economical requirements.

Like all cities sharply divided within itself and living above a volcano of half-suppressed passions, Vienna tends to seek in abandoned gayety, in a frank surrender to the senses, that forgetfulness without which suicide would seem the only remaining alternative. Emotions kept constantly at the boiling-point must have an outlet, lest they burst their container. Add to this sub-conscious or unconscious craving for a neutral outlet, the traditional pressure of the Latin inheritance, and we have the greater part of the causes that explain Schnitzler's preoccupation with the themes of love and death. For Schnitzler is first of all Viennese.

Arthur Schnitzler was born at Vienna on May 15, 1862. His father was Professor Johann Schnitzler, a renowned Jewish throat specialist. I am told that *Professor Bernhardi* in the play of the same name must be regarded as a pretty faithful portrait of the elder Schnitzler, who, besides his large and important practice, had many other interests, including an extensive medical authorship and the editing of the *Wiener klinische Rundschau*. It is also to be noticed that *Professor Bernhardi* has among his assistants a son, who divides his time between medicine and the composition of waltz music.

The younger Schnitzler studied medicine at the Vienna University, as did also his brother, and obtained his M.D. in 1885. During the next two years he was attached to the resident staff of one of the big hospitals. It was also the period that saw the beginning of his authorship. While contributing medical reviews to his father's journal, he was also publishing poems and prose sketches in various literary periodicals. Most of his contributions from this time appeared in a publication named "*An der schönen blauen Donau*" (By the Beautiful Blue Danube), now long defunct.

He was also continuing his studies, which almost from the start seem to have turned toward the psychic side of the medical science. The new methods of hypnotism and suggestion interested him greatly, and in 1889 he published a monograph on "Functional Aphonia and its Treatment by Hypnotism and Suggestion." In 1888 he made a study trip to England, during which he wrote a series of "London Letters" on medical subjects for his father's journal. On his return he settled down as a practicing physician, but continued to act as his father's assistant. And as late as 1891-95 we find him named as his father's collaborator on a large medical work entitled "Clinical Atlas of Laryngology and Rhinology."

There are many signs to indicate uncertainty as to his true calling during those early years. The ensuing inner conflict was probably sharpened by some pressure exercised by his father, who seems to have been anxious that he should turn his energies undividedly to medicine. To a practical and outwardly successful man like the elder Schnitzler, his own profession must have appeared by far the more important and promising. While there is no reason to believe that his attitude in this matter was aggressive, it must have been keenly felt and, to some extent at least, resented by the son. One of the dominant notes of the latter's work is the mutual lack of understanding between successive generations, and this lack tends with significant frequency to assume the form of a father's opposition to a son's choice of profession.

This conflict cannot have lasted very long, however, for the younger Schnitzler proved quickly successful in his purely literary efforts. The "Anatol" sketches attracted a great deal of attention even while appearing separately in periodicals, and with their publication in book form, which occurred almost simultaneously with the first performance of "A Piece of Fiction" at a Viennese theater, their author was hailed as one of the most promising among the younger men. From that time he has been adding steadily to his output and his reputation. When his collected works were issued in 1912, these included four volumes of plays and three volumes of novels and stories. Since then he has finished another play and two volumes of prose sketches.

It is rare to find an author turning with such regularity from the epic to the dramatic form and back again. And it is still more rare to find him so thoroughly at home and successful in both fields. In Schnitzler's case these two parallel veins have mutually supported and developed each other. Time and again he has treated the same theme first in one form and then in another. And not infrequently he has introduced characters from his plays into his stories, and vice versa. A careful study of his other works would undoubtedly assist toward a better understanding of his plays, but I do not regard such a study essential for the purpose. It is my belief that Schnitzler has given himself most fully and most typically in his dramatic authorship, and it is to this side of his creative production I must confine myself here.

"Anatol" is nothing but seven sketches in dramatic form, each sketch picturing a new love affair of the kind supposed to be especially characteristic of Viennese life. The man remains the same in all these light adventures. The woman is always a different one. The story is of the kind always accompanying such circumstances — one of waxing or waning attraction, of suspicion and jealousy, of incrimination and recrimination, of intrigue and counter-intrigue. The atmosphere is realistic, but the actuality implied is sharply limited and largely superficial. There is little attempt at getting down to the roots of things. There is absolutely no tendency or thesis. The story is told for the sake of the story, and its chief redeeming quality lies in the grace and charm and verve with which it is told. These were qualities that immediately won the public's favor when "Anatol" first appeared. And to some extent it must be counted unfortunate that the impression made by those qualities was so deep and so lasting. There has been a strong tendency observable, both within and outside the author's native country, to regard him particularly as the creator of *Anatol*, and to question, if not to resent, his inevitable and unmistakable growth beyond that pleasing, but not very significant starting point.

And yet his next dramatic production, which was also his first serious effort as a playwright, ought to have proved sufficient warning that he was moved by something more than a desire to amuse. "A Piece of Fiction" (*Das Märchen*) must be counted a failure and, in some ways, a step backward. But its very failure is a promise of

greater things to come. It lacks the grace and facility of "Anatol." Worse still, it lacks the good-humor and subtle irony of those first sketches. Instead it has purpose and a serious outlook on life. The "piece of fiction" refers to the "fallen" woman—to the alleged impossibility for any decent man to give his whole trust to a woman who has once strayed from the straight path. *Fedor Denner* denounces this attitude in the presence of a young girl who loves him and is loved by him, but who belongs to the category of women under discussion. When he learns her history, he struggles vainly to resist the feelings of distrust and jealousy which he had declared absurd a little while earlier. And the two are forced at last to walk their different ways. Unfortunately the dialogue is heavy and stilted. The play is a tract rather than a piece of art, and the tirades of *Fedor* are equally unconvincing when he speaks for or against that "fiction" which is killing both his own and the girl's hope of happiness in mutual love. Yet the play marks a step forward in outlook and spirit.

Schnitzler's interest in hypnotism, which had asserted itself in the first scene of "Anatol," appears again in the little verse-play, "Paracelsus," which followed. But this time he used it to more purpose. By the help of it, a woman's innermost soul is laid bare, and some very interesting light is shed on the workings of the human mind in general.

"Amours" (*Liebelei*) may be regarded as a cross, or a compromise, between "Anatol" and "A Piece of Fiction." The crudeness of speech marking the latter play has given room to a very incisive dialogue, that carries the action forward with unflinching precision. Some of the temporarily dropped charm has been recovered, and the gain in sincerity has been preserved. "Amours" seems to be the first one of a series of plays dealing with the reverse of the gay picture presented in "Anatol." A young man is having a love affair with two women at the same time, one of them married, the other one a young girl with scant knowledge of the world. Yet she knows enough to know what she is doing, and she has sufficient strength of mind to rise above a sense of guilt, though she is more prone to be the victim of fear. Then the married woman's husband challenges the young man, who is killed. And the girl takes her own life, not because her lover is dead, not because of anything she has done, but because his death

for the sake of another woman renders her own faith in him meaningless.

"Outside the Game Laws" (*Freiwild*) is another step ahead—the first play, I think, where the real Arthur Schnitzler, the author of "The Lonely Way" and "Countess Mizzie," reveals himself. It has a thesis, but this is implied rather than obtruded. In style and character-drawing it is realistic in the best sense. It shows already the typical Schnitzlerian tendency of dealing with serious questions—with questions of life and death—in a casual fashion, as if they were but problems of which road to follow or which shop to enter. It has one fault that must appear as such everywhere, namely, a division of purpose. When the play starts, one imagines that those "outside the game laws" are the women of the stage, who are presented as the legitimate prey of any man caring to hunt them. As the play goes on, that starting point is almost lost sight of, and it becomes more and more plain that those "outside the game laws" are sensible, decent men who refuse to submit to the silly dictates of the dueling code. But what I have thus named a fault is mostly theoretical, and does not mar the effective appeal of the play. What must appear as a more serious shortcoming from an American viewpoint is the local nature of the evil attacked, which lessens the universal validity of the work.

"Change Partners!" (*Reigen*) was produced about the same time as "Outside the Game Laws," but was not printed until 1900, and then only privately. Yet those ten dialogues provoked from the first a storm which seriously threatened Schnitzler's growing reputation and popularity. When Vienna finds a work immoral, one may look for something dreadful. And the work in question attempts a degree of naturalism rarely equaled in France even. Yet those dialogues are anything but immoral in spirit. They introduce ten men and as many women. The man of one scene reappears with a new woman in the next, and then that woman figures as the partner of a new man in the third scene. The story is always the same (except in the final dialogue): desire, satisfaction, indifference. The idea underlying this "ring dance," as the title means literally, is the same one that recurs under a much more attractive aspect in "Countess Mizzie." It is the linking together of the entire social organism by man's

natural cravings. And as a document bearing on the psychology of sex "Change Partners!" has not many equals.

In "The Legacy" (*Das Vermächtnis*) we meet with a forcible presentation and searching discussion of the world's attitude toward those ties that have been established without social sanction. A young man is brought home dying, having been thrown from his horse. He compels his parents to send for his mistress and their little boy, and he hands both over to the care of his family. That is his "legacy." The family tries hard to rise to this unexpected situation and fails miserably – largely, it must be confessed, thanks to the caddish attitude of a self-made physician who wants to marry the dead man's sister. The second act ends with the death of the little boy; the third, with the disappearance and probable suicide of his mother. The dead man's sister cries out: "Everything that was his is sacred to us, but the one living being who meant more to him than all of us is driven out of our home." The one ray of light offered is that the sister sees through the man who has been courting her and sends him packing. It is noticeable in this play, as in others written by Schnitzler, that the attitude of the women is more sensible and tolerant than that of the men.

The physician is one of the few members of that profession whom the author has painted in an unfavorable light. There is hardly one full-length play of his in which at least one representative of the medical profession does not appear. And almost invariably they seem destined to act as the particular mouthpieces of the author. In a play like "The Lonely Way," for instance, the life shown is the life lived by men and women observed by Schnitzler. The opinions expressed are the opinions of that sort of men and women under the given circumstances. The author neither approves nor disapproves when he makes each character speak in accordance with his own nature. But like most creative artists, he has felt the need of stating his own view of the surrounding throng. This he seems usually to do through the mouth of men like *Dr. Reumann* in the play just mentioned, or *Dr. Mauer* in "The Vast Country." And the attitude of those men shows a strange mingling of disapproval and forbearance, which undoubtedly comes very near being Schnitzler's own.

The little one-act play "The Life Partner" (*Die Gefährtin*) is significant mainly as a study for bigger canvases developing the same theme: the veil that hides the true life of man and woman alike from the partner. And the play should really be named "The Life Partner That Was Not." Another one-act play, "The Green Cockatoo," is laid at Paris. Its action takes place on the evening of July 14, 1789—the fall of the Bastille and the birth of the Revolution. It presents a wonderful picture of social life at the time—of the average human being's unconsciousness of the great events taking place right under his nose.

"The Veil of Beatrice," a verse play in five acts, takes us to Bologna in the year 1500, when Cesare Borgia was preparing to invest the city in order to oust its tyrant, Giovanni Bentivoglio (named Lionardo in the play), and add it to the Papal possessions. All the acts take place in one night. The fundamental theme is one dear to Schnitzler—the flaming up of passion under the shadow of impending death. The whole city, with the duke leading, surrenders to this outburst, the spirit of which finds its symbol in a ravishingly beautiful girl, *Beatrice Nardi*, who seems fated to spread desire and death wherever she appears. With her own death at dawn, the city seems to wake as from a nightmare to face the enemy already at the gates. The play holds much that is beautiful and much that is disappointing. To me its chief importance lies in the fact that it marks a breaking-point between the period when Schnitzler was trying to write "with a purpose," and that later and greater period when he has learned how to treat life sincerely and seriously without other purpose than to present it as it is. That was his starting point in "Anatol," but then he was not yet ready for the realism that must be counted the highest of all: the realism that has no tendency and preaches no lesson, but from which we draw our own lessons as we draw them from life itself in moments of unusual lucidity.

"Hours of Life" (*Lebendige Stunden*), which has given its name to a volume of four one-act plays, may be described as a mental duel between two sharply opposed temperaments—the practical and the imaginative. An elderly woman, long an invalid, has just died, and a letter to the man who has loved and supported her during her final years reveals the fact that she has taken her own life because she feared that the thought of her was preventing her son, a poet,

from working. The duel is between that son and the man who has befriended his mother. The play constitutes a scathing arraignment of the artistic temperament. Bernard Shaw himself has never penned a more bitter one. "Even if you were the world's greatest genius," the old man cries to the young one, "all your scribbling would be worthless in comparison with a single one of those hours of real life that saw your mother seated in that chair, talking to us, or merely listening, perhaps."

The most important of those four one-act plays, however, is "End of the Carnival" (*Die letzten Masken*). An old journalist, a might-have-been, dying in a hospital, sends for a life-long friend, a successful poet, whom he hates because of his success. All he thinks of is revenge, of getting even, and he means to achieve this end by disclosing to the poet the faithlessness of his wife. Once she had been the mistress of the dying man, and that seems to him his one triumph in life. But when the poet arrives and begins to talk of the commonplaces of daily life, of petty gossip, petty intrigues, and petty jealousies, then the dying man suddenly sees the futility of the whole thing. To him, who has one foot across the final threshold, it means nothing, and he lets his friend depart without having told him anything. There is a curious recurrence of the same basic idea in "Professor Bernhardt," where the central figure acquires a similar sense of our ordinary life's futility by spending two months in jail.

To what extent Schnitzler has studied and been impressed by Nietzsche I don't know, but the thought underlying "The Lady With the Dagger" is distinctly Nietzschean. It implies not only a sense of our having lived before, of having previously stood in the same relationship to the people now surrounding us, but of being compelled to repeat our past experience, even if a sudden flash of illumination out of the buried past should reveal to us its predestined fatal termination. This idea meets us again in the first act of "The Lonely Way." The fourth of those one-act plays, "Literature," is what Schnitzler has named it—a farce—but delightfully clever and satirical.

Those four plays, and the group of three others published under the common title of "Puppets" (*Marionetten*), are, next to "Anatol," the best known works of Schnitzler's outside of Austria and Germa-

ny. They deserve their wide reputation, too, for there is nothing quite like them in the modern drama. Yet I think they have been over-estimated in comparison with the rest of Schnitzler's production. "The Puppet Player," "The Gallant Cassian" and "The Greatest Show of All" (*Zum grossen Wurstel*) have charm and brightness and wit. But in regard to actual significance they cannot compare with plays like "The Lonely Way," for instance.

The three plays comprised in the volume named "Puppets" constitute three more exemplifications of the artistic temperament, which again fares badly at the hands of their author. And yet he has more than one telling word to say in defense of that very temperament. That these plays, like "Hours of Life" and "Literature," are expressive of the inner conflict raging for years within the playwright's own soul, I take for granted. And they seem to reflect moments when Schnitzler felt that, in choosing poetry rather than medicine for his life work, he had sacrificed the better choice. And yet they do not show any regrets, but rather a slightly ironical self-pity. A note of irony runs through everything that Schnitzler has written, constituting one of the main attractions of his art, and it is the more acceptable because the point of it so often turns against the writer himself.

"The Puppet Player" is a poet who has ceased writing in order to use human beings for his material. He thinks that he is playing with their destinies as if they were so many puppets. And the little drama shows how his accidental interference has created fates stronger and happier than his own—fates lying wholly outside his power. The play suffers from a tendency to exaggerated subtlety which is one of Schnitzler's principal dangers, though it rarely asserts itself to such an extent that the enjoyment of his work is spoiled by it.

His self-irony reaches its climax in the one-act play which I have been forced to name "The Greatest Show of All" because the original title (*Zum grossen Wurstel*) becomes meaningless in English. There he proceeds with reckless abandon to ridicule his own work as well as the inflated importance of all imaginative creation. But to even up the score, he includes the public, as representative of ordinary humanity, among the objects of his sarcasms. And in the end all of us—poets, players, and spectators—are exposed as mere puppets.

The same thought recurs to some extent in "The Gallant Cassian," which is otherwise a piece of sheer fun—the slightest of Schnitzler's dramatic productions, perhaps, but not without the accustomed Schnitzlerian sting.

When, after reading all the preceding plays, one reaches "The Lonely Way" (*Der einsame Weg*), it is hard to escape an impression of everything else having been nothing but a preparation. It is beyond all doubt Schnitzler's greatest and most powerful creation so far, representing a tremendous leap forward both in form and spirit. It has less passion than "The Call of Life," less subtlety than "Intermezzo," less tolerance than "Countess Mizzie." Instead it combines in perfect balance all the best qualities of those three plays—each dominant feature reduced a little to give the others scope as well. It is a wonderful specimen of what might be called the new realism—of that realism which is paying more attention to spiritual than to material actualities. Yet it is by no means lacking in the more superficial verisimilitude either. Its character-drawing and its whole atmosphere are startlingly faithful to life, even though the life portrayed may represent a clearly defined and limited phase of universal human existence.

The keynote of the play lies in *Sala's* words to *Julian* in the closing scene of the fourth act: "The process of aging must needs be a lonely one to our kind." That's the main theme—not a thesis to be proved. This loneliness to which *Sala* refers, is common to all people, but it is more particularly the share of those who, like himself and *Julian*, have treasured their "freedom" above everything else and who, for that reason, have eschewed the human ties which to a man like *Wegrath* represent life's greatest good and deepest meaning. Again we find the principal characters of the play typifying the artistic temperament, with its unhuman disregards of the relationships that have primary importance to other men. Its gross egoism, as exemplified by *Julian*, is the object of passionate derision. And yet it is a man of that kind, *Sala*, who recognizes and points out the truer path, when he says: "To love is to live for somebody else."

The play has no thesis, as I have already said. It is not poised on the point of a single idea. Numerous subordinate themes are woven into the main one, giving the texture of the whole a richness resem-

bling that of life itself. Woman's craving for experience and self-determination is one such theme, which we shall find again in "Intermezzo," where it practically becomes the dominant one.

Another one is that fascinated stare at death which is so characteristic of Latin and Slav writers—of men like Zola, Maupassant, and Tolstoy—while it is significantly absent in the great Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon poets. "Is there ever a blissful moment in any decent man's life, when he can think of anything but death in his innermost soul?" says *Sala*. The same thought is expressed in varying forms by one after another of Schnitzler's characters. "All sorrow is a lie as long as the open grave is not your own," cries the dying *Catharine* in "The Call of Life." It is in this connection particularly that we of the North must bear in mind Schnitzler's Viennese background and the Latin traditions forming such a conspicuous part of it. The Latin peoples have shown that they can die as bravely as the men of any other race or clime, but their attitude toward death in general is widely different from the attitude illustrated by Ibsen or Strindberg, for instance. A certain gloom, having kinship with death, seems ingrained in the Northern temperament, put there probably by the pressure of the Northern winter. The man of the sunlit South, on the other hand, seems always to retain the child's simple horror at the thought that darkness must follow light. We had better not regard it as cowardice under any circumstances, and cowardice it can certainly not be called in the characters of Schnitzler. But the resignation in which he finds his only antidote, and which seems to represent his nearest approach to a formulated philosophy, cannot be expected to satisfy us. One of his own countrymen, Hermann Bahr, has protested sharply against its insufficiency as a soul-sustaining faith, and in that protest I feel inclined to concur.

With "The Lonely Way" begins a series of plays representing not only Schnitzler's highest achievements so far, but a new note in the modern drama. To a greater extent than any other modern plays—not even excepting those of Ibsen—they must be defined as psychological. The dramas of Strindberg come nearest in this respect, but they, too, lag behind in soul-revealing quality. Plots are almost lacking in the Schnitzler productions during his later period. Things happen, to be sure, and these happenings are violent enough at

times, but they do not constitute a sharply selected sequence of events leading up to a desired and foreshadowed end. In the further development of this period, even clearly defined themes are lost sight of, and the course of the play takes on an almost accidental aspect. This is puzzling, of course, and it must be especially provoking to those who expect each piece of art to have its narrow little lesson neatly tacked on in a spot where it cannot be missed. It implies a manner that exacts more alertness and greater insight on the part of the reader. But for that very reason these later plays of Schnitzler should prove stimulating to those who do not suffer from mental laziness or exhaustion.

"Intermezzo" (*Zwischenspiel*) might be interpreted as an attack on those new marital conventions which abolish the old-fashioned demand for mutual faithfulness and substitute mutual frankness. It would be more correct, however, to characterize it as a discussion of what constitutes true honesty in the ever delicate relationship between husband and wife. It shows, too, the growth of a woman's soul, once she has been forced to stand on her own feet. Viewed from this point, the play might very well be classified as feminist. It would be easy, for one thing, to read into it a plea for a single moral standard. But its ultimate bearing goes far beyond such a narrow construction. Here as elsewhere, Schnitzler shows himself more sympathetic toward the female than toward the male outlook on life, and the creator of *Cecilia Adams-Ortenburg* may well be proclaimed one of the foremost living painters of the woman soul.

The man who, in "Anatol," saw nothing but a rather weak-minded restlessness in woman's inconstancy, recognizes in "Intermezzo" woman's right to as complete a knowledge of life and its possibilities as any man may acquire. The same note is struck by *Johanna* in "The Lonely Way." "I want a time to come when I must shudder at myself—shudder as deeply as you can only when nothing has been left untried," she says to *Sala* in the fourth act. This note sounds much more clearly—one might say defiantly—through the last two acts of "Intermezzo." And when *Amadeus*, shrinking from its implications, cries to *Cecilia* that thereafter she will be guarded by his tenderness, she retorts impatiently: "But I don't want to be guarded! I shall no longer permit you to guard me!" In strict keeping with it is also that Schnitzler here realizes and accepts

woman's capacity for and right to creative expression. It is from *Cecilia's* lips that the suggestion comes to seek a remedy for life's hurts in a passionate abandonment to work. In fact, the established attitudes of man and woman seem almost reversed in the cases of *Amadeus* and *Cecilia*.

Significant as this play is from any point viewed, I am inclined to treasure it most on account of the subtlety and delicacy of its dialogue. I don't think any dramatist of modern times has surpassed Schnitzler in his ability to find expression for the most refined nuances of thought and feeling. To me, at least, it is a constant joy to watch the iridescence of his sentences, which gives to each of them not merely one, but innumerable meanings. And through so much of this particular play runs a spirit that can only be called playful—a spirit which finds its most typical expression in the delightful figure of *Albert Rhon*, the poet who takes the place of the otherwise inevitable physician. I like to think of that figure as more or less embodying the author's conception of himself. All the wit and sparkle with which we commonly credit the Gallic mind seems to me abundantly present in the scenes between *Albert* and *Amadeus*.

The poise and quiet characterizing "The Lonely Way" and "Intermezzo" appear lost to some extent in "The Call of Life" (*Der Ruf des Leben*), which, on the other hand, is one of the intensest plays written by Schnitzler. The white heat of its passion sears the mind at times, so that the reader feels like raising a shield between himself and the words. "It was as if I heard life itself calling to me outside my door," *Marie* says in this play when trying to explain to *Dr. Schindler* why she had killed her father and gone to seek her lover. The play might as well have been named "The Will to Live," provided we remember that mere existence can hardly be called life. Its basic thought has much in common with that of Frank Wedekind's "Earth Spirit," but Schnitzler spiritualizes what the German playwright has vulgarized. There is a lot of modern heresy in that thought—a lot of revived and refined paganism that stands in sharp opposition to the spirit of Christianity as it has been interpreted hitherto. It might be summarized as a twentieth century version of Achilles' declaration that he would rather be a live dog than the ruler of all the shades in Hades. "What a creature can I be," cries *Marie*, "to emerge out of such an experience as out of a bad dream—