

**EINER MUSS
HEIRATEN!:
LUSTSPIEL. EIGENFINN**

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Einer muss Heiraten!: Lustspiel. Eigenfinn by Alexander Wilhelmi & Roderich Benedix & Wm. Addison Hervey

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**ALEXANDER WILHELMI &
RODERICH BENEDIX & WM. ADDISON HERVEY**

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HEIRATEN!:
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Einer muß heiraten!

Kußspiel von
Alexander Wilhelmi

Eigensinn

Kußspiel von
Roderich Benedig

EDITED WITH NOTES AND VOCABULARY

BY

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INTRODUCTION

The text of each play follows the standard edition of the respective author's works, the orthography being revised in conformity with the changes adopted by the Orthographic Conference held in Berlin, June, 1901, and incorporated in the seventh edition of Duden's *Orthographisches Wörterbuch*. The most important change is the substitution of *t* for *th* in these seven words (and their derivatives), where the *h* had hitherto been inconsistently retained: *Taf* (hence *Taler*), *Ton* (clay), *Tor* (der and *daß*), *Tran* (fish oil), *Träne*, *tun* (hence also *Tat*, *tätig*), *Tür*; likewise in Christian names of native origin, as *Berta*, *Bertold* (but either *Walter* or *Walther* is permitted). In loan words, and those of non-Germanic derivation, an original *th* is retained, e. g., *Theater*, *Thermometer* (but either *See* or *Thee*); so, too, in names, as *Theodor*, *Thomas*. Another change is the substitution of a small initial in *namens*, "by name of", and in such phrases as *Montag abend*; further, the uniform adoption of the spelling (*du*) gibst, (*er*) gibt. In cases where the usage is still variable, that which seems likely to become the ultimate standard has been followed. Thus the three forms, *zu Grunde*, *zu grundē* and *zugrunde* (*gehen*) are permissible, but the last will doubtless ultimately prevail (cf. note to page 3, line 11).

The notes in this edition contain little translation,—the vocabulary, as a rule, giving all the help needed in this direction by means of reference to the text. They deal almost exclusively with syntax and idiom, and are intended for the elementary student in high-school or college who needs a review of old difficulties and explanation of new ones. Mere translation of an idiom, with no understanding of its *raison d'être*, postpones indefinitely the time when the learner can make it his. Accordingly reference is made to the notes under the key-word in the vocabulary, which thus serves as an index.

Alexander Victor Wilhelmi, as he called himself (his real name having been Zechmeister), is chiefly remembered as the author of *Einer muss heiraten*. He was born 1817, educated in Vienna, where he did not quite complete the Gymnasium course, and was then apprenticed to a bookseller. He left this calling in 1842 to go on the stage. From 1845 to 1849 he played at the Hamburg Stadttheater. In the latter year he went to Dresden, where the rest of his career was spent. In 1876 failing health sent him to the Tyrol, where he died the following year. As an actor, chiefly of minor parts, Wilhelmi was a favorite with the theater-going public. He wrote a number of good one-act comedies and also essayed longer plays, but with indifferent success. His "Lustspiele" were published in 4 vols., Dresden, 1853-1860.

Einer muss heiraten (1850) shows Wilhelmi at his best in the invention of clever dialogue and droll situations. The obvious allusion to the famous Brothers Grimm (cf. note to page 2), who, as typical German scholars, furnished a hint for the names and the personal relations of Jakob and Wilhelm Zorn—but nothing more—has contributed much to the popularity of the little play. It is a bit of good-natured fun, without a touch of satire, and is characteristically German in tone. For the Germans like to make merry, in a harmless way, over the awkward, absent-minded university professor who—it is made to appear—has no other interest in life than the pursuit of knowledge, but they are mightily proud of him, nevertheless, and well know how much their country owes to him.

Roderich Julius Benedix (1811–1873) was born in Leipzig, where he prepared for the university, intending to study theology. In 1831, however, he suddenly went on the stage, where he remained, as actor and manager, for ten years. His first play, *Das bemooste Haupt*, was produced 1841 and achieved a great success. He left the stage and henceforth devoted himself chiefly to literary work, which included for a short time the editorship of a popular journal. Besides his numerous plays he wrote "Bilder aus dem Schauspielerleben" and manuals of elocution and correspondence. Between 1844 and 1858 he was theater-director in Elberfeld, Cologne and Frankfurt a. M., successively. In Cologne he lectured on literature and elocution at a musical institute. Shortly before

his death, Benedix published his *Shakespearomanie*, attacking the popularity of the English poet in Germany. This polemic was a superficial piece of work and attracted little notice. His last years, from 1861, were spent in Leipzig. In 1871 his autobiography appeared in the journal *Gartenlaube*. His dramatic works, numbering more than ninety, were published in twenty-seven volumes, Leipzig, 1846-1874.

Benedix is unequalled (except by Hans Sachs) for productivity in the range of German dramatic literature, and as a natural consequence his plays include many of indifferent merit. There are enough, however, that are deservedly favorites, to insure the author's enduring fame. Such are, for example, besides *Das bemooste Haupt*, *Der Vetter*, *Die zärtlichen Verwandten*, *Die relegierten Studenten*; among his many good short plays, *Die Eifersüchtigen*, *Eigensinn*, *Die Hochzeitsreise*, *Der Prozess*. The latter, to the number of forty-six (nearly all of them one-act comedies), are published separately in two volumes under the title "Haustheater".

It is the chief merit of Benedix's plays that they are thoroughly German; the social conditions in the Germany of Benedix's time are, of course, not in all respects those of to-day, and his comedies no longer enjoy the large measure of popularity that they once had. The characters are familiar types in the upper middle class, and they reveal their foibles, their eccentricities, their homely virtues, in such a way that one has merely to know something of human nature, in whatever land, in order to understand them. There

is exaggeration, to be sure, even to the point of caricature (as of the pedantic professor in *Die Hochzeitsreise*), but we are merely amused, never deceived. The satire of Benedix's plays is so mild, the occasional moral so unobtrusive, that they furnish scarcely more than clean, wholesome fun. Indeed the author says in his autobiography that he "has always been only a genre painter, and would never use the comedy to scourge the follies of the times." For such a writer, who had no "message," whose sole "mission" was avowedly to amuse, the literary historian and the critic need little space. But this in nowise concerns the thousands who know his plays and are grateful for the smiles he has provoked.

Eigensinn is fairly typical of his shorter comedies. A very simple theme is made to furnish a succession of humorous situations; indeed, the same situation is here repeated with three different couples. It is upon comical situations that Benedix depends for his effects. His dialogue is easy and natural, rather than witty, and makes no pretension to elegance. In fact it is as simple as his plots, which are sometimes so slight and obvious that we wonder at their success. Nor does the author depend upon scenery and costumes to any degree. The shorter comedies, especially, can be produced in the school or the home (hence the title "Haustheater") as well as in the theater.

W. A. H.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY,
August, 1905.

Einer muß heiraten!

Kußspiel in einem Aufzuge

von

Alexander Wilhelmi.