

21.  
Schiller's  
"Play-  
theory."

the instinct or impulse to "Play"; he conceives of man as rising out of a complete dependence on nature, and as exhibiting a superabundance of life and energy in the freedom of Play. "The animal plays when a superabundance of life stimulates it into action." This is the lowest stage of play, which in a higher stage becomes creative. Play creates a world and forms of its own. This world of its own is the world of semblance or beautiful appearance. This appearance may be gained by imitation or by free action, but imitation becomes beautiful and real when it rises to independence; and free action becomes beautiful when it contains within itself its own end, when it is not only the means but an end in itself. Thus, before man is ripe for the exercise of moral freedom he passes through the stage of æsthetical freedom; before the seriousness of life sets in, the child is introduced to the sphere of freedom through play; it learns to use its powers without constraint before it advances to the use of them for a definite end and purpose. The unconstrained freedom of play, within the limits of the beautiful, precedes the self-constrained freedom of action according to the moral law. It has been remarked that Schiller's speculations contain an antinomy, an inherent contradiction. "Two questions press upon us. We are told that out of the æsthetical stage the moral is produced easily and with certainty, and as such is and remains the higher. On the other side we are assured that with the æsthetical condition the moral is already fulfilled, that its task is performed, that therefore moral exertion is not any more required but