

= Johann Peter Hebel =

Johann Peter Hebel ( 10 May 1760 ? 22 September 1826 ) was a German short story writer , dialectal poet , evangelical theologian and pedagogue , most famous for a collection of Alemannic lyric poems ( *Allemannische Gedichte* ) and one of German tales ( *Schatzkästlein des rheinischen Hausfreundes* ? *Treasure Chest of the Family Friend from the Rhine* ) .

Born in Basel , Hebel entered primary school in 1766 and joined a Latin school three years later ; he visited the schools in Basel during summer and in Hausen and Schopfheim respectively in the nearby Wiesental during winter . After the death of his mother in 1773 , he remained at school , graduating with the help of friends from the *Gymnasium illustre* of Karlsruhe in 1778 and going on to study theology . He became a home tutor , an assistant preacher , an assistant teacher , a subdeacon and , in 1798 , a professor and court deacon .

Hebel was interested in botany , natural history and other subjects . His literary work began with *Allemannische Gedichte* , which is perhaps the most popular work written in Alemannic . He had success with his calendar stories in the *Badischer Landkalender* , and later with *Rheinländischer Hausfreund* ( *Rhenish family friend* ) , but a dispute between Catholics forced him to resign as editor of the calendar . In his last years he devoted himself increasingly to religion , becoming a prelate in 1819 , but his wish to become a parish priest was never fulfilled . His last works were biblical stories for young readers , which served as textbooks until 1855 . Hebel died 1826 in Schwetzingen . Goethe , Tolstoy , Gottfried Keller , Hermann Hesse and other writers have praised his works .

= = Early life = =

Johann Peter Hebel was born on 10 May 1760 in Basel , where his parents were employed in a patrician household during the summer . He spent half of his childhood in Basel and the other half in the village of Hausen im Wiesental , where his father worked as a weaver during the winters . As he wrote in an autobiographical sketch , " there I learned early on what it meant to be poor and rich ... to have nothing and to have everything , to be happy with the happy people and to be sad with those who cried " . Memories of both places had a deep influence on his literary work . Hebel 's father , who had moved to southern Baden from the Hunsrück area , died of typhus early in 1761 , as did his younger sister , who was only a few weeks old . Hebel went to primary school in Hausen in 1766 , and in 1769 went on to the Latin school in Schopfheim , where his teacher was the theologian August Gottlieb Preuschen . During the summer months he went to a parish school in Basel , and later to the prestigious cathedral school ( *Gymnasium am Münsterplatz* ) . His mother died when he was thirteen .

In 1774 , with financial help from friends , Hebel joined the *Gymnasium illustre* in Karlsruhe ( now the *Bismarck @-@ Gymnasium* ) , where he graduated in 1778 . After studying theology in Erlangen from 1778 to 1780 , he became a home tutor and assistant preacher in Hertingen , Bad Bellingen , and was appointed *Präzeptoratsvikar* ( assistant teacher ) in 1783 at the *Pädagogium* in Lörrach , now called the Hebel @-@ Gymnasium in his honour . He became friends with the headmaster , Tobias Günttert , and through him met Gustave Fecht , Günttert 's sister @-@ in @-@ law , with whom he had a long @-@ lasting , platonic relationship and to whom he sent numerous letters . Hebel remained unmarried all his life , although in later years he adored the actress Henriette Hendel @-@ Schütz . In 1791 he returned to Karlsruhe to take up a position as a deacon at the Karlsruhe Gymnasium , but was instead only named a " subdeacon " . Apart from teaching , Hebel occasionally preached at court , where he enjoyed great popularity .

= = Later life = =

In 1798 Hebel became a professor and court deacon . He taught several other subjects in the Gymnasium , among them botany and natural history . He took a broad interest in botany ; he maintained a herbarium and rearranged the botanical terms and diagnoses in *Flora badensis alsatica* , written by his friend , botanist Karl Christian Gmelin . In his honour , Gmelin named a plant

Hebelia allemannica , though it was later renamed Tofieldia calyculata . Hebel became an honorary member of the mineralogical society in Jena in 1799 , and three years later a corresponding member of the " Vaterländischen Gesellschaft der Ärzte und Naturforscher in Schwaben " . In his youth he enjoyed the works of Klopstock and Jung @-@ Stilling . Later he especially liked Jean Paul and Johann Heinrich Voß .

Hebel lived in Karlsruhe until his death , but made occasional journeys to other regions . His wish to become a parish priest in Wiesental was never fulfilled , though he wrote an inaugural sermon for a rural parish in 1820 . In this sermon he wrote , " to live and die as a pastor in a peaceful country town , among honest people , has always been my sole wish , up to this hour ; it was what I wished for in the happiest and in the darkest moments of my life " . Instead , he was " led higher and higher by an invisible hand , ever further away from my modest goals " . In 1805 he was offered the Lutheran parish of Freiburg im Breisgau , but he declined it at the behest of Charles Frederick , Grand Duke of Baden . He was rewarded in 1808 with his appointment as director of the Gymnasium in Karlsruhe . In 1819 he became a prelate of the Lutheran regional church , a leading position that brought with it a seat in the Upper House of the Parliament ( Ständerversammlung ) of Baden . As a member of parliament he devoted himself mainly to education , the church and social policy . He later gave a speech at the consecration of the statehouse in Karlsruhe . Even though the Lutheran and Reformed regional churches of Baden merged in 1821 with strong support from his side , into today 's Evangelische Landeskirche in Baden , his position as the prelate of the unified Protestant church was not endangered .

Hebel 's health deteriorated after 1815 . In 1826 he travelled to Heidelberg and Mannheim to oversee school exams , and he died on 22 September 1826 in nearby Schwetzingen . His grave is there . Johannes Bähr succeeded him as prelate in the regional church of Baden .

= = Writings = =

= = = Allemannische Gedichte = = =

Apart from a few early attempts , Hebel 's began his literary work near the end of the 18th century . After returning to Karlsruhe from a trip to Wiesental in 1799 , he began to write Allemannische Gedichte , inspired by a longing for his home . ( Allemannische is the spelling he used ; normally it has just one " l " . ) The 32 poems " for friends of the rural way of life " were written in Alemannic , the local dialect of Wiesental . Hebel could not find a Basel publisher willing to produce the book in Alemannic , and the collection was only published in 1803 by Philip Macklot in Karlsruhe , after Hebel and his friends managed to collect enough advance subscriptions . The first edition was published anonymously , possibly because Hebel was concerned about getting a rustic image .

In Allemannische Gedichte , Hebel depicts the local life and customs of his homeland , with topics ranging from a description of the river Wiese , through praise of the Breisgau area , to his work in the ironworks in Hausen . Perhaps the most famous poem is " Die Vergänglichkeit " , a poem about death , in which the father ( Alemannic : Ätti ) tells his son ( Bueb ) a story based on Rötteln Castle , about how a glorious town like Basel will decline ? and likewise the whole world . Hebel also included his experience of his mother 's death : the conversation between Ätti and Bueb takes place in a cart on the street between Steinen and Brombach , where Hebel 's mother had died .

Allemannische Gedichte was very successful , and a new edition was published a year later , this time crediting the author . When Hebel read the poems aloud to margrave Charles Frederick , the duke praised them , and Hebel noticed his exact local knowledge : " I am surprised how the margrave knew all the villages , every small place , every shrub and hedge from Utzenfeld to Lörrach , and could always say : this is this , and yes , that 's how it is . " In the following decades , further editions were released in Aarau , Vienna and Reutlingen . Famous poets such as Jean Paul ( 1803 ) and Goethe ( 1804 ) wrote reviews of the poems . Hebel was elated at this success and wrote in a letter : " In certain moments I feel all proud inside , and as if drunk with happiness , that I could make our otherwise despised and ridiculed language so classical and give it such artistic fame

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### = = = Calendar stories = = =

Hebel 's second famous work is his calendar stories , which he wrote from 1803 on for the Badische Landkalender and especially from 1807 for its successor , the Rheinländischer Hausfreund . This old Lutheran calendar was selling poorly in the early 19th century , and Hebel was a member of the commission appointed to suggest improvements . After several discussions , Hebel finally became editor of the new calendar , which was first released in 1807 . One of the biggest improvements was to have more text , featuring " instructive news and funny stories " . Hebel wrote about 30 of these stories each year , and they were highly successful . The Schatzkästlein des rheinischen Hausfreundes was issued in 1811 as a collection of the most interesting of these stories . Further editions followed in 1816 and 1827 . The calendar stories included news , short stories , anecdotes , comical stories and modified fairy tales . They were intended both to entertain and to provide moral education . The best @-@ known of Hebel 's calendar stories are " Unverhofftes Wiedersehen " ( unexpected reunion ) and " Kannitverstan " ( I cannot understand ) . The philosopher Ernst Bloch called the first " the most beautiful story of the world " . There was a dispute in 1815 , as Hebel 's calendar story " Der fromme Rat " ( pious advice ) , issued in 1814 , was partially criticised by Catholics as being offensive , leading to its removal from the calendar . There he portrays a Catholic who prays to heaven instead of to the cross @-@ bearing priest ; the change can be viewed as a conversion of the Catholic to Protestantism . Hebel rounded off his story with the words : " The family friend knows to praise and venerate that , although he has never prayed to a rosary , else he would not write to the Lutheran calendar . " Subsequently , Hebel resigned as editor and wrote far fewer calendar stories , except in 1819 , when he wrote more than ever to make that year 's issue of the Rheinländischer Hausfreund possible .

### = = = Bible stories = = =

After the calendar stories , Hebel wrote Biblische Geschichten ( Bible stories ) , a new school book for evangelical religious education . His criteria were that it should be clearly written and tell biblical stories in an exciting narrative style aimed at children from ten to fourteen . It took five years to write and was completed and released in 1824 . It was used as a textbook until 1855 .

### = = Reception and legacy = =

Hebel 's admirers include Goethe , Gottfried Keller and Tolstoy . Goethe , who tried to write a poem ( the " Schweizerlied " , Swiss song ) in Alemannic himself , praised the Allemannische Gedichte highly . According to him , Hebel " countrified the universe in the most naive , graceful fashion " . But on the question of whether he would translate Hebel 's works , Goethe said : " Such a great poet should be only read in the original ! One just needs to learn this language ! " The Brothers Grimm also admired Hebel , and he met Jacob Grimm in Karlsruhe in 1814 .

Hebel 's work reflects the links between popular culture and deeper ideas . August Vilmar , for example , praised Hebel 's " Vergänglichkeit " ( transience ) , saying that it gives the folk @-@ like foreground a background not found in other poets who wrote folk idylls . Vilmar further emphasises Hebel 's description of nature by the river Wiese , the poem " Sonntagsfrühe " , and especially the stories of the Schatzkästlein : " In their mood , their deep and genuine feeling , the liveliness of their imagery , the stories are unsurpassable , and worth a whole cart @-@ load of novels " . Theodor Heuss praised Hebel 's use of the native Alemannic language , not only for parody and vulgarity , but also to make it " a true tool of the poetic craft " , and according to Heuss he created a work that " resonates with the durable , the valid , the eternal , the eternally human " .

Later authors appreciated Hebel 's work too . Hermann Hesse once commented , " As far as I know , in no literary history do we yet read that Hebel was the greatest German novelist , as great as Keller and more confident and purer and mightier in effect than Goethe . " Theodor W. Adorno

lauded his essay *Die Juden* as " one of the most beautiful German prose plays in defence of the Jews " . In *Die gerettete Zunge , Geschichte einer Jugend* , Elias Canetti described the influence that Hebel 's *Schatzkästlein* had on him : " I never wrote a book , but that I did not secretly aspire to his style , and I began by writing everything in shorthand , the knowledge of which I owe to him alone . " Marcel Reich @-@ Ranicki wrote , " Hebel 's stories are among the most beautiful in the German language " , and included the " *Schatzkästlein* " and " *Die Rose* " in his *Kanon Deutscher Literatur* . The first was also listed in the *ZEIT @-@ Bibliothek der 100 Bücher* .

The Johann @-@ Peter @-@ Hebel @-@ Preis was endowed in 1936 in honour of Hebel . The 10 @,@ 000 @-@ euro prize is awarded every two years to writers , translators , essayists , media representatives or scientists from the German district of Baden @-@ Württemberg who write in Alemannic or are connected with Hebel . The prizegiving ceremony takes place in Hausen im Wiesental , which is also home to the Hebelfest every 10 May . The community of Hausen also awards the annual Johann @-@ Peter @-@ Hebel @-@ Plakette to personalities from the Upper Rhine .

The Lörracher Pädagogium was renamed the Hebel @-@ Gymnasium in 1926 . Several Gymnasien in Pforzheim and Schwetzingen were named after him . Basic schools , in Essen , Berlin and especially Südbaden bear his name , as do numerous German streets . Monuments to Hebel are found in the Karlsruhe Palace , in Basel , Hausen and in the Hebelpark Lörrach . The Hebelbund Lörrach , Müllheim and the Basler Hebelstiftung are dedicated to his life and work .