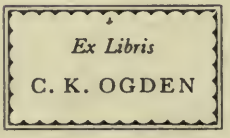
BEYOND THE RHINE

MARC HENRY



BEYOND THE RHINE

AUTHORISED TRANSLATION

Translator's notes in square brackets

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BEYOND THE RHINE

MEMORIES OF ART AND LIFE
IN GERMANY BEFORE THE WAR

BY
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CONTENTS

CHAPTER III

ARTISTS, MONARCHS AND CENSORS PAGE

CHAPTER IV

GERMAN WOMEN

CHAPTER V

THE LIFE OF EVERY DAY

CHAPTER VI

JEWS PAGE

CHAPTER VII

MASTER-SINGERS, STUDENTS, OFFICERS AND POLICEMEN

CHAPTER VIII

VANITY FAIR

BEYOND THE RHINE

PROLOGUE

Why I went to Germany—Early friendships—The *Deutsch-Französische Rundschau*—*Die elf Scharfrichter*—Why I returned to France.

IN 1895, when I had finished my military service, I returned to Paris, the place of my birth. I had studied at the Lycée Condorcet. Barely twenty-three years old, my situation was indeed precarious. My father had just died without having had time to make the legal arrangements necessary to safeguard my interests, and I, so to speak, woke up one morning to find myself alike without family and without resources.

The prospect of vegetating painfully in a city that I had known in happier days failed to attract me. On an impulse of adventure I decided to expatriate myself and look for a job elsewhere.

Trusting to some vague introductions, I departed for Munich, getting out on the platform one fine spring morning with my entire capital at the bottom of my trouser pocket in the shape of two pieces of gold. I knew no more of German than that little which one learns at school, and the first months of my stay in Munich were difficult. Lodging in a poor garret in the Schleissheimerstrasse, one of the most crowded streets of the Bavarian capital, I earned a precarious livelihood by giving French lessons to officers, shopkeepers

and middle class families. My memories of this modest beginning have nothing of bitterness. Youth, strength, health and a tendency to optimism were on my side, and the novel surroundings into which I had been transplanted roused my curiosity. Gradually my pupils increased and I was able to move to more comfortable quarters.

I made rapid progress in German, which enabled me to mix with the people of the town, to understand their mentality and to accustom myself to their manners and customs. I formed friendships both precious and genuine. My wanderings about the town brought me in contact with a Bavarian musician, since become famous, who used to live in Paris. He took pity on me and introduced me to a literary circle which included, among others, Otto Erich Hartleben (who has since died), Max Halbe and Frank Wedekind. The fact that I was French won for me a kindly welcome in this company; I found myself in contact with the young German intellectuals; I was witness to their first efforts and their earliest struggles. In the meantime I had increased the circle of my acquaintance and, becoming venturesome, I arranged for a series of lectures, at Munich and other places in Bavaria, on French literature and customs. The lectures attracted a certain amount of attention and won me a local reputation.

Encouraged by my success, I decided in 1898, in

company with a Paris friend—J. G. Prodhomme, the musician, who had just arrived in Munich—to found a literary and sociological review: the *Deutsch-Französische Rundschau.* The paper was bi-lingual and possessed about a hundred French and German collaborators. We worked for the intellectual *rapprochement* of the two countries without touching on political questions. Prodhomme won the attention for the new paper of Parisian literary circles in which he was well known, and I brought it to the notice of the German writers with whom I was intimate. This little paper now belongs to the past. For four years it united plenty of good will in a common and pacific cult of the humanities. Those who have the curiosity to turn over the numbers of the paper in the Bibliothèque Nationale can form their own opinion of the value of our efforts, which certainly mark an epoch in the history of Franco-German relations.

I soon added to my magazine a small publishing business, and had the opportunity of publishing, in addition to several French books, the first works of the new German literary renaissance.

My knowledge of German, which was now very good, enabled me to increase my sphere of influence across the whole of Central Europe, and I embarked on a lecturing tour for the discussion of questions interesting to both countries. Even the big newspapers began to

take notice of me, and I soon had the entrée to all circles.

In 1902 there began in Germany a movement to reform the theatre. The young writers and artists wanted an opportunity to win a public hearing for their new formulæ. I put myself at the head of the movement in Munich and founded an advanced theatre, "*Die elf Scharfrichter*" (The Eleven Executioners), the name reflecting the number and satiric ideas of its founders. These were: Frank Wedekind, Otto Julius Bierbaum, Richard Dehmel, Gustav Falke, Detlev von Liliencron, Arthur Schnitzler, Franz Blei, Leo Greiner, Max Halbe, Hanns Heinz Evers and Roda-Roda. The services of the leading young musicians and the better known young painters (among them Th. Th. Heine, Bruno Paul and Olaf Gulbranson, who were also drawing for *Simplicissimus*) were given to the preparation of our programmes and our scenery. The theatre made a great hit and had enormous influence both in Germany and Austria.

My varied duties as director and general manager forced me to study music, which played an important part in our enterprise. I gave French folk-song a large place in our programmes. I revived our old costumes, our old provincial traditions, and I reintroduced ancient instruments of music, revolutionising the conception of an orchestra by adding a touch of the picturesque, an unexpected hint of line and colour.

I travelled through all the towns of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Holland, Scandinavia, Switzerland and Baltic Russia, everywhere drawing considerable audiences. I would begin the evenings by a rapid survey, with quotations, of popular poetry and art throughout the centuries. I published a book on French folk-song and an anthology for German use. There followed several collections of old songs, published at Leipzig. These sold largely. A few volumes of original verse and three plays, produced with success, completed my literary equipment. . . .

. . . . . .

I have thought well to begin my book with this short autobiography so that the reader may know something of the man who is going to talk of Germany in the pages that follow.

Completely uprooted from France by the force of circumstances, I believe that I am better qualified than most foreigners to speak of a country in which I played an active part for twenty years. At Berlin, Munich and Vienna I have met too many of my compatriots, who, perpetually brushing one against the other, are incapable of mixing with the population among which they find themselves, but nevertheless feel themselves entitled to publish superficial and misleading appreciations of peoples that they hardly know.

War brought me back to France again, and from the

first days of mobilisation I have done the duty that every Frenchman knows how to do.

I think, however, that I was always doing my duty as a Frenchman when, with influence and reputation, I strove over there in Germany to win affection for France, and when I brought the support of my Latin intelligence to the struggles of a young Teuton generation.

I believe in our victory because our cause is that of all peoples, while the cause of our enemies is that of an evil tyranny; but I cannot help thinking that, if we had better studied the Germans themselves, we should have avoided many misunderstandings.

MARC HENRY.

PARIS, *July*, 1916.

CHAPTER I. THE ARMENIAN QUESTION AT THE "KAFFEE PRINCESS"

" Donnez-nous, dit ce peuple, un roi qui se remue."—LA FONTAINE.

The modern Berlin café—The opening of the *Kaffee Princess*—Its orchestra—I meet the Armenian—Why was Germany interested in Armenia ?—The Teuto-Armenian magazine and its editor—France's " glorious past "—In search of a king—The withering of the Armenian National Committee.

LONG, long ago—to be exact, at Berlin, just before the war—I received a card luxuriously bevelled informing me that there would shortly be opened on the Kurfürstendam a new café to be called the *" Kaffee Princess."* The proprietor begged me, with all the fulsome servility of German politeness, to do him the honour of gracing with my presence the solemn inauguration of his establishment. The card was embellished with a golden crown adorned with five fleurons. It explained to me that the famous architect X had designed the building and that the well-known artist Z had conceived the scheme of decoration and furnishing.

For some years Berlin had had a craze for the ultra modern café. The movement was, of course, an outlet for the commercial fertility of German artists. The practical good sense of business men knew in Germany none of the rigid limits of tradition. All that is new is beautiful. The maddest schemes im-

mediately found wealthy men eager for their realisation. As a result, restaurants, tea salons, bars and cafés acquired more and more the fascination of a nightmare. Each new talent sought to outstrip its competitors by employing decorative excesses of the most violent nature, which horrified but fascinated the docile curiosity of the public.

The opening of one of these new cafés was nothing short of a dress rehearsal. The élite of society were invited. Artists, writers, journalists, cultured idlers, all the recognised habitués of places of public pleasure sat about drinking iced champagne (French champagne of course—no other exists for a public that is really smart) ; little cakes were provided free by the gracious master of the ceremonies, and everyone made an enormous meal, criticising with genuine delight the idiot proprietor who had been robbed and fooled by artists without talent. When this occupation began to pall, they looked keenly about for any notorious individual whose presence might be interpreted as an insult. Finally everybody went away, quite happy to have seen the place, but happier still to have been seen there by others.

Each new café ran the accustomed course. Until the curiosity of the great city was glutted it remained crowded ; perhaps for a few months. Then it would become a discreet shelter for couples in search of solitude.

The *Kaffee Princess* was indeed sensational. At the door of the Kurfürstendam an interminable

porter, a real Potsdam grenadier, displayed a livery of delicate mauve cloth with startling gold bands. He wore a huge Russian cap, also gold and mauve, which made him look like one of the mushrooms in Grimm's stories—impressive, but vilely poisonous. The interior lighting of the café was skilfully softened by gold and yellow silk, which shrouded the electric lamps in dainty folds suggestive of the finest lingerie. Every room struck a different note. There was a salon in episcopal violet, a green room (like a billiard table), a red room (like a Bengal light). The daring pattern of the seats tried to the utmost the physique of those guests who attempted to use them. Glasses, plates, cups, sugar basins, spoons, knives and forks were like complicated riddles. It needed painful effort to persuade them to perform those small services which one has a right to expect.

As the astonished visitors were usually beyond speech, their paralysis was drowned in waves of muted melody. The " Viennese " orchestra, conducted by a Russian Jew, played with a haphazard characteristic of German taste, a Händel Largo, " The Merry Widow," the latest Tango and the Waldweben from Siegfried. But always muted, everything was muted, without *piano* and without *forte ;* for a sort of impersonal distance is, of course, the only real chic.

The Kurfürstendam is the most fashionable street of West Berlin—that is to say, the Berlin of the wealthy. The actual Germanic race is barely represented there except by a handful of errant females in riotous

costume. The rest of the crowd that grace the street are Jews. They feel at home there. They can be at once distinguished by their type from the native Germans. They stand for high finance, big business, and the whole series of the liberal professions into which they are driven by the rigid hostility of the Government: they are doctors, lawyers, journalists, publishers, theatrical managers, etc. etc. They form naturally enough the nucleus of the world that patronises the *Kaffee Princess*.

I became more or less of an habitué at the *Princess*, not for the sake of its style of decoration nor out of love for the languid movements of the orchestra-conductor, but because I lived a few yards off, and particularly because that all-too-green room, reserved for regular visitors, had a coolness and quiet which I learned to appreciate. Every evening after the theatre I would find there pleasant company with whom I passed the hours till bedtime.

Regularly, at the table next mine, appeared a guest with long hair, aged about thirty, always occupied with reading some foreign paper printed in characters which suggested a Turkish inscription. We began with a nod of greeting and ended in conversation. He was Armenian, as was also the paper that he read. He told me he was finishing his studies at Berlin University and was preparing for a Doctorate of Philosophy. He talked German badly enough and hardly understood French at all. Nevertheless, I learned from him a lot that was interesting about the history, conditions and

ideals of his country, the fate of which had always moved my sympathy.

The young Armenian told me that a National Committee had been founded at Berlin to interest the Government in their fate, and that support had been found in high quarters. I did not know Armenia, but I knew Germany very well, and I ascribed instantly to this benevolence motives more subtle than sheer philanthropy. Germany keeps her sentimentality for literature and never allows it to mingle with politics.

What interest could Berlin possibly have in encouraging an Armenian revival? It was enough to move in German circles to know the importance the Government attached to the question of the Balkans and Asia Minor. The Bagdad Railway was a national undertaking for which every one saw a magnificent future. To unite Berlin and the Persian Gulf was the first step toward the subjection of Europe to German political theory. The rapid decay of French influence in the East was a secret from nobody. German trade had already laid its hand on Turkey. What, I asked myself again, could the Wilhelmstrasse hope to gain by showing official favour to Armenian aspirations?

In the course of our conversations I learned that a German-Armenian paper was to be founded. The funds were provided by a German Bank in Constantinople, which had just established a branch at Van in Armenia. It is always through their banks that the Germans begin their methodical and peaceful penetration of

another country. They have shown it over and over again in South America, where gradually they have edged out their European competitors by extending large credits to native traders.

I had, then, the privilege of being present at the realisation of the Armenian programme in Berlin. My friend brought his comrades to the green room, which soon lost all its charm of solitude and was filled every evening with raucous conversation of which I understood not one word.

I got to know in this way a great national poet, exiled by the Turkish authorities, who was going to edit the new paper. He was assisted by an Armenian ex-general, built like a Hercules, with an olive-green face framed in a thick grisly beard. Three times condemned to death by default for having defended the cause of his fellow countrymen, he had some time ago taken refuge in Berlin, where he practised the profession of a dentist. With such biceps I have no doubt of his efficiency.

The first number of the periodical was conceived and edited in my presence at the *Kaffee Princess*. As it was to appear in the two languages, several learned Germans supplied indigestible articles flavoured with unreliable statistics, in which they endeavoured to prove that only Germany was able to give back to the Armenians that influence and that place in the sun which they deserved. These articles, as well as the contributions in Armenian, were sent to Constantinople, because Germany did not possess, even at

Leipzig, the necessary fount for printing them. In contrast, Constantinople swarmed with German printing works, and it was therefore easier to produce the paper on the banks of the Bosphorus.

The evening when the first number, freshly arrived from Turkey, passed from hand to hand was indeed a great occasion. The last page proclaimed the excellence of the Hamburg-Amerika and of the Norddeutscher Lloyd, while listing also the numerous advantages offered to their clients by the Deutsche Bank and Disconto Gesellschaft.

From the first number onwards the Foreign Minister in Berlin gave his support to the paper. The Armenian-German entente was an accomplished fact, and my friends were never tired of praising their benefactors.

Indeed I did not grudge them their enthusiasm, and I respected their illusions. This handful of men did not represent the Armenian nation. They were acting on their own accord and with the best of motives. Nevertheless, I ventured with great discretion to remind them of the sympathies of France, which had never deserted them. I mentioned books by courageous writers (such as Pierre Quillard) which ceaselessly urged the Government of the Republic to intervene in favour of the Armenians, but I was met with sceptical smiles and shrugs of disillusion. I was not to think that they disliked France. Oh no, it was not that. . . .

Indeed they loved France, and had the most profound admiration for her glorious *past*. That was it. Everything for which France stood in their eyes had

long ago perished. This was not the only time that my patriotism had to suffer this cruel taunt. It was the powerful shadow of the Prussian Eagle which so many saw cast across the high roads of the future. For my country they had only a respectful sympathy and words which were not unlike condolences.

The Armenian gatherings became more numerous and more excited. I had gone back to my usual table and refrained, on purpose, from taking part in discussions in which, as a Frenchman, I might have seemed an intruder. Many strange names glittered in their conversation. They spoke with enthusiasm of the reigning houses of the German confederation. The whole Almanach de Gotha appeared in their discussions, from the all-powerful Hohenzollern to the ridiculous remnant of the senior branch of the Princes of Reuss. This chatter of the great had for me no significance.

But one evening the dentist general, who had come rather earlier than usual, was kind enough to impart to me a truly stupefying secret. The Armenians of the *Kaffee Princess* wanted a Prince, who would do them the honour of putting himself at their head. The stupid story of the Mpret of Albania, the ineffable Prince of Wied, had turned their heads. They wanted a German Prince. Their plan had been well received in high quarters, with reserve certainly, but at any rate with sympathy.

Germany exports everything. Pedlars of merchandise, pedlars of royalty. Every operation is a business

proposition, even war. The great principles of human ideals have never moved the German Government to act; their motives have always been with a view to profit. The German is a commercial traveller, even when he wears a crown or a uniform.

My Armenians proceeded to ransack the Almanach de Gotha before embarking on their scheme. It even occurred to them to approach one of the numerous Hohenzollerns, but they had an uneasy feeling that this was too great an ambition. Such powerful monarchs would demand a more considerable reward. Gradually they had come down to the insignificant princelings, decaying off-shoots of the old Germanic tree, who have nothing particular to do and who would probably be glad enough to attract to themselves the attention of the world. The chances of success were weighed. The profits were reckoned. The best market was chosen. Rumania, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania (this last created solely as a favour to the Central Empires) were already regarded as branches of Berlin. Why not also Armenia?

But they had not time even to begin their negotiations, or perhaps I should say that I was not in a position to await the result.

July 31st arrived. Farewell Kurfürstendam! Farewell raucous silks of the *Kaffee Princess!* Farewell Berlin! Farewell, also, incredible band conductor, who sweetened our faintly sugared evenings with your muted melody! Another music, louder and more nervous than yours, has begun to sound. France is

awake. She is no longer the country of the past but of the present, and, as I believe in my heart, of the future.

And you, my poor Armenians, what has become of you? From afar I hear the pitiful cries of your murdered countrymen. The Turks are bleeding you, their flags mingled with those of Germany. Are you still looking for a little German Prince, or have your patrons, who now need you no more, crushed in their brutal hands those hollow dreams, those generous illusions, which blossomed in the artificial light of the *Kaffee Princess*?

CHAPTER II. SOME ASPECTS OF SOCIALIST GERMANY

" Tous les mangeurs de gens ne sont pas grands seigneurs."
LA FONTAINE.

Karsten P.... in Munich—Our visit to von Vollmar—The differences between the various German states—The *Reichstag*—The Social Democratic Party—What is their real influence?—Sketch of the rise of Social Democracy—Karsten P.... in Breslau—His famous retort to the insolent Berliner—Education Committees—Social Democratic organisation—Socialism among the peasants—Karsten and I attend a village concert—Election fodder—Karsten P.... in Berlin—The Kaiser and the sullen builders—Karsten P...., Reichstag Deputy.

IT was at the bottom of a Munich garden, eighteen years ago, that I made the acquaintance of German social democracy.

Karsten P...., who was studying political economy under Lujo Brentano, lived in a bungalow hidden behind a clump of poplars. Pigeons nested in his eaves and, while we sat with him drinking tea, we could hear through the joists of the ceiling their interminable cooing.

The guests found seats where they could—preferably on the bed, for the chairs were littered with books, principally with the numerous volumes of the Brockhaus Encyclopædia, that indispensable arsenal of German learning. A reproduction of Boecklin's *Toteninsel* (Isle of the Dead), ornamented the wall; a

bust of Karl Marx faced it from the other side of the room.

Our host was essentially the amusing type of learned Teuton caricatured by the artists of *Simplicissimus*. His apparent leanness was shrouded in the ample folds of a green cloth cloak ; woollen socks of natural colour sagged in ugly folds over the tops of his big untidy shoes ; his pointed head, slightly bald at the top, had a frill of dull fair hair, and his blue eyes shone behind enormous gold spectacles hooked to his prominent ears.

He was interested in the cause of the people, and greeted with enthusiasm the dawn of an organisation destined to educate the masses to political action.

Fresh from university and barracks (where, far from promiscuous equalities, he had, according to German custom, done his year as reserve cadet), he sang the praises of military method, declaring that, before swimming in ideals like the sentimental and rhetorical French, it was necessary to discipline one's effort and to give one's good intentions the force of energetic guidance.

He used to say, striking with his hand one of the numerous volumes of Franc-Comtois Proudhon, " There is not a new idea which this man has not worked out. He is ancestor to all of us, but he has no practical sense. We Germans, we will carry out his ideas."

Anita Augsberg and Rosa Luxemburg would sometimes startle our little group with the violence of their feminism. Impulsive and extreme, they prophesied

the revolution and saw in Socialism, before anything else, the emancipation of their sex. Karsten P.... would interrupt their cackle with the utmost brusqueness. He looked forward to a gradual and disciplined evolution of his ideals.

During the summer Karsten and I went off into the Bavarian Alps with our rucksacks on our backs. We followed the picturesque valley of the Isar as far as Kochel Lake, at the foot of the Herzogstand. A zigzag path led us from the other side of the pass, separating the Bavarian plain from the mass of the Alps, to the wild shores of the Walchensee. We stopped at Göiensass, at the country cottage where von Vollmar, chief of the Bavarian Social Democratic Party, spent his holidays. He received us kindly.

He was a man of culture and sincerity, but one who carried with him the mark both of his aristocratic origin and of his early career as an officer. Converts to a cause, however eminent, never shake off the habits of their early education.

Von Vollmar's road to Damascus had been a long period in a military hospital, where he was kept laid up and in pain by a serious wound, which left him limping all his life.

The influence of the woman he married was not without bearing on the transformation of his views. She was a Swede, whose eager and devoted soul was cloaked under an appearance of coldness. She shared her husband's work and, in the height of the battle, strengthened his faith.

The origin and the romantic past of von Vollmar had a great influence on Bavarian Socialist politics. Always hostile to democratic exaggeration, he knew how to give to the manifestoes of his party the forms of wise diplomacy.

He never rejected even the most unexpected compromise if, by making it, he saw a possibility of increasing the authority of his group. The whole world remembers the electoral agreement which he made with his mortal enemies, the clericals, in order definitely to renew the hopes of the official party.

. . . . . .

It is not sufficiently realised abroad what a difference exists between the conditions under which live the German social democracy and those surrounding other Socialist parties in Europe. To begin with, the Social Democratic Party is profoundly affected by the fact that Germany is and remains, despite the existence of the Empire, the least united country of Europe. Half a century had not been enough to blend so many conflicting elements. Community of interest and outlook is not possible between, for example, a dweller in Eastern Prussia and one from the shores of Lake Constance. Differences of custom, instinct, tradition and dialect are always there. Rigid discipline can alone achieve a coherence of effort and unity of impulse, without which the Empire and the great political parties which compose it cannot exist at all. This discipline is equally necessary to the reactionaries and

to the revolutionaries. As a result the social democracy reflects the complexity of German political life. Each of the States which compose the imperial confederation has its own *Landtag*, and the election of this assembly differs from one State to another. Bavaria, for example, has universal suffrage and constitutional equalities greater than elsewhere. But in Prussia the electoral organisation is by class—that is to say, the power of one's vote is in proportion to one's income or real estate. A single peasant proprietor has alone more voice than two hundred workmen in a Berlin suburb.

The party tactics are therefore equally varied. In Bavaria the great enemy is clericalism, which, all powerful in the Catholic countryside, struggles to resist the Socialist impulse in cities like Regensburg or Wurzburg; there the working classes find themselves in bitter opposition to the smaller clerical Bourgeoisie. In Prussia, on the other hand, the enemy is the agrarian and the Lutheran countryman. The Social Democrats, always in a minority, can only obstruct, or ally themselves temporarily with the Free Thinkers.

Above these organisations is an Imperial Chamber of Deputies—the *Reichstag*—a kind of parody-Parliament, the importance of which foreigners always overrate (to the complete satisfaction of the Bureaucracy).

The Socialist Party in the Reichstag appears at first sight rather imposing. It consists of more than a hundred deputies, but many of them (and this it is important to remember) are only radicals in disguise.

The election of a Social Democratic deputy in a popular centre has frequently been merely a momentary gesture of annoyance from the middle classes.

After the Agadir incident and the check to German policy in Morocco, all the inhabitants of Western Berlin, the richest area in the capital, voted for the Socialist candidate solely to annoy the Government. Yet again, at Potsdam, where the electorate consists almost entirely of the imperial suite, ex-officers and secretaries, a few members of old Brandenburg families, retired soldiers and civil servants, the successful candidate was a Social Democrat. For this man the Royal household voted, even including the Emperor's personal chauffeur.

And yet, when all is said and done, what difference does the number of the Socialists in the Reichstag really make ? The Parliament has no influence on the policy of the Empire. Ministerial responsibility is unknown to the Constitution.

The vote of the Reichstag has never forced a Minister to resign. The Chancellor, appointed by the Emperor, only leaves his post when his master demands or accepts his resignation.. Consequently the Social Democratic policy in the Reichstag cannot be other than one of delay or agitation. The party have, at their most powerful, succeeded in forcing the Government towards certain social reforms as, for example, Old Age Pensions.

The necessity of taking part in the financial legislation of the country actually forces the Social Demo-

crats to deny their principles. For instance, before the war, they accepted the numerous credits asked for the increase of the Army, on which account great play has been made abroad with accusations of hypocrisy and imperialism. As a matter of fact, the Social Democrats only acted in the immediate interest of their party. They knew well enough that if they abstained, as is their usual plan, they would not prevent the credits from being voted. In addition, they would be shut out from the commissions appointed to select the nature of the tax to be imposed.

What they wished to prevent was that the working classes should be left alone to pay the vast expenses of Prussian policy. They supported the Government and consented to agree to the credits, in return for a pledge that they should have a share with the other parties in arranging the distribution of the new financial burden.

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The great apostles of German social democracy, Liebknecht, Bebel and Herwegh, arose indeed from the very heart of the nation after the revolution of 1848 had shaken the whole of Europe.[1]

After 1871 new elements appeared in the party. Social democracy was taken up by Radical members of the middle classes who hated the rule of the bureaucratic caste, and by the Jews, who saw themselves

[1] Karl Marx and Ferdinand Lasalle—one a theorist, the other an agitator—were "Socialists" and not "Social Democrats." The latter are members of a recognised and organised political party.

admitted to finance, trade, journalism and the liberal professions, but obstinately debarred from the highest ranks of the Army and from the magistracy, those corner stones of autocracy. It was these new elements who got to work on the organisation of the party, in order to forge a weapon for political conquest. Neither the urgent need of poverty nor ideals of humanity and sociology have raised them from the ranks of the people. As a result, they are without any kind of fanaticism.

Opportunist almost to excess, they never shrink from acting in contradiction to their theories if these moments of apostasy bring them advantages. All their efforts are to maintain solid discipline and keep the party together. The vulgar herd have to obey. And indeed, the millions of the proletariat follow, like an obedient flock, the crook of their shepherds. No one protests, no one tries to see really to the bottom of himself, to interrogate the depths of his conscience, to discuss the elementary truths which are handed out to him every day. No one has the curiosity to leave the crowd and to walk beyond the limits of the beaten track. The flock is too well guarded. What a marvellous instrument is this German people! Placid and sheep-like, infinitely docile, infinitely childish. How well those clever bourgeois who guide them know their tireless patience!

In 1814 the King of Prussia, in order to stimulate the patriotism of his subjects and encourage them to defeat Napoleon, promised them solemnly a few elementary constitutional liberties of a kind suitable

to free and responsible beings. The national soil was freed from the invader; trusting to a royal word the blood of the people was poured out. Since then the country has risen to the highest point of strength and triumph, but the promised liberty is still awaited. Will the new leaders of Germany bring it to pass?

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My friend Karsten P.... was summoned to Breslau in order to help edit the Socialist paper of Silesia. He packed up his rags, his encyclopædia, his *Toteninsel*, his bust of Karl Marx, and left the room where we had so often talked of the future of the German people, while the pigeons cooed above the roof. A white-haired porter put his trunk on the cab which was to take us to the station.

The people of Munich are simple and good-hearted. They love the gaiety of their clean and spacious town and give easy welcome to those foreigners who come to live among them.

The old porter took his tip and said, "You will be sorry to leave Munich?" and then added wistfully, "But you will come back. No one who has lived for a long time within sight of the towers of the Frauenkirche can get on without them."

Karsten's cab started and the porter touched his cap, for he knew my friend well and had often come in contact with him. But at this moment an official carriage crossed the path of Karsten's humble vehicle. It was Prince Ludwig Ferdinand returning to the Schloss.

He saw this old workman bareheaded and, thinking that the salute was meant for him, raised his cap and bowed politely, but the old man shook his head and cried out: "I am not saluting you, Royal Highness, but Mr. Karsten P...., who is leaving us."

And the Prince smiled, for life is soft and patriarchal at Munich.

. . . . . .

When I saw my friend again at Breslau some years later, he seemed to me embittered. Bavarian by manners and in spirit he could not adapt himself to the mind of the North German. Their arrogance wounded his Southern kindliness and his critical instincts loved to mock their self-conceit. Seeing him among his new companions, I understood how great are the divergencies between the races that make up the imperial confederation.

One evening in a café a talkative Berliner began to speak of Munich. He knew where Karsten came from and jeered at the Wittelsbach.

"You've got a fine king," he said, alluding to the unfortunate Otho. "He's mad."

"True enough," replied Karsten, "but at least we have shut him up, while you let yours run about in freedom."

This reply had a great success, and the anecdote was repeated all over Germany.[1]

Although unhappy, my friend had lost none of his

[1] This was actually said in 1897, but I have since heard the repartee in innumerable different forms.

enthusiasm. He struggled bravely for his ideas, but I felt that, rather despite himself, he was caught in the machine. His instincts revolted from the tasks to which he was set. But nevertheless he endured, for discipline's sake.

Thanks to him I was able to study in all its details the remarkable organisation which exists in every great centre for the education of the masses.

Each town has an Education Committee, which hires in advance every year all the large halls available in the poor quarters capable of accommodating an audience of one to five thousand people. Every Saturday, every Sunday, and every Thursday there is a Socialist evening in each of these halls. The varied programmes are musical, literary, or dramatic. Even the dance is not forgotten.

The Committee engage the most famous artistes, both German and foreign. It pays a price as high as the more wealthy middle class gatherings, for the halls are always crowded, and the entrance charge, according to the average of wages in the neighbourhood, varies from 30 to 60 pfennigs, which means a total gate money of from one thousand to three thousand marks. This is net, as there are hardly any expenses. The hiring of the hall costs next to nothing as it generally belongs to a syndicate, and the immense consumption of beer and sausages can be relied upon to pay the expenses of warmth and lighting. Actors, musicians, singers, orchestral conductors and lecturers ask nothing better than to perform to an enthusiastic audience that pays well.

The committees, who draw up the programmes to their own taste, do not care for "revolutionary" poetry or plays. Anything likely to excite the minds of the people is administered in prudent doses. Gerhardt Hauptmann's "Weavers" is rarely given. Herwegh's rebel songs are rarely sung. "Why," ask those responsible, "should we always be reminding the workman of his miserable condition and so feed his discontent? Our task must be to amuse him."[1]

The Central Education Committee distributes the tickets to the local sub-committees, who distribute them to the party heads in each factory, each workshop, each co-operative store. Everyone pays for his own ticket; that is the rule. As there is only one price for one particular evening the crowd arrive early in order to get the best places. They eat Socialist sausage and drink Socialist beer while waiting for the Socialist performance to begin. Many do not bother to change their clothes, so that they have genuinely the look of workers—poor folk with horny hands and faces worn with the day's work. They are filled with good intentions. They do everything that is required of them. They applaud. They thrill. If they were asked, they would throw stones or even do murder. One word only would suffice, but no one speaks that

[1] It must not be thought that this precaution is due to the fear of the police. In the majority of towns these evenings are not subject to police censorship. The law allows them to be considered as private meetings because the tickets are not sold officially or in public. Of private meetings, only those dealing with political matters come under the observation of the police.

word, as the leaders are afraid lest they be unable to dam the torrent thus let loose.

An intellectual comrade makes a short speech to enlighten the audience on the subject or giver of the evening's entertainment. Annotated programmes are distributed. The party paper, which is the only one read by the masses, has carefully primed its readers.

The crowd is all eyes and ears. The buzzing of a fly would be audible. Few things are more impressive than the sight of these great silent and respectful children, whose applause has the fascination of disaster. They accept with pleasure the intellectual food given to them, but they gulp it down without bothering about the value of words. They are equally pleased with a Beethoven Sonata or a selection by Leoncavallo. They applaud Max Rosenthal no more and no less than a Tyrolese with a banjo.

"Applaud, comrades! Applaud the art and talent of the middle classes! Thanks to us you are able to do so. These are the same people who have performed before the rich. You are paying them as the rich pay them, and you are strong as the rich are strong. You will become still stronger, but at present—patience." That in effect is what is said to them, and they believe it. They are happy to have others thinking and acting for them.

It is thus that every evening in the great towns the Social Democratic general staff know where to find their army. They know that the army is gathered together between seven and eleven o'clock in the great

halls hired by the organisation and all the time the telegraph and the telephone are at work, so that, between two scenes of a Shakespearian play, the cinematograph announces to the crowd the result of an election or the success of an interpellation. If necessary a comrade appears before the curtain during the interval and hands on to the crowd the words of one of its leaders. Never, in the whole huge Empire, is the workman left to himself.

. . . . . .

The rural population is, on the whole, irresponsive to Socialist propaganda. In Germany, as elsewhere, the peasant is an individualist attached to the land.

My friend Karsten told me of an attempt to be made in the neighbourhood of Breslau to reach the peasant mind. Two or three villages had been worked by the party and gradually the inhabitants had drifted into some sort of membership. The moment had now come to test the hold of the Education Committee on the new recruits. A little hall had been hired in one of the villages and a pleasant evening on a modest scale was to be given. A few old songs, accompanied on the lute, were to be sung in appropriate costume by a Munich actress.

My comrade had charge of the organisation and asked me to go. We departed with the singer in a little local railway train, and having been met at the station, which was some kilometres from the village, by a small market cart, were driven to the inn where the concert was to take place.

The low ceilinged room, where usually the local "nuts" would dance to an accordion, had been transformed into a lecture hall. Four empty beer barrels topped with planks sufficed for a stage, while for footlights there was merely a big oil lamp.

In the smoky light of this lamp the audience could be dimly seen—about a hundred persons crowded on the oak benches. The women still wore their kerchiefs, and reminded me of the peasant women of Argenteuil, when hoeing their potato fields. The men, with their wrinkled faces and low obstinate foreheads, stared at the empty stage in motionless silence.

Karsten P.... climbed on to the barrels and spoke a few simple words as a preface to the evening. Not a soul moved. The silence was icy. At the sight of the singer in her crinoline the women tittered, finding the old costume comic, but they stifled their laughter and made no further sound. The old German songs with their simple melodies had not the least effect. A terrible gloom reigned in the hall. I doubt whether the wretched creatures even knew when one song finished and another began. As soon as the singer disappeared they got up and left the room on tip-toe as though it were a church, glancing nervously at my comrade. The cart took us back to the station, and the cool evening air gradually revived our drooping spirits.

"That was a bit of a frost," I said, laughing.

Karsten looked at me a moment in silence, and then replied:

" It is just possible that their grandchildren will be human."

But I could not help thinking that, in the meantime, these creatures were always election fodder.

. . . . . .

Karsten P.... left Breslau to join the editorial staff of *Vorwärts* in Berlin. He carried on a violent campaign in favour of electoral reform in Prussia. Some time before the war he was chosen as Social Democratic candidate for one of the suburbs of Berlin. He was elected and became a member of the Reichstag.

I used to meet him often at the house of some friends, where also the three Liebknecht brothers would come and dine, of whom one, the Deputy, is now so famous a figure. We talked of the past, of our youth in Munich, of our noisy teas in the shady garden, but we never spoke of our generous dreams.

When I look back over my friend's career I am forced to admit that not a single one of his ideals has ever been realised. The carrying out of old Proudhon's theories, which had been the vaunted aim of the German intellectuals, became more than ever Utopia. Not born of the people and driven by circumstances, the Social Democratic movement had only succeeded in emphasising the gulf which separated the people from the middle classes.

These frankly up-start middle classes had put their yoke on the masses in order the better to support their personal ambitions. The type of mind which led the

Government was, at bottom, the same as that which led the working class opposition.

Prussia did hypocritical homage to the political union of the German peoples and organised the working of the Empire for her own profit, exactly as the pundits of Social Democracy preached liberty and equality in order the more firmly to establish their own domination. The ignorance of the masses and their complete lack of moral maturity or individual education were essential to both parties alike.

How account in such a state of affairs for the undeniable honesty of Liebknecht or the revolutionary violence of Rosa Luxemburg? How explain those sporadic but terrible outbursts which now and again convulse a few thousand disillusioned souls?

I remember one day seeing the Kaiser riding down the elegant Friedrichstrasse, as he did every spring, at the head of his suite. He was coming back from the Tempelhöferfeld, where he had reviewed the garrison. Mounted on his prancing charger, his silver trappings gleamed in the sun. His helmet was blatantly crowned with the Prussian eagle. Surrounded by the gold lace of his personal staff, he threw proud glances at the teaming crowds hedged in along the foot walks by the police. Handkerchiefs were waved and loyal cheers rose from the throng.

At the corner of the Leipzigerstrasse about a hundred workmen swarmed on the scaffold of a new block of offices. They gazed at the little procession, cigar in mouth, their hands in their pockets, their caps still on

their heads. Not a cry, not a movement. The Kaiser saw them, put spurs to his horse, and passed, but one could see that he was angry.

The symbol is striking enough. Above the sycophant crowd and its glittering Emperor, the proletariat waiting for its turn, trusting in its secret strength and sure of its destiny.

But it does not do to put too much trust in symbols. Not one of those workmen carried in him the seed of a future harvest. They were not descended, like the French, from the *sans-culottes* of 1793 or the rebels of the Glorious Three Days. The harsh song of human liberty had never stirred the souls of their ancestors. Up there on the scaffold, they did not stand for the future of an oppressed race ready to throw off the yoke. If they ignored the Emperor it was because they had been bidden to do so. It was, so to speak, their password.

I can well remember what Karsten, now leader of his party, said to me when I asked him one day, after the unexpected success of the last election, what his plans were if ever Social Democracy won an absolute majority and the right to govern Germany as it willed.

"What shall I do?" he replied ironically. "I shall join the opposition.

Let us not therefore blame the German people for what is not their fault but that of their blind leaders.

CHAPTER III. ARTISTS, MONARCHS AND CENSORS

The *Hofbräu* at Munich—I meet Prince Ludwig Ferdinand—The dinners of the late Prince Regent—The unlucky sculptor—Prince Ludwig Ferdinand as member of the opera-orchestra—The *Oktoberfest* and the *Schäfflertanz*—The Bavarian Censorship—Wedekind escapes—Myself as the Artistic Poodle—We make mock of an Imperial *Overture*—Prussia threatens—The Prussian Censorship in Breslau—In Berlin—William II as *arbiter elegantiarum*—William and the recalcitrant sculptor—William and the Impressionists—William and the *Gedächtniskirche*—"The Star of Bethlehem"—I am censored at Rixdorf—But emerge unconquered.

THE most varied crowd meets every morning at the *Hofbräu* at Munich, in an attractive little courtyard where barrels do duty for tables. The foreigner jostles the native, the middle class mingle with the workmen, the prince clinks glass with the porter. A good-tempered promiscuity wipes out in this place all social differences. You choose your pitcher from a huge stone tank, you wash it yourself at a tap, you take your place in a queue before the counter where the tapster in his green apron fills from the actual barrel the mugs held out to him; then you move off and drink your foaming beer at one of the improvised tables, exchanging casual conversation with the neighbour whom chance has given you. A few meagre trees shade the drinkers with their pale green foliage. Above the high walls is a glimpse of

blue sky. The morning air has a heady scent of barley and hops. As the caressing liquid slips down the drinkers' throats they exchange looks of sleepy happiness, eloquent witness to the fraternity of thirst. Returning to work one feels, perhaps, slightly stouter but certainly more cheerful than before.

The first time that I went into the courtyard of the *Hofbräu* I encountered a massive man of large size with a benevolent air. He had a long golden beard, and his eyes twinkled behind gold spectacles. He addressed me with familiarity.

" You are an artist, I suppose ? "

My long black hair had apparently interested him. I touched his beer mug with mine politely and murmured :

" That is so."

My clumsy accent revealed my origin. He said at once :

" You are a Frenchman ? " and became more cheerful and cordially talkative.

" I hardly know French," he said, " and yet I used to learn it once. My head's very hard, like that of all Bavarians. The only thing I remember now is the little memory-rhyme that they used to teach us at school :

" ' The bull—*der Ochs* : the cow—*die Kuh*
Shut the door—*mach' die Thür' zu*,' "

and he laughed joyfully.

" You are enjoying yourself here ? " he asked.

" Very much," I said.

" That is excellent, excellent."

He threw back his head, emptied his mug at one gulp, put it noisily back on the top of the barrel, and declared, " I am also an artist. I am a musician."

And then he departed, after shaking me familiarly by the hand. That was Prince Ludwig Ferdinand of Bavaria, and this little story will give some idea of the tone prevailing at the Court of Munich.

The Wittelsbach like mixing with their people, and are on terms of cordial geniality with artists. The times are gone by of autocratic patrons like Maximilian I or Ludwig II. The princes of the present day, degenerate perhaps and certainly less powerfully placed than their ancestors, have neither a very open mind nor a very deep understanding toward their people's intellectual aspirations. They have a certain respect for the arts, about which they are either ignorant or but poorly informed, but they never think of trying to impose on others their own point of view, and their rewards are not given only to those who know how to show servility. As a result there is no official art in Munich.

The old Prince Regent Luitpold, now dead, had only one real passion, and that was chamois hunting. He knew nothing whatever about painting, but he forced himself every Sunday to invite to his table five or six well-known painters or sculptors. The Rhine wines were delicious, and the Havana cigars, with which the guests filled their pockets before departing, were excellent. The conversation trailed painfully from

commonplace to commonplace and made no pretence of cleverness. Every Monday the newspapers faithfully recorded the names of those who had the evening before been the Regent's guests. Every artistic group was honoured alike. Stück and Lenbach, elsewhere deadly enemies, forgot their rivalry in the presence of their royal host.

One of my friends, the sculptor B...., had one day the unfortunate idea of praising the muscular calves of the old Prince. His Royal Highness was very proud of his legs and loved to show them off, whenever he went hunting at Neuschwanstein, by wearing the short breeches of the Bavarian mountain peasant. My friend's flattery brought down upon him, therefore, the privilege of making a plaster mould of the august limbs. Perhaps it was his excitement at the condescension shown him, or perhaps it was the champagne of which he had partaken somewhat freely, but for one reason or another he neglected the most elementary precautions of his art. The plaster clung in the most painful fashion to the Prince's legs, which were very hairy. The mould had to be broken in a thousand pieces, during which performance the victim swore aloud. And yet he never let this unfortunate incident embitter his subsequent welcomes to B.....

Prince Ludwig, now King of Bavaria, had a taste for medicine, and certainly his achievements as an oculist brought him more celebrity than his triumphs as a politician. .

Prince Ludwig Ferdinand, besides being a doctor,

played the violin with enthusiasm and, eager to make himself useful, forced himself in as a member of the orchestra at the Royal Opera. Mottl and his successor Zumpe would draw long faces at the screechings of the royal fiddle; but how could they resent the presence of a Prince so conscientious as never to miss a rehearsal, a Prince who sawed away there in his shirt-sleeves among the common members of the orchestra, proud of keeping time and playing his part, no matter how humble?

It was during one of these rehearsals (they were studying *Siegfried*) that a palace servant approached the invisible orchestra and called to his master.

"You will excuse me a minute," said the Prince to the conductor, putting down his violin and taking up his waistcoat, "I am summoned to a sick bed."

Zumpe bowed politely, being at heart rather relieved at the departure of his musical volunteer. The rehearsal went on. An hour later Zumpe, with baton aloft, felt a sudden shudder go down his spine. His finely trained ear had already recognised the sound of the Prince's bow. He looked round amazed, and there was Ludwig Ferdinand once more in his place. The conductor, without stopping the orchestra, bent towards the violinist.

"And your patient, Royal Highness?" he asked.

"Oh, he was already dead,"[1] replied the Prince philosophically, and went on playing.

[1] [Perhaps a fairer translation of the royal remark would be, "He'd already kicked it," as the actual transcription of the German shows the extreme of Bavarian slang.]

Thanks to this middle class royalty Munich has been able to keep for many years its character of ancient city of the arts. By tradition the medieval charm of the popular feast days still remains. During the carnival weeks every rule of ordinary life is abolished. On the 6th of January the King from the window of his house confers on the prince of fools an autocratic power. Every class of the population treat their neighbours with the utmost familiarity. Both caste and ordinary morality goes by the board. The city proceeds to sow its annual wild oats and noisy crowds of masked figures swarm through the streets. Everybody says what he thinks, everybody does what he likes, but as the cathedral clock strikes the midnight of Shrove Tuesday Prince Carnival abdicates and dies, and over his tomb the eternal bourgeois, sated with extravagance, assume once more in the grey dawn of Ash Wednesday the heavy cloak of social convention.

The Autumn Kermesse (*Oktoberfest*) swathes the Theresienwiese[1] in broad bands of blue and white, the national colours. It might be a *Festwiese* held by Wagner's Meistersinger. Many-coloured pavilions are crowded with mountain peasantry in every kind of costume. Rivers of beer flow. Entire oxen are roasted in the open air over enormous bonfires. The fat sizzles and flames. The meat crackles as it cooks. The crowd dress themselves as giants and as monsters. Among the throng move long open drays loaded with beer

[1] [This open space corresponds, perhaps, more closely to Hampstead Heath than to one of the more central London parks.]

barrels and drawn by strong horses whose leather harness tinkles cheerfully with heavy medallions of red copper.

In the spring there is the Dance of the Coopers (*Schäfflertanz*), which was introduced as a result of a vow made in 1658, in which year pestilence afflicted the city. All the coopers and their apprentices, in medieval costume, meet at the graceful fountain of the Blessed Virgin in the square in front of the Town Hall. They go through all the streets of the city for a week, singing their old songs and dancing their old dances before the houses of the more prominent citizens. The town flies bunting and cheerful flags, and everywhere there is an air of holiday.

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The Bavarian censorship, which protects the rights of royalty and the claims of decency, is on the whole tolerant. The laws which govern it are softened by the hatred which every Munich heart has for Prussian tyranny. Lèse-Majesté has therefore no meaning apart from the Kaiser. No Wittelsbach has ever had to set the law in motion to protect his royal honour. The simplicity of these Princes saves them from satire. When, however, it is the Emperor that is insulted the authorities are forced to intervene, but they do it half-heartedly and treat the offender with discreet lenience.

Frank Wedekind, who in 1898 was collaborator of *Simplicissimus*, published in that paper a savage poem

entitled, "The Zoologist of Berlin." The last verse ran :—

"Moral : eschew zoology
As dangerous. For deep
In every animal there lies
Lèse Majesté asleep." [1]

An order was given for the arrest of the offender, one of whose plays was on that very day being produced for the first time at the Schauspielhaus. But the police gave a hint to the director of the theatre that they would be waiting for Wedekind in the evening after the performance. Wedekind consequently took the first train for Paris and was bothered no more.

I was at that time managing my theatre at Munich, which, as I have said, marked an epoch in the artistic and literary evolution of Germany. The most outspoken and audacious writers, painters and musicians challenged on this stage the old formulæ. Sometimes, between two dramatic scenes, one of the writers would attack with ferocity the political organisation of Germany, but they always spoke their minds in an ironical and humorous way, so as not to risk their liberty.

A certain poet, Leo Gr...., had the idea of parodying that familiar music-hall turn—the lightning artist. Disguised as a Hungarian hypnotist, he introduced to the audience a black poodle. I was the poodle. After a few magical passes of his hands,

[1] The poem describes how an unfortunate zoologist, without a thought of evil, found in the pig, the ass and the camel certain characteristics of a sovereign unnamed, and these discoveries brought him a year's imprisonment. Hence the moral of the last verse.

accompanied by a suitable incantation, he began to ask the poodle riddles in the form of rhymed four-lined verses, and the poodle gave the answers to the riddles by drawing rapidly on a sheet of white paper the personality to whom the verse referred. The whole value of the turn was in the wording of the riddles, where the fiercest but most cleverly concealed satire awoke all the curiosity of the audience. The last quatrain of all described a puppet, shrill and jerky, talking at random, contradicting himself continually, who decided, with an arrogance only equalled by his ignorance, the political and literary destinies of Germany, and who hid a natural hump under costumes at once gaudy and grotesque. It is easy to guess the caricature which the poodle drew after this verse.

The text of everything to be spoken on the stage had to go to the censorship to be passed. I was summoned. The young official who was in charge of the theatrical branch asked me to show him the drawings made at the end of each verse. I explained that this was difficult, as the drawings were improvised every night. He insisted, saying that he could not authorise the verses to be spoken until he had seen the portraits. I knew quite well what he was after, and the next day I took him a bundle of sketches. On his desk were two photographs of the Kaiser—one in uniform, the other in civilian clothes. I could hardly repress a smile. He turned rapidly through the drawings to see the last of the series, but there, to his amazement, he found a picture of von Bülow.

"Do you mean to tell me," he asked, "that it is actually the Chancellor that you draw every evening?"

"Why, of course," I said, adding, after a moment "who did you think it was?"

And he gave me back the verses and the drawings without another word.

All the rigours of the censorship in Bavaria are kept for those who insult the Catholic religion. Ludwig Sch...., a Socialist poet, got five months in a fortress for having recited from the stage the following two lines of a violent poem:

> "I do not believe in your God,
> He is a helpless old fool."

The Emperor is less vigorously defended. In fact it is only necessary to use a little ingenuity in order to say whatever you like about him. I cannot forget, however, one adventure which nearly cost me dear, thanks to the urgent interference of the Prussian Ambassador at the Court of Bavaria.

William II was, at the moment, attracting public attention by composing a ballet. We had in our theatre an invisible orchestra, as at Bayreuth, and we would begin our evenings by playing unpublished symphonies, a plan which gave young musicians a chance of a hearing.

I took the opportunity of rehearsing, as one of these introductory pieces, his Imperial Majesty's *Sang an Aegir*, with chorus. Our programme gave the piece a page to itself. One of the caricaturists of *Simplicissi-*

mus prepared little drawings as decoration. It is hardly necessary to say that this imperial composition is the perfection of ineptitude. The audience, when they recovered their breath, caught on to the idea and smothered laughter broke out all round the theatre. Down in our pit we felt slightly uneasy, and we did not have long to wait. I was summoned to the prefect of police. I took with me a copy of the *Sang an Aegir*, for which I had paid 3.50 marks at a music shop. I pointed out to the official that the cover bore the inscription :

" Every purchaser of the piano score is entitled to perform this piece in public."

The prefect shook his head.

" I know well enough the spirit in which you and your friends acted."

I protested. " Indeed, the interests of art are my sole guide in the choice of my programmes. I defy you to prove the contrary."

The officer became threatening.

" Please remember that you are a foreigner. We shall not put you in prison, but we shall expel you from the country."

" You do me great honour," I said bowing, " but would it be a compliment to His Majesty to explain the reason for my expulsion ? "

" That will do," said the chief of the police angrily. " You have had your joke. Take the piece out of the programme, for these Berlin gentlemen mean what they say."

I could merely bow and depart.

Sang an Aegir vanished from our repertory to the relief of the audience.

Every day in intellectual circles one could see the sullen hatred of north German tyranny. Once, at a performance of Glück's *Orpheus* at the Munich Court Theatre, a Berlin critic asked a Bavarian writer how the title of the piece was pronounced in Munich dialect.

"Perfectly simple. We say '*Orfeus*' just as we say '*Saupreuss*'" (Prussian pig).

. . . . . .

At Breslau, however, I encountered the Prussian censorship itself, and that is no joke. The officials act with a haughty brusqueness, extremely characteristic of the stupid but autocratic mind of the Hohenzollern monarchy.

In *La Lettre Chargée*, by Courteline, the censor remorselessly struck out a shocking passage, in which the post-office clerk reminds La Brige of five francs lent to the latter one evening when he had forgotten his purse.

"Anyone who wants five francs at an hour as late as that can only want them for an immoral purpose."

All these petty irritations bothered me, personally, less than the company. The arrival of my Munich theatre in a Prussian town set the authorities all in a flutter. They knew well the abandoned and cynical habits of Munich, and they suspected in every line some evil snare laid for the docile flock under their command. Their first move was to make great excisions

in every play and in every poem. They even wanted to forbid us to exhibit our lithograph-posters, because they had a red background, which to these gentlemen smacked dangerously of Socialism. I had to go and grovel before the chief of police, and when I had humbly repeated the names of my collaborators and stressed the undoubted artistic reputation which we had at Munich, I received this truly Prussian answer :

" A city in which *Simplicissimus* is published is not a German city, and a theatre at which Frank Wedekind is played is not a German theatre."

Wedekind served a year's imprisonment for Lèse-Majesté. Th. Th. Heine, who designed our posters, had, more than once, a brush with the imperial authorities.

. . . . . .

Berlin is, of course, the city in which official art exercises the most impudent tyranny. The Emperor, whose foolish ambition knows no limits, claims to direct his people's taste as autocratically as he directs the policy of the Empire. He brooks no contradiction, and those around him flatter his every whim and exert themselves to carry out his wildest schemes.

William II, being before everything else King of Prussia, is anxious that his capital should become the artistic centre of the Empire. Until his day, the political decentralisation of the confederation secured to each member a certain freedom of development. Gradually, however, the Prussian capital is sucking the strength of the whole of Germany. The moment

that an artist begins to win a certain local reputation, the Emperor summons him to Berlin and bestows some honour or rank upon him, it being of course understood that he submits himself entirely to the fancies of his new master. As a result, much real talent has withered away on the banks of the Spree, and lost every trace of individuality under the Hohenzollern influence. The few who remain independent—for example, Liebermann and the late Menzel—are exceptions, for whom the Emperor has no use. The majority, however, do not scruple to accept the honours, sinecures and degrading tasks imposed upon them by the imperial Philistine.

The Kaiser is determined to beautify his capital according to his own taste. Each square, each open space, is adorned with a marble statue, whose glittering whiteness only emphasises its ugliness. The Tiergarten is, in winter, a truly lamentable sight. Between the bare branches appear glimpses of the innumerable official monuments, designed with fantastic ignorance and scattered like foolish lumps of sugar through the wood. The *Siegesallee* is the laughing-stock of Germany. What terrible impulse has produced this avenue of Hohenzollern, dragged by the imperial will from the oblivion into which history had so wisely plunged them ? The actual features of the Electors of Brandenburg not having been preserved, it has been necessary either to invent them or to choose suitable models. The people of Berlin amuse themselves by recognising in the bust of " Otto the Idle " the cheery

countenance of a well-known pork butcher in the Friedrichstrasse, who sat to the sculptor.

The proportions of the Brandenburg Gate, one of the few public buildings of Berlin which successfully reproduces the classical feeling, have been completely spoiled by the addition of a new white marble balustrade, adorned with expressionless busts. The "Roland," hung from the massive Column of Victory, is like a huge piece of chocolate icing, round which the limousines of the wealthy glide and turn.

Everything is done on the Emperor's instructions, who insists on his ideas being carried out down to the smallest detail. One of the best known Berlin sculptors told me that William used to come at exactly the same hour every day to his studio, to view the clay model of an enormous statue which the Emperor had ordered. One day the angle of the statue's arm displeased the Emperor. The artist showing a tendency to argue, William drew his sword and, with a quick blow, struck off the offending limb. Then returning his sword to its scabbard he turned on his heel and remarked pleasantly :

"You will alter that now, won't you ?"

Several people of influence have in vain attempted to interest the Emperor in modern art ; but he refuses point-blank to accept any formulæ than those of which he himself approves. He loses no opportunity of showing his dislike of originality ; revolutionary artists are as distasteful to him as social democrats. In his displeasure is included his cousin, the Grand

Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt, who is something of a Mæcenas to the younger school. Everyone in Berlin remembers the visit William was induced to make to the Secessionist salon. One of the most famous art critics, who had been officially decorated, was appointed to receive the Emperor. The poor man's business was to soften the imperial irritation and endeavour to explain, in as learned a fashion as possible, the merits of the Impressionists. The Emperor gave the Herr Professor no chance of opening his mouth. The moment he caught sight of his welcomer on the steps of the Exhibition, he walked up to him and said roughly :

" We must set our faces against all this modern nonsense."

The unfortunate Professor had to gulp down all the exhortations he had prepared, and the Emperor departed without condescending to look at a single canvas.

It is hardly necessary to state that this man, who thinks himself by divine right both monarch and artist, makes every day the most incredible blunders which nobody dares to correct.

At the entrance to the Kurfürstendam, that most elegant of Berlin streets, William caused to be built a vast Protestant church in the classical style, called the *Gedächtnisskirche.* His enthusiasm for architectural harmony drove him to insist that all houses and shops in the neighbourhood should be in the same style. (According to rumour, it was even suggested

that a certain little public convenience in the middle of the square should also be classical.) The clock tower of this church bears a golden cross, from which arises a long stalk with a star at the end of it, the whole being heavily gilded. The chief merit of this brilliant erection is that it cost about fifty thousand marks to get the star hoisted to such a height.

When the architect submitted his plans, the church tower appeared exactly in the centre of the sheet of paper; a pencil line, which divided it down the middle, terminated at each end with a small draughtsman's mark in the form of a star. It so happened that this line rose above the cross which the designer had placed at the top of the tower, and the Emperor, after looking at the drawing, cried enthusiastically:

"Splendid! I think it is a beautiful idea to put above our human cross the Star of Bethlehem, shining over the House of God."

And no one dared to explain to His Imperial Majesty that this unfortunate little pencil mark was not a cross at all but only a scribble for the guidance of the architect. It is better to squander a fortune than to contradict the Emperor.

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All things considered, the Berlin censorship is, perhaps, less bitter than that of the provincial towns of Prussia. The rich are on the whole tolerant. The middle classes insist on a certain amount of latitude, and contact with the great men of the day tends to

check the excessive zeal of the officials. They make up for this enforced moderation when they have control of a population, who have to be kept in ignorance and servitude.

Some years ago a Socialist club in Berlin asked me, with some of my Münich company, to organise an evening's entertainment for their members. A huge hall of a café, capable of holding seven thousand people, was hired for the occasion at Rixdorf, one of the Berlin suburbs. The police were responsible for the behaviour of the meeting.

When I got out of the train in Berlin, two of the Socialist leaders met me on the platform and told me that the censorship had suppressed three-quarters of the programme.[1] As they knew that I was on good terms with the minister responsible, they asked me to go in person and see if I could not get the decision altered.

As I was indeed acquainted with Herr Oberregierungsrat von Glasenapp, I immediately paid him a visit, for the performance was to come off that very evening. My two Socialist friends went with me. I shall never forget the reception I received. Herr von Glasenapp was as rude to me that day as he had on all previous occasions been polite. I succeeded, never-

[1] This was of course illegal. The authorities maintained that the size of the audience prevented the evening being considered as a private entertainment, although the tickets had not been sold publicly. By their violent protests against this decision the Socialist organisers achieved nothing but a further embitterment of the quarrel.

theless, in getting the interdict removed from some of the items on the programme. I then had the idea that the offensive manner of the official were intended for my companions, so I gave them the hint to go and remained alone with the minister. He became immediately the courteous gentleman I had always known, and said to me with some bitterness :

" Aren't you ashamed, you, an artist, to give a performance before this riff-raff ? "

" My dear sir," I replied, " every artist who really has something to say welcomes as audience alike the workman or the man of substance."

" Rubbish. You are merely throwing pearls before swine."

" I am grateful for the compliment you pay to the efforts of my company and myself, but I cannot help being surprised at the anxiety you have shown to hush up the majority of the ' pearls.' You know our repertoire well enough and you have before now allowed it to be given to a middle class audience among which you have been actually present yourself."

" It doesn't follow that what is suitable for educated people is suitable for the mob. They are always on the look-out for opportunities to criticise the justice of the present social scheme. They will watch in every one of your sentences for encouragement to break out against the established order of things."

As he felt that my silence was sceptical, he added :

" Believe me, our duties are rather delicate."

" Both delicate and deplorable," I said as I withdrew, for, as a Frenchman, I had at least the right to be sincere.

Our evening's entertainment was greeted with enthusiasm, but, despite the size of the crowd, it was not difficult for me to notice among the workmen the police spy, sent there to see that his superior's instructions were being carried out. As soon as I recognised him, I arranged that in an interval he should be given a tremendous dinner and several bottles of old French wine. This had the effect of rendering him harmless, and, while he snored under the table, we gave the vulgar herd the benefit of our whole casket of pearls.

Berlin struggles as best it can against its imperial master. He is popularly spoken of as " S.M.," " *Seine Majestät,*" say his loyal subjects. " Siegfried Mayer " say, ironically, the bitter minority of to-day, who may, perhaps, become the rebels of to-morrow.

CHAPTER IV. GERMAN WOMEN

" Naturalists say that in every animal species degeneration begins in the female."—CHAMFORT.

" Do not forget your whip "—The mortar-women—Municipal employees—Waitresses—Bourgeois lack of taste—The *Hausfrau*—The lawyer and the breasts of the Naïads—*Kaffee-Klatsch*——Concert audiences—My lecture at Weimar—And at Landshut—Bavarian princesses—I visit the Princess de la Paz at Nymphenburg—And am " done " by the cabman—The wealthy woman, the mirror of the *Parvenu*——Genoa *versus* Berlin—Fashionable crazes: " Reform " clothing, physical culture, Mensendieck—" The Dangerous Age "—The coming of Post-Impressionism: Kahnweiler, Valentine de Saint-Point—The Empress—Bohemia at the *Stephanie Café*—(1) Anatole—(2) Margarete Beutler and her babies—(3) A Bohemian spoilt—(4) "The Dictionary of Authors"—(5) Else Kratzfuss—(6) Friederike Kempter—Fashionable vice—Gretchen up-to-date.

A LOT has been written since the beginning of the war about the Germans as a race, but very little has been said about the German women. The reason for this is probably more ignorance than chivalry. There is an old French saying, " Cherchez la femme," and the Germans are fond of quoting this saying, in order to show that they are well read and cannot pronounce French.

I am not going to pretend that the study of the German woman will establish the origins of the present war or reveal the true mind of our enemies. All the same, such a study throws light on one aspect of the

German social structure. Woman is still little more than what men have wished to make her ; I say this with apologies to extreme feminists. She reflects to a very high degree the surroundings in which she is placed. She is a convex mirror reflecting and absurdly exaggerating the main characteristics of the masculine mind. The Germans, hesitating between washy sentimentality and an admiration for everything that can be termed " kolossal," have accordingly created two types—the Gretchen and the Valkyrie, the virginal doll and the virago. These are the types which appear again and again in Germany's already decaying literature. The famous Kultur has lately produced other classifications which it is amusing to recognise in the ups and downs of daily life. It is easy to understand why the Germanic race has never produced a St. Genevieve, a Joan of Arc, or even a Ninon de Lenclos. One can even sympathise with Schopenhauer's contempt for " the sex with short legs," or Nietzsche's brutal words, " You are going among women ? Do not forget your whip."

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At the time of my first arrival in Munich a new house was being built just opposite the window of my lodgings. In those days every detail of the Germany I did not know fascinated me, and I used to stand for long enough staring into the street.

While the taciturn workmen were busy on the scaffolding, two women mixed the mortar on the pavement : they would fill little wooden hods and, in turn,

toil up the heavy ladders to keep the builders supplied. Dressed in faded jackets and patched skirts, they wore on their feet old and shapeless men's shoes, and on their heads a cotton handkerchief tied under the chin. A few wisps of fair hair straggled on their shoulders. Their toothless mouths with pale dry lips were black cavities in their swollen faces. Their horny hands toiled awkwardly with bricks and trowel. At times they would go off, carrying a kind of stretcher, to a neighbouring tavern and return balancing with great care about thirty tall litre mugs (they are called *Maass*) full to the brim of brown beer. The stone-masons tumbled down the ladders and drank in huge gulps, occasionally chaffing their women assistants who stood watching them with their hands on their hips. The foreman would interrupt these pleasant intervals with a harsh order, and, while the men went back quietly to do their work of building, the women, piling the empty mugs on the stretcher, would walk off with them again at the same regular and level pace, like mechanical figures.

One of them brought with her a small baby which she propped against a pile of sand on a few sacks of plaster. When his yells became too violent the mother left her work, picked him up and, undoing her blouse, gave him unconcernedly her poor dry breast. The child, finding nothing there to satisfy him, continued to cry. The woman would then take her mug of beer and give the baby a sip, who showed his satisfaction by waving his tiny fists with joy.

The Bavarian stonemasons have no other help than these feeble and lifeless slaves. They are called *Mörtelweiber* (mortar-women). They earn a miserable livelihood by ceaseless rough work, which exposes them to every kind of violence. For a few pence they buy the beer and the sausage necessary for their existence. They have no home or, at best, only a garret in which they sleep, many in a bed. When they become mothers they bring up their children in the streets among those untidy craters of sand which form the banks of sticky ponds of lime.

Such were the first really significant German women that I saw at Munich.

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All the menial and disgusting tasks in Bavaria are performed by women. They are largely responsible for the road cleaning, and in the old days the women, who can still be seen with a hard broom sweeping the busy streets, used to have the task of collecting the horse dung. To-day motor-cars and electric trams have replaced horses, and the woman street-cleaner has a long rod which she puts into the groove of the tram rail, leaning the other end against her shoulder; she pushes the rod along and forces out the mud which has collected in the rails. From far away her strange crouching figure can be seen remorselessly following the shining steel of the tram line. More fortunate than the mortar mixer, she is officially employed by the municipality, and wears on her little felt hat a municipal badge. As some consolation for her wretched

existence she is adorned with the sonorous title *Städtische Elektrische Strassenbahnschienenreinigungsfrau*, or, in other words, "The municipal-female-cleaner-of-electrical-tramway-lines." It takes a German to express so beautiful a thought in so few words.

The waiting in restaurants and taverns is also done by women. These waitresses are a constant source of astonishment to Latin visitors, who cannot conceive their promiscuous life among the clients without picturing the most romantic consequences, but unfortunately the *Kellnerin* is not so much a woman as the machine that German ultilitarianism has produced. It is a sight to see her pirouetting through the crowds in the cafés in one of those huge rooms where as many as two thousand people sit down at once. She carries at arm's length an immense number of mugs of beer (her agility would be the envy of a travelling juggler), every now and then dipping a fat hand into the knotted dishcloth which jostles at her hip, in order to pick out the little hunch of grey bread which every beer-drinker expects. She is old, wrinkled, overworked, and dripping with sweat—anything but attractive. Nobody thinks of being gallant to her. In certain establishments the waitress is more elegant and lays herself out to be more attractive, but the battle of life has taught her egoism, and such love-making as she practises is always well thought out beforehand. In the majority of cases she keeps some impecunious student, helping him by endless self-sacrifice to finish his studies, while he in return pledges himself to marry her after he gets

his diploma. Many a *Frau Doktor* have I met in later years who once upon a time brought me my bock in a Munich restaurant.

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The women of the German towns make a poor impression because they lack that grace without which even actual beauty will often pass unnoticed. Their movements are awkward and stiff. They have neither the subtle harmony of body nor a sense of the chic. Seldom does a passing glimpse of a woman in a German street attract the wandering eye. One of her most striking weaknesses is her choice of footwear. Nothing is more suggestive than to examine the feet of the German women as they walk. The worn heels, the slack uppers, the warped soles only accentuate the size of their feet. The Frenchwoman seems to glide, but the German strides, and the spot whereon she puts her foot is no spot for a flower.

When a girl sets out to make herself attractive she does so clumsily, covering herself with bright coloured ribbons and oddments of lace. This self-adornment is not done from coquetry, but with the purely practical idea of interesting marriageable men. Once married, the German girl of the middle-class is finished with. Sex in her is dead. Why waste time on feminine grace and a careful toilet when her future is totally settled and it is no longer necessary for her to attract ? The insipid German girl becomes the German housewife, a kind of domestic Minotaur whose only duties are to populate Germany and take care of her house. Sure

of her wifely privileges, she gives up the difficult task of keeping alive her husband's love. Their union is adequately held together by custom and social necessity. She rules her household as an autocrat without rival, and consequently the German husband avoids his home and spends most of his life outside in the smoky atmosphere of cafés. Beer takes the place of his still-born ideal. He returns home as late as possible and spends his time far from his family. Only on Sundays is he met with his better half. On these days they take a compulsory walk together, their faces showing clearly enough the profound gloom in their hearts. The Germans are sentimental dreamers because of the ugliness of their everyday lives. Unable to capture beauty and hold her by them, they end by despising their wives, and this contempt is only an avowal of their own incapacity.

I still remember a poor lawyer whose acquaintance I made one evening in a medieval tavern in Nurnberg. He had a gaiety of manner at once exuberant and heavy, and filled his body with beer as though it had been a bottle. He lived near the hotel where I was staying, and we walked home together. We wandered down the roughly paved streets, while behind us the Burg, the home of the old Burgraves of Nurnberg, cut a fantastic silhouette against the starry sky. The huge square tower of agony in which were kept the wooden horse, the thumb-screw, the nails, the shears, the boots, the Iron Virgin and all the now rusty paraphernalia of the torture chamber, brooded with a

mysterious and evil air which is lacking during the daytime when the trippers go their noisy round. In the lower town there was that animation usual in large cities on the eve of public holidays. Drunkards shouted in the streets. Little groups of passers-by gossiped at the street corners. The market-place was loud with the murmur of water spouting from four bronze culverins, while above the basin rose the Gothic tower with its many coloured rows of carved, stone saints.

My companion made me cross the square and round the corner of the old fourteenth-century Minster, where, as midday strikes, twelve Prince-Electors in carved wood appear, one after another in Indian file, in order to bow before Charlemagne, while the bells peal joyously. We passed the figure crouched on a circular base of granite, who with distended cheeks seems to blow upon the bagpipes under his arm, while from one of the funnels of his instrument falls a silver thread of water. But when we reached the Lorenzkirche and saw the graceful circle of six bronze girls from whose breasts the water sprang in graceful curves, he stopped, and, looking at me in a bewildered way, remarked, "How beautiful they are!" I was quite moved by the depth of his sigh, for he himself was not beautiful. His figure no longer enabled him to see his feet. His legs were slightly knock-kneed. His neck was very short, and his round face with its scraggy beard, snub nose and slightly squinting spectacled eyes was crowned with a polished head and a tuft of grisling

hair. His costume was equally unattractive. His trousers hung about his boots and were baggy at the knees; his waistcoat, which was rather tight, met with difficulty over his stomach, and he wore a soft felt hat with an aigrette of badger's hair.

Was his admiration for these charming and pagan nymphs ironical self-reproach, or did he seek in their soft curves some consolation for the gloom of his own life. "I come and look at them every evening before I go home," he said, and I understood that he was married, and I could picture what his wife must be, crabbed and ugly, a real Hausfrau. He grasped my hand. "Good night. I must go in now and find my old woman" (*meine Alte*), for this is the name that the middle-classes give their wives. "My old woman!" What regrets, resignation, even bitterness in this uncouth familiarity![1]

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Every afternoon the German middle-class women in their unbecoming clothes crowd in little groups at the tables reserved for them in their own particular café. They have with them usually a little dog, peevish, fat and sleek, a miniature apology for a bulldog, which they call Mops, and on which they squander the treasure of their undesired affections. They consume café-au-lait from large porcelain bowls, and eat indigestible

[1] [It must of course be realised that "meine Alte" strikes the Frenchman as a more pathetic expression than it appears to the English mind, which is accustomed to the use of the phrase "my old woman" as one of the casual genialities of the working class.]

cakes with repellant names: *Krapfen, Gugelhopf, Sandkuchen, Käsetorte,* etc.

And all the time they talk at the top of their voices. Many of them have their ball of wool and knitting-needles with them, and while the tongues wag the needles click and the hat feathers bob and sway. Their conversation is of the thousand little scandals of their walk of life. It is the outlet for all the bitterness of their cramped and solitary minds. The talk satisfies their spitefulness as the cakes their appetite.

With Germany the rank of the husband reflects glory on the wife, and this title is the only mark publicly retained by the German Hausfrau of her servitude. She loves to address her fellows pompously, "*Frau Konsistorialrat, Frau Postassessor, Frau Bahnadjunkt, Frau Oberkommissar, Frau Ministerial Kanzleisekretär.*" The world is never large enough for these unfortunate women who every moment jar against the narrow limits of their lives. They have lost all sense of the ridiculous, and seem no longer to feel the painful pressure of their tightly laced corsets which encase their flabby but superabundant busts. The men turn away as they see them, for they recognise their wives.

Kaffee-klatsch, tea-shop gossip, that is the only recreation of the German middle-class housewife. I cannot recall their flat dull faces without remembering those lines of Ludwig Thoma who, in *Simplicissimus,* addressed a satiric poem to the *Deutsche Hausfrau.*

Seeing that the German husband likes to spend his evenings in front of a mug of beer and among his

friends, his solitary wife seeks distraction at the theatre or at the concert. In some little German towns artistic performers of any kind get an audience that is almost entirely feminine. About seven o'clock in the evening the streets spring into animation. Women and girls, their heads covered with a silk wrap and wearing a costume of the year before last, plod in their abominable goloshes towards the theatre or the concert hall.

My first personal experience of this phenomenon was at Weimar, where I gave a lecture with illustrations on French folk-song. I arrived in the town only just in time to change my clothes and hurry to the theatre. There was no peep-hole in the curtain to enable me to examine the audience, a procedure so attractive to all performers. I was forced to be content with listening nervously to the buzz which suggested a crowded auditorium. The bell sounded. The curtain rose. In the moment before the lights were put out I was able to give one glance round the theatre. They were all women. Only here and there I saw a beard. The applause had a curious muted sound, and I knew that it was the applause of small, soft hands.

When, after the show was over, I left the theatre, the streets were so dark that I might well not have been able to find my hotel had not an amiable lady, who had been present at the lecture, grasped my difficulty and offered politely to help me. In return I enquired whether she could tell me why there had been no men present at the performance. She admitted,

sadly enough, that at Weimar gentlemen preferred to spend the evening in the *Schmiede*, an old and charming tavern, but one full of smoke. She offered to take me there, as she was going to find her husband. Thanks to her I was thus introduced into the male society of the town, and it was in this strange fashion that I became acquainted with the grand-ducal capital in which Goethe and Liszt had lived.

The Frenchman is a great favourite with German women. Is it our light literature (written on purpose for export) or our stormy past which makes us so attractive and gives us in the eyes of the fair Teuton a romantic halo ? I am inclined to think that it is rather the general atrophy of their minds. A Frenchman, in their eyes, is everything their own men are not. They credit him with the chivalry so lacking among those of their own race. But there is more than that. Vaguely they regard us as traditional libertines, and they feel that half-unwilling attraction which every Eve feels towards every Serpent. We frighten them a little, but we fascinate them. They are like the fair Sieglinde imprisoned in the hut of the fierce Hunding. When the door opens and a stranger appears, springtime has come.

A certain Professor from Landshut visited me one evening at Munich and asked me if I would lecture in his town on modern French literature. When the day arrived he met me at the station with a deputation of other Professors, all in frock-coats and white ties and looking like undertakers. The rickety old cab jolted

us to the hall where I was to lecture. Landshut being little more than a village, I was not surprised at the difficulty with which I got soap, towel, comb and looking-glass in order to make myself presentable after an hour's journey by express train. Indeed, I had to use for mirror the well-polished bottom of a copper saucepan, for I need hardly say the performance was to take place in a tavern. In Germany it is very difficult to separate the pleasures of the mind from those of the stomach.

When I appeared on the trestle platform in front of the little table with its green cloth and its water-bottle, I noticed that the first ten rows of seats were empty, and that the audience were crowded together right at the back of the hall, pressed up against the walls most distant from my person. I pointed this out in a whisper to the Chairman-Professor, who explained that these rows were reserved for the ladies, but that they had not dared to occupy them.

Presumably I was the first Frenchman that Landshut had ever seen, and was consequently rather a terrible creature in the eyes of the female audience. Seeing them crowded into the darkest corners and glancing at me with nervous curiosity, I did my best to encourage them before embarking on the subject. I explained how painful it would be for me to talk to empty chairs, and how great would be the encouragement of seeing their charming faces close to the dais, that a Frenchman without ladies is only half a Frenchman, and, in addition, that they would not get their money's worth

by sitting at that distance. The oldest of all first made up their minds and advanced with cautious clumsiness suggestive of hens. The others followed gradually, but, once the ice was broken, they got as near as they could.

I am inclined to doubt that they listened with much attention to my analysis of French naturalism, and the criticism I gave of Flaubert, Zola, Daudet and Huysmans, but I know that they took in every detail of my costume, from my patent leather boots to my shirt front. A Frenchman! What a strange and absorbing object!

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The Wittelsbach are not rich. Ludwig II, who was a great spender, emptied the royal treasury to achieve his dreams of lunatic magnificence. Those mysterious and magical castles on the Bavarian lakes exhausted his resources. To-day his descendants live like the people of the middle-class, and the princesses, shut up in their ancient palaces, lead a simple and monotonous life not unlike that of their humble women subjects. A few have paid tribute to public scandal and gone the pace with famous actors or even with their own coachmen, but these tiresome irregularities are exceptional. Almost all spend their life in religious observance and in taking part in the occasional Court receptions. Their gowns are entirely without elegance, and their ugliness saves them from jealousy. The princes, like their loyal subjects, stay at home as little as possible and spend their time in public places, where, being

entirely without arrogance, they mix with the crowd as though with their equals. At the time when I was conducting a literary magazine for the benefit of the young German intellectuals, one of the ladies-in-waiting at the Court, who subscribed to my paper, praised me to the Princess de la Paz, wife of Prince Ludwig Ferdinand. The latter expressed a desire to see me, in a mystic letter which was read to me by the Countess of Z. :

" Let the young foreigner come to me. It is for the good of his soul and for the redemption of his brethren that he has followed the Golden Star, as did the kings of old, to Bethlehem."

Without having the least idea what her Highness meant by this, I was grateful for the honour so accorded me.

She gave me audience at the Castle of Nymphenburg. I put on my best clothes and started in a horse cab fitted with a taximeter. This class of conveyance had only just been introduced at Münich, and the drivers protested angrily that the new system was designed to rob them of their tips.

The Castle of Nymphenburg is a feeble imitation of Versailles. The park is charming and well wooded, but the palace itself is sadly blotched and pealing. Under plaster which is intended to imitate stone, one can see the lowly brickwork. My conveyance stopped at the main entrance. A servant in knee breeches ran to open the door, and led me through the empty halls of the groundfloor where curtainless windows threw a

feeble daylight on to the empty and corroded walls. I noticed that my guide had holes in his white cotton stockings and that his faded livery smelt of benzine. I was shown to a severely furnished room, at one of the windows of which the Prince Regent was chatting with a group of magnificences in uniform. Before the hearth, in which flickered a consumptive log, ladies in faded silks, perched crookedly on uncomfortable stools, talked in low voices. Through the windows one could see the gardens with their straight avenues and level lawns. Boredom like a canopy of lead brooded over the room.

The Countess of Z. led me to Her Highness the Princess de la Paz. I bowed deeply. Prince Ludwig Ferdinand left the group of men and came towards me with his hand outstretched, regretting that he was not able to talk French better. Then he went back to his conversation.

I accompanied the Princess into a neighbouring boudoir, and our conversation was carried on in the presence of the Marshal of the Court, thus fulfilling the demands of etiquette. The Princess questioned me about my past and present activities. She spoke French well, but everything she said had a strangely distant sound, as though one of the old portraits hanging on the wall had come to life and was talking to me of things long since vanished.

" You are a writer ? " she asked.

" Yes, Royal Highness."

" And about what do you write ? "

"About art, about life, about human beings, about everything that touches and moves me."

"You are a Catholic?"

"Yes, Royal Highness."

"A French Catholic—and France is the eldest daughter of the Church."

I bowed politely.

"Have you seen our Holy Father the Pope?"

"Never, Royal Highness."

"I like to think that you have come among us in order to spread the good message."

She proceeded to develop a whole plan of campaign. She wished to rally the Catholics of Bavaria, Austria, Spain and France, and so form a league against free thought, and especially against the Jews.

Poor Princess! She seemed wholly ignorant of modern life, of the political and social trend of her country. It was evident that the outside air never penetrated into this rococo palace, with its odour of stuffiness and damp. Never before did I so wholly grasp the unapproachable abyss which separates human beings.

The same punctilious ceremony marked my departure. I took leave of Her Highness and her husband. I bowed to their noble friends, and the servant with his damaged stockings led me once again down the deserted stairs and through the deserted rooms. When I arrived in the courtyard I filled my lungs with the fresh air. I felt at the end of my breath, like the pearl fishers when they emerge from the sea. But my joy

was of short duration. I saw my cab galloping at a great pace round and round the empty basin which lay in front of the castle. A foolish Triton of bronze watched this ridiculous gallop with his blind eyes. The driver had made skilful use of his period of waiting, in order to increase the fare by adding a few extra miles.

He drew up without the least embarrassment, and remarked good-temperedly to me, pointing his whip at his horse :

" The brute cannot bear to stand still."

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The woman of the wealthy or intellectual class develops on more independent lines, but even she is prevented by her traditions from enjoying a real education in femininity. She is apt to become, like everyone who has got on too fast, a snob. Torn between a desire for elegance and the wish to assume an artificial individuality different from that of her contemporaries, she exaggerates French fashions and is apt to mistake the *outré* for the original. She knows that Paris is essentially the woman's city, and that everything there is planned for the benefit of woman's grace and woman's charm. She therefore buys all her clothes in Paris. She insists on the very latest fashions. She goes to the best shops for her hats, her dresses, her underclothes, but she has no taste. She cannot select, and therefore takes with her eyes shut whatever the unscrupulous shopkeeper presses upon her. Her

critical sense being puerile, she makes the sole condition that whatever she buys must be the last word. Like all Germans, she has deep in her heart the love of discipline, and submits to the dressmaker's every command. Without the least attempt to adapt the fashion of the day to her own personality, she remains decked out in the richest clothes that France can provide, always the foreigner, with a curious air of being dressed up, which only emphasises her natural heaviness. Nothing is more dismal than a Parisian costume on a German woman. The subtle art of setting off one's clothes is quite unknown to the woman of Berlin.

Like her menfolk, the German woman thinks that everything can be bought, even a sense of the beautiful. She knows nothing of the deep influence of heredity, of the slow and precious history of old civilisation, that maturity of mind which can only be moulded by the patient hand of time.

This is characteristic of the race. Germans are *parvenus*. They think that forty years of prosperity should win them the admiration of the world, and they confuse, without knowing it, the two different but parallel conceptions, the twin sisters of national history so utterly different in their essence, civilisation and culture. No doubt their restaurants are palaces of marble and gold. No doubt their railway stations are magnificent and convenient. No doubt they have learned to put comfort within the reach of the poor. No doubt they have everything that money can buy. Science has won for them every practical achievement

But all these are the fruits of civilisation. Civilisation can acquire, can expand, can impose itself. It is only necessary to know how to organise society, and that the Germans certainly know. But the quality of the individual mind, its intuitive sense of beauty, its fundamental principles, the development of the intellectual faculty, harmony of gesture, grace of movement, moral and physical texture, are these to be bought along with white tiled lavatories, automatic lifts and fish forks ?

I remember once seeing, moored alongside the quay at Genoa, a heavy barge loaded with coal. The great, triangular, red sail hung from the mast, moving gently as a fan in the light wind. A narrow plank ran from the barge to the land. Four or five boys, naked to the waist and girded with soiled coarse cloth, were emptying the hold of the vessel. They carried the coal in huge baskets, balanced on the right shoulder. How beautiful they were in the clear sunlight of the summer morning ! Their bronzed and shining skins gave the tense muscles a texture of silk. Their well-fashioned bare feet trod with ease and grace the wooden plank, which bent under their weight. Each was a complete harmony. Their profile had the delicacy of an ancient cameo, and one, lying easily on the flagstones of the quay and holding a ripe fig to his lips, might have stepped out of a Murillo. I spoke to him, and he replied in his musical native tongue, without servility but without insolence, knowing with instinctive tact the distinction that must be made between a *signor*

and a *facchino*. I could recognise in him the essence of an ancient race. Certainly he was unconscious enough of this, and was merely expressing, without knowing it, the beauty that lived three thousand years ago in the poetry of Homer. These few Genoa street arabs had more culture between them than all the wealthy of Berlin in their luxurious houses, where the costliest comfort has only produced ugliness.

As I have said, it is the absence of tradition that drives German women to extremes. It is sufficient to catch their attention by violent self-advertisement to draw them where you will, and this fact has been grasped and exploited by more than one far-seeing mind.

The movement began in 1901 with the industrial triumph of Germany at the Paris Exhibition. It opened with a campaign in the great towns against the originality of French fashions. A return must be made to the practical. The inventors appealed to the laws of health in order to give their ideas a scientific character, which was of course highly sympathetic to Teuton pedantry. It was necessary to fight Parisian competition, and accordingly the battle-cry " Reform " was invented. This expression always goes down in Germany, and from that moment the whole Empire was flooded with lectures and exhibitions. The theory was attractive. The body must be free under the clothes that covered it. The natural figure must nowhere be compressed. There were " Reform " gowns, " Reform " corsets, " Reform " underclothes. Women

appeared in sort of floating sacks, hung by braces from their shoulders and decorated (to relieve the monotony) with lumpy embroidery of the most revolting kind. The hair was worn plaited close to the head, and the effect was welcomed by the intellectuals as pre-Raphaelite. No complete costume was to weigh more than 220 lbs. Everybody wore combinations—not the little wisps that French women were forced to wear a few years later, when the fashion for clinging gowns made any underclothes at all rather a problem, but stout cotton tights well buttoned up in every direction and extremely cheap.

To adorn these wonderful garments, art workers devised huge, square jewels. The craze lasted for some years, but, as the non-German universe showed no desire to wear these marvels, the German women drifted back to Paris fashions.

It was then that two Scandinavian women had the brilliant idea of going among the Germans, not to improve their wardrobe but to teach them the subtle art of feminine grace. Accordingly there set in the reign of Physical Culture. Muller flooded the world with his famous system. Mrs. Mensendieck published a sentimental work, *Physical Culture for Women*, which was sold all over Central Europe, spreading the good word and supported by endless lectures. Women's Clubs were founded in every town. There were teachers of breathing, of movement, of bowing, of sitting down, of going to bed—all according to Mensendieck principles. Moving pictures were made to

illustrate the course of instruction. Mensendieck had laid it down that it was not clothes that gave a woman elegance of grace and suppleness of body, and there was a certain amount in what she said. But she went rather far in maintaining that any woman, at the cost of a little perseverance and a few hundred marks, could acquire this subtle accomplishment. However this may be, she made a lot of money, and numerous drawing-rooms were opened in which one could see women wobbling painfully about according to the complicated and numerous rules of the new system. Everyone, fat and thin, short and tall, was "doing Mensendieck," and their attempts to carry out the same rigid principles gave the scene the appearance of a ballet only half learnt.

Then came Karin Michaelis. She left the physical side of the question on one side and spoke to the soul of the German woman, with the laudable intention of prolonging their youth by a sort of spiritual gymnastics. Her book was called *The Dangerous Age.* She taught her disciples subtle means of passing that critical moment without losing their femininity. The women of uncertain age flocked to Michaelis, and there were, I am sorry to say, flippant people who called them "The Dangerous Aged."

In this way snobbery succeeded snobbery. The German woman, unable to find in herself any basis for physical and moral education, rushed wildly at every new idea, leaving it with equal rapidity the moment something more startling appeared. If you knock

two nails one after another into the same hole the second drives out the first.

The "high-brows," rendered even more idiotic by their learning, founded colonies in Northern Italy and among the Italian Lakes, which were supposed to revive the customs of the ancient world.

The two sexes lived in common with very little on, eating nothing but fruit and salad, baking their stomachs in the sun and bathing in the beauty of the placid lake, to the considerable embarrassment of the peasant natives. Isidora Duncan's brother, with his Christlike face, his veil, his bare legs and sandals, had a positive triumph at Berlin. It was only with the greatest difficulty that a number of ardent ladies were prevented from walking about the Tiergarten in the same costume. Finally, they were persuaded to compromise and ranged the streets, their hair flowing down their backs.

Shortly before the war, taste changed. The rich Jewesses, always the first to grasp anything new, discovered in Paris an art, which had existed for long enough in Germany, that of violent contrasts of colour and brilliant schemes of decoration. The Vienna workshops, a Viennese group of craftsmen led by Klint, Kalo Moser and Zeschka, the Munich school and the Dresden school had for long enough sought inspiration in old German folk art, which survives to-day in the brightly coloured embroideries and costumes of Hesse, Schleswig and the Black Forest. Cotton stuffs designed on these models had been for some years in

all the exhibitions, but had had no great success because they were German. But now Paris was taking them up. To avoid offending the sensitive French with their distrust of Germany, the talk was all of Serbian and Bulgarian art, of the influence of the Russian Ballet. Those who were in the secret went regularly to Germany, to get ideas from the people already working there, who no doubt had their eyes opened and wept for their illusions and their lost clients. For what happened was, that all the well-to-do women of Germany hastened to buy from Paris what they had refused to buy from their fellow-countrymen. The great ladies of Berlin began to look like Turkish Sultanas straight out of *Kismet*, which was itself largely influenced by Reinhardt's *Sumurun*. At the same time their husbands were buying cubist and futurist pictures, thanks to the enterprise of a certain Kahnweiler, who was the centre in Paris of these pictures for export. Valentine de Saint-Point set off to teach to the ladies of Berlin the new religion of luxury and the delights of restless wandering.

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In the midst of this short-cut scramble to elegance and charm, the Empress of Germany—a true Hohenzollern consort—strives to uphold the natural simplicity of the German woman. She has a Puritan hatred for Paris. She makes a point of buying her clothes exclusively from German shops and boasts of doing so, but nobody thinks of following the good example that she sets.

William II finds her principles rather trying, not because he is particularly fond of France, but because he cannot help seeing that his wife is badly dressed and because his Pan-Germanism, like that of his most zealous supporters, feels at home with French fashions, French cooking and French wines.

In 1914 was the famous jubilee to celebrate the centenary of Prussian independence. A gala performance was given before the whole Court at the Royal Opera House in Berlin. William determined that the Empress should look better than usual, and sent two functionaries to Paris to order his wife's dress from one of the most famous houses of France. It was conditional that the firm thus favoured should pledge themselves to keep the secret of the august customer's name. Money can buy most things, and the secret was well kept. The Empress received the gown as from her usual Berlin dressmakers. When complimented on its beauty, she replied, with evident satisfaction :

" You see, then, that it is not only in Paris that people have taste ! "

Some time before, the ineffable Crown Prince, who was presiding at a banquet at the Kaiserhof to celebrate some nationalist ambition, swilled best quality Clicquot cunningly disguised as a bottle of Henckel.[1] In this way he showed to those present how excellent, in his opinion, were German wines.

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[1] Henckel is a German champagne.

Apart from the hierarchy of caste, by the side of the beaten track, lies, in each great German city, Bohemia. As in other countries, this is a world of sculptors, painters, writers, actors and erring bourgeois. It is an interesting world, for it reflects, perhaps better than any other, the German mind. A careful study of it suggests what the Germany of to-morrow will be. Woman is represented either as herself practising some intellectual occupation or merely as making easier and more pleasant the life of her companions. She brings no light relief to the society in which she moves. Like her middle-class sisters, she reflects absurdities and exaggerates them.

The Stephanie Café in Munich corresponds more or less to the Café Procope in Paris.[1] All the young intellectuals gather there, and the maddest schemes, destined, according to their inventors, to revolutionise Germany, have been discussed round its noisy tables. The thousand shameless details of Bohemian life are revealed at this café, and it was there that I met, for the first time, a German female "high-brow."

She was sixteen years old and hideously ugly. Picture a dead white face with a little pointed nose like a mouse, a huge mouth, two little pale and squinting eyes, a bush of red hair, a flat chest and two thin legs ending in large feet, and you can form some idea of what Anatole looked like. I do not know why they called her Anatole. Perhaps as a sort of ironical souvenir of Arthur Schnitzler's famous dialogues. She

[1] [Or the Café Royal in London.]

came every evening and always alone. As she was very small, she raised herself on her chair by sitting on directories and telephone books. She asked for all the newspapers and magazines, for ink, pen and paper, and there, in the middle of the turmoil of the café, she sat and produced Literature. When she was tired of writing and reading, she would call the boy, who is found in every German café dressed in a shabby dinner jacket and vowed to the humble task of wiping table-tops or bringing glasses of water to the drinkers, and, in a nasal drawl which rose high above the conversation around her, she would ask him questions about his adolescence and instruct him in feminist theory. She would explain to him the horror with which she viewed the prospects of maternity, and then, suddenly, would send him off again to the bar and start writing. Nobody was allowed to come near her. She preserved inviolate the riddle of her lonely life. Her contempt for men held her great mouth in a permanent grin of disdain.

Among the literary women who frequented this café, there was also a dark girl with bright eyes, who was always dressed like a little child. She loved to fling her legs over the back of a chair, smacking herself on the chest and shouting loudly :

" I am a real German poetess."

She was called Margarete Beutler and certainly had some talent. In contrast to Anatole, she regarded fertility as woman's greatest duty, and accordingly, at intervals, she could be seen with tell-tale figure wander-

ing shamelessly about the streets of Munich. When one spoke to her, she would comment proudly on her condition, and remark :

" You can bet your life the brat will be a genius ! "

She brought her entire brood one after the other to the Stephanie Café, suckling them between her drinks and uttering cries of encouragement. But when they began to grow up, she left them to their fate and they were never seen again.

I used to know, in this strange circle, a charming girl who lived with a neo-romantic poet called Otto F. She had a little flower shop and did her best to keep her friend's affection by practising all the domestic virtues. She made him as comfortable as possible at home, skilfully spending the 200 marks a month which the young writer's father allowed him. Otto F. was full of her praises and boasted of her qualities as a housekeeper. When his father died he inherited something of a fortune and married the girl, partly in gratitude, partly because he was used to her. And so she became a great lady with her smart house and garden on the outskirts of Munich ; but though, as a little flower-seller, she was able triumphantly to live the life of a Bohemian, her new rôle was too much for her. Her head was turned. She ran into debt, and a rift appeared between her and her husband. When I visited them one day not long before the war, I found Otto F. himself cultivating his kitchen garden. He sold his wife the leeks, carrots, potatoes and lettuces that he grew, thus getting back some fraction of the

money which he gave her every week for the housekeeping.

I also remember another woman, one of the many divorced wives of a great misogynist. She wandered from town to town with a bundle of impossible manuscripts under her arm, spending her time between publishers' offices and public places frequented by well-known authors. Her gentle soul did its best to snare the affections of famous poets, and some did indeed temporarily succumb. She parted from her lovers with complete resignation, and the chapter of her life became little short of a complete history of modern German literature. People used to call her "The Dictionary of Authors."

As a rule these women were completely without sense of proportion. One of them, Else Kratzfuss, had the unhappy idea of reading her verses to a practical joker and of asking his advice. She was revolting to look at—thin as a skeleton, with a face like a horse and long straight black hair. This unfortunate creature wrote poems exclusively about sensuality and morbidly tinged with death and decay. She was the laureate at once of licence and of carrion. The practical joker dressed her in clinging black silk, put a white lily in her hand, called her "Dolorosa," and set her to read her verses in public. Her success in Berlin was unbelievable. The more ardently she sang of the flesh and its ultimate putrefraction, the more her audience writhed with delight. She never grasped that she was being made a fool of, and continued, with

her haggard eyes, to follow the hysterical fancies which haunted her foolish brain.

The phenomenon of auto-suggestion is not rare among German women. There was, for instance, in Saxony a well-known poetess—Friederike Kempter—whose sole published volume sold in fabulous quantities. She came of a good family, and was a sensible and respectable woman, who wrote verses in order to do good. They were very moral and very religious, but their success was entirely due to their excruciating badness. The publisher, who was clever enough to speculate on this inverted greatness, was rewarded for his courage. The author wrote a new preface for every new edition. She thanked the public for their kind appreciation, and marvelled that the good God (to whom she also gave thanks) had endowed her with such talent. These prefaces were almost more popular than the poems. The last edition contained them all, and the poor woman died at a good age without ever realising the true reason of her literary reputation.

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In view of the attacks made on various occasions by Pan-Germans against the corruption of French manners, it seems desirable to explain that, in certain German circles, perverted vice has developed to an extent never known in France. The cosmopolitan Paris is not France, but there is a Paris, hidden from the foreigner, which is full of fine traditions and of

moral health and in which woman knows how to preserve at once her virtue and her outward charm.

Germany has not even the excuse of possessing an artificial centre of international licence. Berlin, Munich, Dresden, Leipzig and Frankfurt are not cosmopolitan cities. Tourists come and go, but do not settle there. Nevertheless, freshly come to the very abstruse pleasures of civilisation, the well-to-do circles in Germany have determined themselves to enjoy all the lechery and vice for which the French act as merchants on behalf of their riotous guests. And the playing of this dangerous game has gone to Germany's head.

I do not deny that the poorer classes in Germany have a morality which is often severe and always repellent. The sight of the average woman of those classes explains the epigram of a certain German poet: "Virtue is the absence of temptation." But those women who have been plunged suddenly into luxury, those who have become easy victims to the most shameless snobbery, wallow in self-indulgence and exceed every limit in their desire to show that they are above prejudice. They know no more how to wear their vices than their clothes. Only someone who has lived in Berlin society, who has jostled all the scandals and all the baseness, can understand the moral degradation of certain of these upstart wealthy women who have been thrown too suddenly into an unripe social organism.

I wonder whether apostles of Pan-Germanism think

that they deceive us by their pompous pronouncements. Do they seriously consider Europe to be so naive? Do they seriously think that all those who dwell among them are blind? The poison has entered into the race, and there is no secular heredity to act as innoculation. Such a national evil advances with terrible rapidity until gradually it permeates every class of the population. Germany can offer the best example of rapid decadence in the world. Only forty years have sufficed to bring a healthy nation to decay. Where has that old-time Germany gone, which gave the world fine minds and great works of art? World massacre will not remove the poison, neither will the formidable machine of a brutal policy restore the country to health. The German flower blossomed too rapidly and under glass, and its withering will be a symbol of the eternal revenge of old civilisations upon those which have sprung up too rapidly.

The woman whom Germany has been unable to educate and who herself knows not the secret of attraction, becomes a pleasure drunkard and rises against her old master. She wears shirt-fronts, waistcoats, soft felt hats, and founds special clubs in which, under the guise of feminism, she claims to have eliminated the male. The men follow suit, and the scandal fouls even the steps of the throne.

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And where has the symbolic Gretchen gone—that type which the foreigner, so ignorant of his neighbours,

persists in regarding as symbolical of Germany? She still exists, although changed by the hysteria which has seized the whole nation. I will tell you the story of one such Gretchen.

Her name was Grete Baïer, and on either side of her pale prettiness fell two thick plaits of flaxen hair. She was barely seventeen and lived in a charming town on the Rhine, where the low houses with their balconies are reflected in the waters of the river. She was engaged, a condition which affords considerable pleasure to German girls. She wore on her little finger a gold ring, ornamented with a single Rhine pebble, the little gold ring of the old stories. She loved to go sentimental walks with her fiancé, whom she called *Schatz* (treasure), as is their way in Germany. The young man was twenty-four and worked in a local bank. Together they questioned the oracle of the marguerite, and, when the lad looked into the blue eyes of his companion, he read there, no doubt, the comfortable promise of a true and peaceful love in a dwelling poor in size but rich in happiness. He rejoiced in the girl's innocence, in the pure questioning of her glance, and sighed with pleasure as he pressed her to his heart.

Gretchen found the day hang heavily upon her hands while her friend, bent over his ledgers, awaited the moment of release. She confided somewhat naively in an officer of the Dragoons, who was stationed in the town, and the latter suggested distractions which appealed to her. A child of her nature cannot

resist the charm of a uniform and, as the officer seemed to wish it, she engaged herself to him as well. Another ring, this time ornamented with an imitation pearl, occupied during the day the place of that presented by the bank clerk.

In the evening she always remembered to change the rings, because she was full of natural tact and hated to give anybody pain. To each of these men she maintained the sphinxlike attitude of a little girl, at once intelligent and gentle. Maybe she would have gone on for long enough in this way with her two lovers, but men have strange fancies. The officer, less patient than the civilian, demanded the complete possession of his fiancée. He even resorted to threats. Gretchen wept. Her kind heart could not give up her first love, and the task of jilting him was altogether beyond her. If only he could disappear without noise, without tears, without recrimination. . . . But he would be sure to protest if she tried to get rid of him, and, in the softness of her heart, she knew that she would yield. And then the officer would be angry and give her up, and again she would be alone all day. Besides which, a soldier is much more distinguished than a bank clerk. She racked her brains to find a way out. And when she found one, she lost no time in putting it to the test.

One evening the young bank clerk came to her house to take her out. Gretchen received him with the greatest affection, clapped her hands, skipped to her wardrobe and took out a little round and shining

object, obviously a sweet. She returned to her fiancé and said with a mysterious pout :

" Shut your eyes and open your mouth."

And he shut his eyes and opened his mouth—and fell to the ground and never rose again, for he had swallowed a pill of prussic acid. . . .

The trial made a great sensation. The most famous scientists studied the mentality of this curious murderess. Learned pamphlets were written about the case. Who would have suspected such desperate intentions under such a show of naïveté ?

CHAPTER V. THE LIFE OF EVERY DAY

" I do not admire a man for one perfect virtue unless he also possesses in equal degree the contrasting virtue."—PASCAL.

Where we must learn from Germany—Democracy of comfort—Flats—Postal arrangements—Parcels—Railways—Stations—Hotels—Public baths—Street cleaning and dustmen—Street repairs—Newspaper advertisements—Intelligence *versus* obstructionism—The true value of Kultur—Tales of German mentality—The scandal of the mustard-pots—" Made in Germany."

THERE are people in France and England who think it their duty to blackguard everything German just because it is German, as though it were necessary by this means to bolster up their own patriotism. To acknowledge any good point among our enemies seems treason to them. I think that people of this kind are ignorant of all the lessons of war and of history and blind to the merits of frankness. No really strong nation need shut its eyes and ears to facts ; indeed, it gains by recognising its own faults. France and England are strong. They have proved this once again. They have surmounted many obstacles, of which the most serious were absence of preparation and a wrong interpretation of their responsibilities. They have shown themselves, in the course of the struggle, full of resource, patience and perseverance. It is a just and proud claim that they will

emerge from the conflict with increased prestige and will appear to the whole world renewed by adversity. Germany, on the other hand, will, when the war is over, be morally and materially reduced, because she enslaved her intelligence and her power to her egoism and her lust for dominion.

We Allies can therefore claim the right to be sincere and fair-minded. Profiting from the lesson which is leading a blind nation to its fate, we can regard pre-war Germany with impartiality, that Germany which has been and which will be no more ; and from the entity of her social life we can disentangle for our own profit those qualities of discipline and method which were the most fruitful signs of her activity. No war, however cruel and however wicked, can be without results. Wisdom lies in drawing conclusions profitable to our own cause, which is the cause of future progress and liberty.

The chief characteristic of German development before the war was faculty of assimilation and adaptation. Evolution was hampered by no hard and fast tradition. Itself an organism freshly come to civilisation, the German Empire knew how to learn from the experience of other nations and to take for itself that which seemed likely to be useful. Methodical organisation simplified the daily acts of social life and allowed individual activity to redound without hindrance to the profit of the community.

Democracy of comfort was the essential quality of pre-war Germany. In Republican France and Parlia-

mentary England comfort came with riches and was barely distinguishable from luxury. Autocratic Germany, on the other hand, put convenience within the reach of the majority of her citizens. I can bear witness to this, for I have lived a long time there.

Twelve years ago I had a flat at Munich with four rooms, also a kitchen, bathroom, servant's room, larder, a small box-room, electric light, gas, central heating, hot and cold running water and a lift. This flat cost me £30 a year, rates included. The increase in the cost of living naturally tended to send up rents, and just before the war my flat cost annually £43. Munich is a town of 600,000 inhabitants, and, as capital of Bavaria, must be placed in the class of large provincial cities. At Berlin a similar flat cost, just before the war, £60 a year, but even this price, taking into consideration the comfort of the dwelling, is a long way below rents in Paris or London.

Landlords, when they build, always put in at their own expense electric light, gas, heating, hot water, bathroom and lift. At the bottom of the courtyards of each block of flats are built a few sets of smaller apartment-dwellings (they are called *Rückgebäude*—back-buildings) which command a much smaller rent, while benefiting fully from the general conveniences of the establishment. The latter are thus rendered less expensive by being accessible to more families.

Of course I am not talking of working-class tenements. These blocks, built in outlying suburbs, con-

sist of tiny dwellings with low rents, but even they have as much water as is required, gas and electric light. The most modern inventions are kept for the better class houses.

The municipal electric light and gas companies never charge for their metres. Why, they argue, should the consumer pay for the installation of an apparatus which acts solely in the interests of the supplier? The confectioner at the corner does not charge his clients for the scales that he uses. In the same way the telephone, which is much more widely used than in France or England, is installed free of charge, and no payment is asked for the apparatus. The annual subscription is determined to include the cost of the apparatus and the connection of the individual subscriber to the main system. When you move house, the post office officials instal your apparatus in your new flat without charge.

Any agreement in the form of a letter is a binding contract. Scraps of paper, so much despised by German politicians, bind the private individual as tightly as a legal document. If necessary, a verbal agreement is sufficient, provided it is made before witnesses. Perjury in civil law is punishable by imprisonment. I have known important business deals concluded by telephone with a witness at each receiver. The main thing is to save time. Every unnecessary legal interference is regarded as a hindrance and therefore a cause of delay.

The whole organisation of the public service is so

practical that one would hardly suspect the existence of bureaucracy.

There are only two perfectly simple methods of sending money by post—the registered letter and the card money order. The latter has a perforated slip attached, which is filled in by the sender and serves as a receipt, for the addressee merely signs his name, tears it off and sends it back. All the registration and administrative work of the system is done later, after post office hours. The public must not be made to wait.

To facilitate trade communications, the post office runs a banking system called *Chek-Postverkehr*. Everyone can get his money or make his payments through the post office, which opens an account for him under a particular number.

The postal rates between the two Central Empires have been unified. A letter from Hamburg to Budapest costs 10 pfennig up to about ⅔ oz., and 20 pfennig up to about 9 oz. A postcard 5 pfennig. Local municipal post only costs 5 pfennig for a letter of ⅔ oz., and 10 pfennig for a letter of 9 oz.[1]

The post office undertakes, free of charge, subscriptions to all the newspapers and periodicals of the Empire. The postman gives you your paper every morning without wrapper and without address, as though he were the newsagent. The papers are collected by the post office straight from the publishers, on the same terms as by the shops.

[1] [In 1916 postal rates were raised in Germany and Austria, 5 pfennig charges becoming 7½ pfennig, 10 pfennig becoming 15 pfennig, while the local 2 pfennig postcard now costs 3 pfennig.]

Post-parcels deserve their name as they are dealt with entirely by the post office. The charge is 50 pfennig for 11 lbs. The address card (a card bearing the address is attached to the parcel) is provided with a blank space on which, without further charge, the sender can send any necessary message to the addressee. The post office motors—in some towns, like Munich and Frankfurt, motor-tramcars which run on the municipal tram lines—take the parcels to the station, collecting them from every post office in the city. Arrived at the station they are put in official post office wagons and reach their destination as quickly as circulars. A parcel takes twenty-four hours to get from Hamburg to Munich. Special postmen with electric tricycle-vans distribute the parcels to the various houses. If preferred, one can register a parcel and send it by express like a letter. Locally, within the limits of one town, the tariff is reduced to 25 pfennig per 11 lbs. It is easy to understand the advantages to trade of this organisation. There are post offices in Berlin which take in, in the evening when the shops shut, as many as three hundred parcels from one firm, of which quite a number are "cash on delivery."

The letter boxes, which are numerous in every town, have large enough openings to admit bulky bundles of printed matter. It is not necessary to go to a post office. The boxes are cleared by the tricycle-vans, and the postman carries a large leather sack which opens automatically. He fits the sack on to the bottom of

the letter box,[1] and an ingenious contrivance opens simultaneously the sack and the box. The letters fall out, the box and sack come apart, closing up as they do so. Not only is time saved by this method, but no letter can possibly be lost.

The German railway authorities have done all in their power to put within the reach of everybody rapid transport facilities, for on these commercial activity largely depends. In every branch of the service is a wide and democratic spirit. To travel in comfort is not the monopoly of the rich. Big expresses have second and third as well as first class ;[2] indeed, in Germany hardly anybody travels first class, with the result that such compartments have either vanished altogether or are run in very small numbers. The use of the restaurant car is free to everyone on the train, even between meals, but of course on the condition that the actual meals are taken there. To travel by large expresses it is only necessary to pay an overcharge of 1 mark for 100 miles on a second class ticket and 50 pfennig on a third class ticket. For a long distance the extra charge is 2 marks and 1 mark.[2] In South Germany slow trains run fourth class carriages, for which the ticket rates are 2 pfennig per kilometre (about a halfpenny a mile).

[1] [The letter boxes in Germany are not pillars at the street corners, or built in flush with the wall as in London, but stand out from the wall with every side clear except that actually attached the masonry.]

[2] [Here again the point appeals to the continental rather than to the English reader, who knows little of *Trains de Luxe*, with their single costly tariff, and nothing of fares regulated according to the speed and importance of the train.]

Both first and second class passengers are admitted to the sleeping cars on payment of a supplement, which varies from 6 to 15 marks according to the length of the journey and the ticket held by the traveller. A few months before the war there had been introduced third class sleeping cars, which provided a berth with bedclothes and pillow at 3 to 5 marks, according to distance. The sleeping car service extended beyond the frontiers of the Empire to those countries which were signatories to the Railway Convention, e.g. Switzerland, Holland, Austria, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. One could travel from Berlin to Copenhagen or Stockholm in a second class sleeping car without even getting out for the crossing, which was made on a train ferry, and the only payment, over and above the price of the ticket, was 10 marks for the use of the sleeper.

Many a time I have taken the four o'clock afternoon train from Zurich and arrived the midday following at Berlin, having travelled via Basle, Freiburg i/Breisgau, Heidelberg, Frankfurt, Erfurt, Weimar and Halle. I would get into a sleeper at Zurich with my second class ticket, which cost 45 marks plus the supplement of 10 marks. We were at most only four in the compartment. At ten o'clock the conductor prepared the beds and we were called between eight and nine in the morning. While we were having *déjeuner* in the restaurant car the conductor folded up the berths and we arrived at Berlin as fresh as paint, having covered the same distance as between Nice and Paris in equal comfort but at one-third or even a quarter the price. In

France one must either be rich or have a pass in order to travel in this way, but there is nothing of the latter kind in Germany, where everybody pays, even journalists and members of Parliament.[1] The former travel for their newspapers, who pay their travelling expenses ; the latter are only allowed to go free at the beginning and end of each Reichstag session, and this only for the stretch between their constituency and Berlin.

All those who have travelled in Germany know the comfort of the second class corridor coaches. There are only six in a compartment, where are provided every imaginable convenience—enormous luggage racks, hooks for your coat, seats which pull out, elbow rests, adjustable tables, small electric lamps for reading, separate lavatories for men and women, soap, towels which are only used once and then thrown into the wash-basket. Third class carriages on the big expresses, holding eight per compartment, are crowded with commercial travellers, who appear in excessive numbers in the dining-cars. An unattractive lot certainly, but then Germany believes in business, which is the foundation of her prosperity.

And yet, despite the fact that travellers are supplied with all these comforts at a cheap price, the State earns by the railways several thousand million marks a year, which are not distributed in dividends, but go to the improvement of the train service and to the

[1] [Free railway passes for Reichstag deputies were among the innovations rejected by the *Herrenhaus* early in 1917.]

building of splendid stations like those at Leipzig, Hamburg, Cologne, Dresden, Frankfurt, Darmstadt, Munich and Heidelberg. At these railway stations are bathrooms with showers, manicure parlours, barbers' shops, flower-stalls, fruit and vegetable sellers, post and telegraph offices, public telephones, booths in which one can buy every imaginable convenience for travelling, book shops, bars, restaurants, tobacconists, etc. etc.

The hotels, another necessary element to well-organised travelling, have the same methodical comfort at the same low price, even in quite small towns. At Hamburg, Breslau, Königsberg, Munich, Weimar, Nurnberg there are huge hotels with fixed prices, where for 3.50 marks one can get a room with a small dressing-room, hot and cold water and shower bath ; for 4.50 marks, bedroom, dressing-room and bathroom. A special office in the hall of the hotel enables the traveller to buy at leisure his railway ticket, to reserve his seat and to register his luggage, for all of which convenience no charge is made. When the time comes for departure it is merely necessary to walk to the station. There are no further formalities.

Everywhere is to be met this constant desire to put useful inventions within the reach of the largest possible number. Every town of the Empire has its public baths run by the municipality. Besides actual swimming-baths, there are electric baths, vapour baths, carbonic acid baths, needle showers, massage rooms, hot-air baths, steam baths—in fact a Russo-Turkish establishment with, in addition, massage and

every form of hydrotherapy. And all this, with, into the bargain, the right to lunch afterwards in a comfortable room, costs from 2 to 2.50 marks. Attached to the establishment is a doctor, a barber, a foot specialist and a manicurist, as well as a restaurant.

Street cleaning and the collection of rubbish is carried out inconspicuously and with speed. Household dust-bins are cleared every morning by motor vans hermetically sealed. Landlords are compelled to build in the courtyards (which for hygienic reasons are on a generous scale) a special shed of corrugated iron, in which are fitted two square tanks of similar size and shape. These tanks never leave the shed. The men in charge of the motor dust-cart in their grey leather uniforms come into the courtyard and, opening the shed, fit to either side of the tank that has to be cleared wooden bars, by which they carry it, as though it were a Sedan-chair, to the van outside. A special crane raises the bin above the van. The bottom is released and the rubbish falls out without the least dust escaping. The lid of the van closes automatically, the empty tank is taken back to its place by the dustmen and the motor-truck moves on. As a result, it is possible to walk through a German town at night without seeing stray dogs or rag gatherers poking about among the debris, which stand in evil-smelling bins along the pavements.

It is forbidden at any hour to shake tablecloths, bedding or dusters out of the windows, either into the street or into the courtyard. Curtains and hangings

are taken down and beaten in the courtyard, bars of wood being fixed in the wall for the purpose. Vacuum cleaning, obtainable at a reasonable price, is in general use in all decent houses.

The meticulous cleanliness of German cities is familiar to everyone who has visited the country. The watering and sweeping of the streets is done mechanically, and the asphalt of the Berlin streets is so smooth that, in dry weather, the passing motors are reflected as though in a mirror.

When there is street work to be done of urgent importance it is carried out during the night. There is something almost eerie in seeing, about two o'clock in the morning, bodies of twenty to fifty workmen toiling in the glare of great acetylene lamps at gas or water mains, repairing the tram lines or asphalting a section of the street. Should the work not be finished by the morning, it is patched up provisionally and the next night sees full completion. It is essential that traffic should never be interfered with during the hours important to the life of the city.

For the same reason the municipalities have, in every public garden and square, a special children's section. Surrounded by shrubs or on grass well shaded with trees, there is an open space with sand heaps, small pits, little benches, chairs, a shelter in case of rain, all for the use of young children, their mothers and their nurses.

The absence of monopolies allows competition free play. Every trader tries to supply his clientele as

cheaply as possible, and the more a particular article is widely bought, the greater the competition in its manufacture. It is the public that profit. Matches, for instance, are of excellent quality and very cheap. Playing cards can be had for almost nothing.[1]

Advertisement follows the same lines. The newspapers have the same interest in putting their power within the reach of every class. I have heard people make fun of these daily papers of sixteen to thirty pages, which appear several times a day, but it must be remembered that this system allows of cheaper advertisement rates. The charge is 50 pfennig a line in Berlin, 20 to 30 pfennig in the smaller towns. No advertisements appear in the body of the newspaper proper. The editorial and advertisement branches are quite separate and independent one from the other. Never, between two paragraphs of news, is a disturbing phrase designed deliberately to resemble editorial reading-matter, but really praising the virtues of some

[1] [Marc Henry is, of course, writing from the French point of view, and consequently knows a State monopoly of tobacco, matches and other commodoties. It may be suggested that he tends to exaggerate the freedom of competition in Germany, and forgets the influence of the various cartels, which control, for example, the electrical and chemical trades. These cartels, encouraged by the Government, are combinations by contract, for a limited number of years, between the competing elements in any given business, each member being responsible for a definite amount of production, and receiving a definite share of the total profits. One of the effects of such cartels was undoubtedly before the war to penalise the home consumer in order to sell more cheaply in foreign markets and so cripple foreign competition. Incidentally also, it is interesting to mention that early in 1917 the German Government were contemplating the institution of a tobacco monopoly in Germany in order to meet economic conditions produced by the war.]

product, some book or some play. A large heading sets apart the commercial from the editorial section. When one sees the word *Inseratabteilung* (Advertisement Section) one knows what to expect. In my opinion this is the most sensible method and certainly the papers profit by it.

Sometimes, in order to depreciate the advantage of methodical organisation in social life, it is said that the success of such organisation depends on a narrow and servile discipline on the part of each individual. This is a serious mistake. Communal life is only possible on a basis of mutual concession. When men unite in one society, individual liberty can only exist in so far as it does not interfere with other people. Discipline, properly understood and submitted to with a true sense of its importance, allows a nation to develop more quickly and more uniformly than would be possible without such self-control. Often they are the smallest details of daily life which show the advantages of this discipline. The extraordinary growth of Germany, both industrial and economic, would never have been possible in so complex and heterogenous an Empire, if the relations between the State and the individual had not been simplified to the extreme. It is useless to attempt great reforms or great achievements, when the way is blocked by the innumerable obstacles of a decaying bureaucracy, and when a nation is bound by a false idea of modern social life. "It always has been like that. Why should it not continue as before?" That is the miserable excuse

on which so much initiative has gone to ruin. Such blind obstructionism endangers the future of a nation, for the people come to endure every yoke, and some neighbouring nation, taking advantage of their weakness and freer in its movements, pushes on to enterprise and progress. This question has nothing to do with culture. It is a product of civilisation. Culture is the treasure we carry in ourselves, the sacred fire—so to speak, the forcing bed in which we grow. Civilisation is a practical application of human discovery, and amounts to putting within the reach of the community the greatest possible well-being. Negroes can be civilised by a present of trousers, of a Bible, a gun and a bottle of rum, but even with these benefits they are not cultured. Such culture as they have is that of their ancestors and is expressed in their coloured stuffs, their rudely carved statues, their clothes, their dances, their songs and their music.

Germany has borrowed the word "Kultur" from France, but the change of spelling has changed the meaning and has produced a conception purely Germanic. Like their trashy merchandise, this "Kultur" is cheap and nasty. They are civilised, but they are not cultured. Like the negroes, they have their trousers, their Bible, their gun and their rum, which possessions are paralleled in their case by Zeppelins, ocean liners, banks, factories, siege guns, palaces and Berlin itself, so clean, so smooth, so ugly. Everything is practical, everything is tremendous, but none of the

dust of old humanity is allowed to rest on all this splendour. They have thrown overboard all ballast, in order to rise ever higher, but the ballast they rejected was their real treasure and stood for the true value of their race, which is now dishonoured in the eyes of the world. Fortunately nations cannot be robbed of their culture and their traditions, as they can be robbed of their markets, their inventions, their learned men. What the Germans have done, others can do, and that without degradation. The Germans have organised effort. They have realised and applied the inventions of other people, and there is nothing shameful in depriving an ape of a looking-glass he has stolen and used to reflect on to himself the merits of others.

The power of Germany does not depend on the proud character of the race, but on their industrial skill and subtlety which have won themselves a footing in every land. The German Empire has only become insolent and brutal under the illusion that it was all-powerful, and that others were too weak to resist. The German will submit to anything, if he knows himself the weaker party.

One evening a Saxon was sitting in a restaurant at the same table as two foreigners who were making fun of him and, in order to get rid of him, slighting him in various ways. His patience finally exhausted, the poor man cried out :

" You have trodden on my toes. You have spat in my beer. If I have any more of your impertinence— I shall go and sit at another table."

They tell this story about themselves.

When, on Sunday morning, noisy groups meet in one of the Kempinski restaurants at Hamburg or Berlin, they order champagne, oysters and other exotic dishes for their midday lunch. They marvel at the pasteboard splendour that surrounds them—the reinforced concrete pillars, the horrible gilded stucco, the napery, the ice buckets, the sham silver dishes, the glass. They regard themselves as living a life of desperate refinement, although the German champagne they drink costs 3 marks a bottle, and the oysters they swallow have no taste. Outward appearance is all they want. They never go below the surface.

The sentiments of justice, freedom and brotherhood only interest them as business propositions. They have no longer in them the stuff of which martyrs and apostles are made. They cannot suffer for an ideal, and that, doubtless, is why they are always afraid of revolution and of policemen.

A certain great merchant of Berlin had brought a doubtful action against a competitor. Unable to be present at the decision, he asked his lawyer to inform him without fail of the result. The latter, proud of having won the case for his client, telegraphed triumphantly :

" The just cause has triumphed."

But the merchant wired an immediate reply :

" Appeal at once."

Little stories of this kind show the German mentality better than anything else.

The patriotic conceit, which to-day has driven them to massacre, impelled them during many years to deny their nationality, when such denial was a help in capturing foreign markets and spreading the sale of their goods. They do not worry about pride of country, and, in the cause of self-interest, will change their skins as easily as chameleons.

A few years before the war the china shops in Paris were flooded with grotesque mustard-pots, representing a swine's head wearing a pointed helmet, the latter serving as lid. The production had considerable success, and this caricature of German militarism was bought far and wide. The German Ambassador in Paris made friendly representations to the French Government, who took steps to stop this insult to the neighbouring State, with which France was then at peace. International courtesy forbade that we should wound our neighbour's feelings by public ridicule in shop windows. An enquiry was held, and with a somewhat startling result, for it was found that the guilty mustard-pots were made at Frankfurt. Good business is always worth apostasy.

It is to be hoped that France and England will profit from the German example, both good and bad. After the harvest the grain must be separated from the chaff, and we also shall have to co-ordinate our efforts. We must organise our social life and see that our renaissance does not become, like that of our enemies, a weapon of violence and domination but a tool in the service of human freedom.

CHAPTER VI. JEWS

" In Berlin Christians are beginning to complain that Christianity has passed entirely into the hands of Jews."

HEINE. *Reisebilder.*

The waiting-room stove at Kaiserslautern—I discover the Jewish problem at the Frankfurt Zoo—The Jews are the mortar of Germany—Their hold on the German Press—On the German theatres—On Berlin—Their attitude towards war—Their acquiescence in *the* war—The three Jews at Portofino—" Converts " from Judaism—German-Jew slang—Jewish self-criticism—The Brothers Deutsch and the Tyrolese hat—The *Wiener Werkstätte*—The *Uberbrettl*—Reinhardt and *Schall und Rauch*—Reinhardt invades the circus—" The Miracle "—Jewish craze for novelty: (1) Picture-dealing and picture-buying—(2) Sanatoria—(3) Eurhythmics—The saving sense of humour: Zadoc, Isaac, Aaron and the miracles—Jewish craze for splendour: (1) Restaurants: Kempinski and Rheingold—(2) Shops: Wertheim and its story—*Le Juif s'amuse*—The Emperor and the Jews—Myself and the Jews—The cab-rank in the Hardenbergerstrasse.

IN 1895 I got out on the platform at Frankfurt station one warm summer morning. I was deeply moved, for it was the first time that I had been in Germany, and, throughout the journey, I had kept a prudent silence for fear of betraying my nationality by my accent.

At Kaiserslautern, where I had had to break the journey, I had slept on a seat in the waiting-room, near an enormous cast-iron stove decorated with reliefs, which showed in the most brutal fashion the triumph of Germany over France. The sight of this

stove had increased my apprehension, and I remembered all the horrors that I had been told in childhood of the terrible Prussian. I saw again in my mind the day of the first performance of *Lohengrin* in Paris, when the stalls were packed with excited politicals and wild cries rose from the audience against the hereditary enemy. Why had I ventured into this awful country, I, who when five years old cut to pieces and burned on a little bonfire such of my soldiers as wore German uniform ? . . .

At dawn a vast official with a beard, in a very tight coat, shook me to tell me that my train was about to leave. Seeing my embarrassment and the difficulty with which I spoke German he smiled through his beard and remarked in bad French :

" You come from Paris ? "

I nodded. His cordiality was amazing.

" Paris, what a city ! How I wish I could go back there ! "

And behind his mighty carcass I saw the stove and Germany, in helmet and cuirass, placing her foot and the point of her sword on the breast of vanquished France. How was I to conceive any possible transition from this terrible symbolism to the benevolence of the German before me ? After all, I was only twenty-three.

" You know Paris ? " I asked him, rather nervously.

" Certainly," he said proudly. " I entered it with our troops in 1871."

And he continued to regard me with an amiable eye.

My first week at Frankfurt took me to the Zoological Gardens. I was greeted on my entrance by the deafening screech of the parrots. Many-coloured cockatoos swung in the open air on perches placed at intervals down flowery lawns. Little hampered by the chain attached to one leg, they hurled themselves about in a complicated manner, flapped their wings, sharpened their beaks and their claws against their zinc troughs, unfurled their iridescent combs, and regarded the passer-by with a round and shining eye. One of them, a great red and blue creature with a large beak and looking extraordinarily like a Jewish banker, put his head on one side as soon as he saw me and exclaimed in a strange ventriloquial voice :

" Cohn, Cohn, here's another Jew ! "

At first slightly irritated by this inaccurate remark, I was soon comforted to notice that the sarcastic creature addressed himself in the same manner to every fresh arrival. Presumably he was merely expressing his warder's contempt for the Semite population of Frankfurt.

In this way I became aware of the Jewish problem in Germany.

. . . . . .

It is impossible to understand the political and social life of the country without some acquaintance with German-Jewish circles. It is unnecessary to be pro- or anti-Semite to realise the importance of the rôle played by Jews in the Germanic Confederation, and

this rôle is but the natural result of the historical antecedents of the Empire.

At the present time Germany and Austria are, after Russia, the States of Europe with the largest Jewish element. There are 1,700,000 in Austria-Hungary and 900,000 in Germany, of which Prussia alone counts two-thirds. Their freedom has come slowly. It began at the end of the eighteenth century under the influence of French ideas. An Austrian edict in 1782 and a German law in 1803 marked the first stage. In 1808 Jerome Bonaparte granted for the first time full civil rights to the Jews in Westphalia. Prussia followed the example timidly in 1812, with a special edict incorporating the Jews in the nation. But the autocracy of the various Courts demanded restrictions, which made these reforms somewhat illusory. The Constitution of January 31st, 1850, while proclaiming in so many words the equality of Germans and of Jews, closed to the latter the career of teacher, as well as the Army, the magistracy and other municipal functions, even down to that of juryman.

Although the new German Confederation confirmed Jewish emancipation by the law of February 6th, 1875, the present war actually found the Jews still excluded from the Army and from the high places in the magistracy. Their race feeling, which has survived every political transformation, has given them a special place in society.

While the Latin peoples have rapidly assimilated and enfranchised the Jewish race, the Northern

Germans, come more recently to civilisation, have not achieved the same absorption. The Eastern strain in the Jew clashes too much with the Teuton stock for the character of foreigner ever to disappear. On the other hand, the differences of nationality within the Empire have not affected him, and that is the reason of his strength in the German Empire. The union of Germany surrounded the Hohenzollern with an artificial and forcible combination of every branch of the Teuton family, each one so different in tradition and mind. The Jews alone, scattered throughout the States of Germany, accepted without protest or difficulty the new synthetic Fatherland, which had been founded in the flush of victory and of which they foresaw the rapid growth.

While, therefore, Germany consists of Prussians, Saxons, men of Baden, Wurttemberg and Bavaria, the Jews are purely and simply German. North, south, East and West they are, so to speak, the mortar which holds together the stones of the Empire.

Thanks to their innate genius for adaptability, they grasped at once the share in the organisation of the new Germany, which would fall to them. Intelligence and perseverance have conquered for them two spheres in which they are now unrivalled—the sphere of money and the sphere of thought—and, consequently, the German-Jews have become, half-unconsciously perhaps, missionaries of pan-Germanism. Of course they do not subscribe to the brutality and narrowness of the Junkers and the agrarians—with the single apparent

exception of Maximilian Harden, whose attitude is, of course, adopted purposely as part of an elaborate campaign.

Above all the Jews were no supporters of the war, which they considered both hazardous and out of date as a path to dominion. But through their banks and their trade they had undertaken the pacific penetration of the world. They knew how to combine the tendency of German imperial policy with their own international relationship, in order everywhere to advertise the supremacy of Germany, who had no citizens more active or more enterprising than themselves. The *Viktoria* affair, which caused recently so much gossip in Paris, was their doing,[1] and they pushed their influence to the very theatre itself. The Slivinski agency, whose Paris office bought the rights of French successful plays, flooded us in return with Jewish musical comedy—*The Waltz Dream, The Merry Widow*—while, simultaneously, the Astruc concern in the Champs Elyssée was partly financed by the great Jewish music publishers of Germany. Innumerable examples could be quoted.

As in big business, finance and industry, so also in the liberal professions the Jews had in Germany won

[1] [The *Viktoria-Gesellschaft* is a large German insurance company, the headquarters of which are at Berlin. There was in Paris a very independent branch, established in order to compete with French companies and to acquire information regarding French financial conditions. The director, who was in close touch with the German Government, was a dangerous influence over French insurance finance and acted in every possible way as a secret agent of the German Empire.]

their monopoly. The famous doctors, prominent University Professors, well-known lawyers, were almost all Jews. Similarly the most influential and widely read section of the Press was in their hands.

In Berlin journalism is dominated by three great Jewish groups. Rudolf Mosse publishes the *Berliner Tageblatt* and its four supplements: the *Weltspiegel*, a paper illustrated with topical photographs; *Ulk*, a comic paper; the *Technische Rundschau;* and *Haus, Hof und Garten*, a journal devoted to gardening and agriculture. Mosse's advertising system is spread over the whole Empire. He even owns newspapers abroad.

Aug. Scherl, who sold his business to the Prussian Government one year before the war for eleven million marks, used to publish the *Lokalanzeiger* and the *Tag*, without counting half a dozen illustrated papers, of which the most important are the *Woche* (The Week), the *Gartenlaube* (The Summer House), *Daheim* (At Home), etc.

The Ullstein group owns three great daily papers—the *Berliner Morgenpost*, the *Berliner Zeitung am Mittag*, and the *Vossische Zeitung*. In addition they publish a number of magazines including the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* and *Sport im Bild*.

The *Berliner Börsen-Courrier* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, with its five daily editions, the paper with the largest circulation in Germany, are both Jewish owned. It must be understood that the list I have given covers only the most salient examples.

With the exception of the Hoftheater, the court

theatres which belong to the reigning prince in each particular State and which are, as a rule, managed by officials of noble origin, all important theatres are under Jewish direction. At Berlin :—

The *Kammerspiele* and the *Deutsches Theater* (Max Reinhardt).

The *Königgrätzer Theater* and the *Berliner Theater* (Bernau).

The *Lessing Theater* (formerly owned by Brahms and since his death by Barnowski).

The *Kleines Theater* (Doctor Alven).

The *Berliner Schauspielhaus* (Doctor Lothar).

The *Nollendorfplatztheater* (Doctor Hahn).

The *Passage Theater* (Rosenfeld).

In the provinces :—

The *Schauspielhaus* at Düsseldorf (Louise Dumont).

The *Schauspielhaus* at Munich (Stollberg).

The *Residenz Theater* at Wiesbaden (Rauch).

The *Stadttheater* at Freiburg i/Br. (Doctor Oppler-Legband).

The *Schauspielhaus* at Königsberg (Geyer).

The *Stadttheater* and the *Lobetheater* at Breslau (Doctor Löwe).

The *Schauspielhaus* at Frankfurt (Gottschalk).

The *Central-Theater* at Dresden (Gordon).

I write the names down as they come into my head. If I should attempt to complete the list, I should compile practically a schedule of the theatres of Germany.

It is obvious that, under these conditions, active anti-Semitism is impossible. Indeed, in politics, this

attitude has lost all meaning since the eccentric peregrinations of Count Puckler, who delighted Berlin between 1892 and 1898 by touring the low-class cabarets of the capital with his demagogue eloquence. One such cabaret in the Friedrichstrasse still bears his mark, a relic of the time when this hater of Israel would assault Jews in public places. Violent inscriptions are on the walls : " No Jews tolerated here." Anti-Semite proclamations are painted on every hand and grotesque statues of Ahasuerus surround, on a kind of dresser, the heavy figure of old Bismarck.

Certainly neither the agrarians nor the Court nor the Catholic centre are favourable to the Jews, but the newspapers belonging to these parties have little circulation and, as those who hold these views are also opponents of popular liberty,[1] their anti-Jewish feeling remains platonic.

Intellectuals do not worry any longer about the question, with the exception of Werner Sombart, the pro-Jewish Gentile, whose works and lectures are much fancied in Berlin. When theatres, publishers and newspapers are all Jewish, the paths of public opinion are well policed.

One day a writer said to me, ironically :

" Anti-Semitism ? An excellent idea of course, but it will never be made to go until some intelligent Jew takes it up."

Rössler—playwright and actor—told me one day

[1] [Written, of course, long before the Erzberger revolt and the Reichstag resolution of July, 1917.]

at the Stephanie Café in Munich that he had just finished "a little piece" which was sure to make a sensation. He handed me the manuscript. It was that of the *Five Frankforters*. Jew himself, Rössler knew perfectly the soul of modern Germany. The piece found a place in every repertoire, and was played in Paris and London. The author made a fortune.

Berlin, capital of Prussia, has become capital of the Empire, largely thanks to the German Jews. They have made it their headquarters. To them the city owes its cosmopolitanism, its night-life, its luxury and its pleasure. Their offices, their banks, their storehouses fill the heart of the city, while they themselves inhabit the airy and spacious quarters of Berlin W. or, as it is sometimes ironically called, in order to stress its excessive elegance, "Berlin W.W." The Kürfurstendam with its trees and handsome houses is the scene of their triumphal progress. The passers-by are unceasing—Professor Israel, the banker; Bleichröder, Maximilian Harden, Max Reinhardt, Rudolf Mosse, newspaper king; Wertheim, monarch of the shops; Baruch, the dressmaker's despot. Others own pretentious villas at Grünewald, among the seedy pine trees of the Berlin suburb.

The Jews are settled in every great centre where their presence is likely to help their business interests. At Leipzig, the city of books and international interests; at Hamburg, the centre of foreign trade. But, after Berlin, the two cities where they predominate the most are Breslau in the east and Frankfurt in the west.

In this way they hold the two doors to the outer world. On the one side, the door to Russia, Poland, Austria; on the other, that to France, Belgium, Holland, England, Switzerland and Italy. At these vital points the Jews lie in wait and watch the markets of the world.

Many Jews exaggerate their patriotism and their loyalty in order to stress their devotion to their Fatherland and to the Emperor. Maximilian Harden, originally an insignificant actor, was taken up by Bismarck on account of his caustic tongue, and now poses as saviour of the people and more Prussian than William himself. While he preaches brutality and cynicism, his fellow Jew Lissauer writes hymns of hate against those nations who have so far dared to resist the ambitions of German militarism.[1]

However, exaggeration apart, the Jews certainly represent the liberal wing of the Empire. They grasped that autocracy is a dangerous survival in a modern State. While whole-heartedly admiring the results of discipline and organisation, they knew well that caste prevented them from acquiring real power,

[1] When mention is made of Lissauer, Liebknecht, also a Jew, must not be forgotten, who, despite his pacifism, has never failed to protest his love for Germany. Hermann Fernau does the same in his book, *Because I am a German*. It is certain that the Jews will be the first people in Germany to recognise the crime that has been committed and its dangerous consequences.

[It would appear that Marc Henry is mistaken in implying that Fernau is a Jew. T. W. Rolleston, in his introduction to *Because I am a German*, says: "One section of the German Press makes him out to be a Polish Jew, now in the pay of the French Government. He is neither Pole nor Jew, but a Prussian subject of German stock, born in Breslau."]

and that the destinies of the country were at the mercy of a too powerful monarchy. Accordingly they made it their duty to awaken the German conscience.

Karl Marx and Ferdinand Lasalle, who planted new social ideas in the minds of the masses, were both Jews. Social democracy is an instrument on which the Jews and middle classes well know how to play. They have organised the movement, with the result that the great social democratic leaders to-day are largely Jews. Those who are still afraid of *communes* or the International proclaim themselves Free Thinkers and form a party of Radical Socialists.

As they have a keen sense of satire, they have ridiculed the Byzantine rigidity of the Prussian Court and all the absurdities of the German character, alternately obsequious and arrogant. *Simplicissimus*, which has become famous for its mordant humour and the skill of its artists, has played an important part in the evolution of Germany. It was founded in 1894 at Munich by a publisher Albert Langen and by Th. Th. Heine, the greatest German caricaturist. *Lustige Blätter* is also a Jewish paper, having been originated by Eysler. All the German satirists are Jews—Moskowski, Stettenheim, Presber, Pserhofer, Roda, Schanzer,[1] etc. etc. Their wit easily becomes cruel,

[1] Jewish surnames are easily recognisable in Germany. When they are not plainly Hebraic, such as *Aron*, *Kahn*, *Melchissedec*, *Israel*, *Levy*, etc., they are the names of ordinary trades; for example, *Schnitzler* (the sculptor), *Meyer* (the farmer), *Goldschmidt*, etc. etc.; or they are the names of countries, towns, or inhabitants of towns; for example, *Deutsch*, *Osterreicher*, *Berlin*, *Berliner*, *Worms*, *Wormser*, *Regensburger*, *Leipziger*, *Wiener*, etc. etc. Many Jewish

but they do not shrink from attacking themselves, for they have that power of self-criticism which has always been a salient characteristic of their race.

Nevertheless, despite their liberalism and their independence, despite their keen perceptions, not a single Jew protested against the declaration of war. They submitted without a murmur, like social democrats, and yet they had the Press and the intellectuals at their mercy. There are many reasons for this betrayal of the cause of humanity. To begin with the state of war, proclaimed in Germany the moment the international situation looked critical, made it possible for the Government to hoodwink the whole nation and make them docile. A series of clever lies showed Germany as victim of the wickedness of the Allies. In the face of danger the duty of every citizen was clear. He must stifle his aspirations and his criticism, defer to a later date his political ideals, and first of all save the country which had been treacherously attacked by jealous neighbours. The perfect mechanism of the hideous war machine, by manipulating the Press and public opinion, gave these specious arguments the appearance of indisputable dogma. Indeed, twenty-

names are made up of a combination of ordinary words; for example, *Rothschild* (red shield), *Braunschild* (brown shield), *Rosenberg* (mount of roses), *Rosenfeld* (field of roses), *Grunbaum* (green tree), etc. I even knew a Jewish trader at Breslau called *Hundertmarkschein* (100 mark note). The origin of these names goes back to the sixteenth century. When it became necessary to register the Jews, it was found sufficient, in order to avoid noting difficult Hebrew names, to register their place of residence, their trade (that is why there are so many people called *Kaufmann*, i.e. merchant), or the nickname that those around them had bestowed.

three months of war have only just sufficed to show to our enemies the beginnings of the truth.

The Jews, faithful to the Empire which had enabled them to rise, accepted the war as a cruel necessity; and, in order to consolidate their devotion to the German cause, their eyes were carefully directed to the East.

We Westerners know very little of Russia. We live too far away, we are not great travellers and our political interests compel us to discretion. The German Jews, who run all over Europe to do business, know the complicated formalities of passports, the prohibitions to reside in certain towns, the necessity of lodging in a special quarter, the impossibility of staying in one place longer than is allowed by the police.[1] Living close to Russia has taught them the full lesson of the intolerant Russian bureaucracy. They have had front seats at Pogroms and consequently it is not difficult to understand the lack of enthusiasm in Galicia at the Russian advance. The Jews of Germany feared the victory of a nation hostile to their liberty and to their prominence, privileges they had only recently gained at the cost of ceaseless effort.[2]

Their patriotism, however sincere, was not instinc-

[1] When Max Reinhardt with his whole company went to Petrograd in 1912, the German Government had to intervene to obtain permission for him to enter Russian territory, and even then his passport was only obtainable on condition that it described him as a commercial traveller for a German celluloid collar factory.

[2] [This was, of course, written before the Russian Revolution. No doubt Marc Henry would agree that this great event has brought appreciably nearer the awakening of the German Jews.]

tive. It was carefully reasoned. Certain of them, having calculated the risks which war, if it came, would force them to run, had decided the game was not worth the candle, and that is why there are so many Jews living outside Germany, having taken all their interests with them.

On July 2nd, 1914, I was at Portofino, near Genoa. There was not a sign in that fair Italian country with its olives, its mimosas, its blue sea, of the disaster about to break over Europe. All the papers thought that the trouble could be arranged, but nevertheless, tucked away on this peaceful Ligurian coast, I seemed to see, falling across the world, the shadow of Germany. At the top of a woody hill, among pines and eucalyptus trees, was the villa to which the Kaiser's father came to die. Not far away, a less pretentious dwelling welcomed every Spring the dramatist Gerhard Hauptmann. Astride the narrow isthmus which attaches Portofino to the Riviera, the palace of the Count of Mumm-Scharfenstein[1] sprawled its marble terraces, while its wonderful gardens were flung over the rocky heights of the bay. It was here that the Emperor of Germany paid the Count a visit in 1914. Triumphal arches adorned the pleasant and shady village crouching by the sea. The Emperor climbed the Salita, leading to

[1] Formerly German Ambassador in China, Count Mumm (related incidentally to the champagne manufacturers) had resigned on account of the stupidity of German diplomacy. Since the war he has been given an important post at the Foreign Office in the Wilhelmstrasse. It is he who is in touch with the diplomatic representatives of neutral States.

the plateau of St. Giorgio, amid the cheers of the fishermen and the lacemakers. The inn where I was lodging looked over the harbour, and had once been the great house of an old German noble family. On the terrace, where I took my meals, my only neighbours were three German Jews, brothers, who had been established for several years at Genoa where they conducted a large export house.

The declaration of war surprised us at dinner. We looked at one another in consternation. The eldest brother, not more than thirty-eight years old, asked me what I should do.

"Return immediately to France," I said without hesitation.

The three brothers thought for a moment and then began to talk excitedly. They explained that mobilisation would ruin them; their firm, pledged to great speculation, demanded constant supervision. They cursed the Emperor.

"He is mad!" they cried.

I also was thinking what the war would cost me—my interests in Germany, my flat in Berlin, everything that this tempest would at once and finally engulf. In front of us the sea murmured against the breakwater and the setting sun lit the hilltops to crimson. At the bottom of my soul I heard the distant song of my childhood, and I knew that nothing could prevent me rejoining my countrymen in this hour of danger. My three companions were still arguing. The eldest turned to me:

"What shall we do?"

"It is not for me to advise you. Only your conscience can tell you what to do."

"And our interests?" they exclaimed.

They got a pack of cards and I watched them with interest. They were drawing lots to see which of the three should remain. The one chosen by fate would desert his Fatherland in order to save the family fortune. The other two would depart, at the same time as I, the following morning.

. . . . . .

It is a noticeable fact that there is no, so to speak, lower class among the Jews of Germany. In Austria the Galician Jews live in the utmost misery and practise the most degraded trades,[1] but in the German Empire the humblest among them belong to the smaller bourgeoisie. It is particularly noticeable that they hardly ever go in for manual labour. The number of Jewish workmen is very small indeed, and I never remember seeing a Jewish waiter. During my twenty years in Germany I met no Jew working either as porter, taximan, engine- or tram-driver.

In certain cities—for example, Nürnberg, Leipzig, Dresden—there is still a Jewish quarter, the survival of the old Ghetto. The inhabitants of the narrow

[1] It is necessary actually to have seen the Jewish quarters in Tarnopol, Lemburg and Przemysl in order to get any idea of the squalor in which the people live. The men still wear the black silk coat, and on either side of their faces the long corkscrew curls. The ritualistic term for these curls is *beikes*, but the Austrians give them a slang name, *Laüseschaukel* (the louse's weighing machine).

streets in these quarters (they are almost all called *Judengasse*) trade principally in second-hand goods—clothes, ironware, old furniture and curiosities generally. There are to be found also butchers' shops and a few Jewish restaurants—*koscher*—i.e. conducted according to solemn rite. On Friday afternoon, being the evening before the Sabbath, they close their shutters with the utmost regularity. A great fidelity to Jewish custom still exists among these people, but the more the Jew rises in the social scale, the less he practises his religion. Many become Protestants, and I even knew one who first became a Protestant and then moved on and became a Catholic. I asked for an explanation of this series of conversions and he replied:

"Well, you see, when I am asked my religion, I can now reply: Catholic; and if they ask me what I was before I became a Catholic, I shall say: Protestant."[1]

I was travelling one day from Hamburg to Berlin with three Jews. They were total strangers before the express left, but it was not long before the ice was broken and the conversation turned to religion. They had immediately recognised that they were fellow Jews. All three had become Protestants: one because his son aspired to the magistracy and a Protestant father was a help; another because his trade (he was a publisher of religious books) made conversion desirable; but the third actually stated that he had

[1] In Germany all passports and official documents have to mention the faith to which the holder subscribes.

changed his faith from conviction. The first two were stupefied.

" From conviction ? You must be off your head ! "

In the great cities like Berlin, Frankfurt and Breslau a number of Jews declare themselves openly as belonging to no faith. In this way they avoid paying that Jewish religious tax which goes to the salaries of the Rabbis and the upkeep of the Synagogue.[1] This frank negation of religion was becoming daily more prevalent before the war. I used to see at Berlin lists circulating, which were called *Austrittsliste*—a kind of schedule of religious resignations. The Free Thinkers, who are powerfully organised, make of course the most of this anti-religious propaganda. In April, 1914, one such list had more than seven thousand signatures in a single week, the adherents coming from every variety of faith.

The Jewish humorist—Doctor Arthur Pserhofer—once remarked in public, to the great joy of the people of Berlin :

" Like most Jews, I am a ritualistic Free Thinker—that is to say, I never give anybody Christmas presents."

It is easy to recognise the Jewish type in Germany. Fair or dark, the Jews have a combined vivacity of gesture, a definite facial character and an elocution peculiar to themselves.

They never talk absolutely pure German. Even

[1] Protestants, Catholics and Jews all pay a tax, which is devoted to the expenses of the particular faith they practise in the town in which they live.

though their birth may have accustomed them to one particular dialect (Saxon, Bavarian, East Prussian, etc.) they never lose a certain exotic accent which is their own.

The German Jew talks in a sing-song. He pronounces the *s* as though it were *z* and changes the vowel sounds. There is an untranslatable word for this process—*mauscheln.* The Jew when he talks German—*mauschelt.* He is perfectly aware of it and laughs at himself for doing so. A well-known Berlin lawyer was talking one evening to a singer. The conversation turned to music, and somebody said :

" Of course you sing, Herr Doktor ? "

" Only when I talk," he replied smiling.

In another way also their language is peculiar. They have introduced into German a kind of German-Jew slang, to understand which with ease needs long familiarity with their talk. They say *meschugge* instead of *verrückt* (mad). A young girl is a *Schickse ;* a married woman a *Kalle.* If they dislike something or wish to express contempt they say *nebbisch.* The fleshiest part of the human anatomy is the *Ponem.* When one of their friends goes bankrupt, they say *Er ist kaporès* (It's all up with him). The family circle is called ironically the *Mischpoche.* Many of these expressions have won a place in everyday talk. For instance, in Berlin a low class restaurant is called *Kaschemme.*[1] Most of these words come from the

[1] It is a noticeable fact that German slang is full of Jewish expressions. The Berlin lecturer—Hans Hyan—has published an interesting study on the subject.

Yiddish dialect spoken all over Galicia, a corrupt mixture of German and Hebrew.[1]

These peculiarities of speech and pronunciation give to German Jew circles an amusing vivacity, of which the members are well aware. Witty and critical, they love to parody themselves upon the stage. Two Jewish theatres exist in Berlin—the *Folies Caprices* (how they love French names!) and the *Gebrüder Herrnfeld Theater*, the latter belonging to the two Herrnfeld brothers who are popular actors. They are always crowded. The Kommerzienrat, pompous and foolish, his stout wife with her violent and out-of-date fashions, the peaceful train officer (the only kind of officer that the Jew is allowed to become), the quarrelsome merchant, the greedy and sensual banker, provide the chief characters of the farces that are played. The dialect is rapid and crowded with epigram. The situations irresistibly comic. One of these plays the *Klabriaspartie* (that is to say, The Game of Klabrias, a card game played only by the Jews), recalling somewhat *Courteline* in observation and humour, had an enormous success and was performed five thousand

[1] There is a whole Yiddish literature, its most important exponents living in the United States where the large German-American colony is almost entirely composed of Jews. Among other things, they have just instituted a Jewish day in America for the assistance of Jews in Europe who have suffered from the war, and which number, according to their estimate, is as large as nine millions. For some time Yiddish theatres have existed and Yiddish translations of Shakespeare, Schiller, Goethe and even the operas of Richard Wagner have been performed in this language [much of which is of course familiar to an habitué of Whitechapel].

times in five years. It must not be forgotten that several companies of this kind play simultaneously in the great cities of Germany and Austria.

Despite the half German slang used by the writers, it is easy to see that the spirit of these plays is not in the least Germanic. The audience takes every allusion, and there is no need to underline each pun and each joke as the purely German comic papers have to do in order to hold their reader's attention.[1]

A rather bitter irony is the dominant quality of German-Jewish wit. The Jew does not shrink from laughing at himself in order to give himself the right of laughing at other people.

The little German music-halls, which are called *Tingel-Tangel* (a reference of course to the jingling of the orchestra), all possess a comic singer, usually a Jew, who, within the limits allowed by the law, pours scorn on current political and social life. When one of these singers gets his call, he appears in front of the curtain with an opera hat under his arm and begins a string of stories, each one of which begins, " Once upon a time there were two Jews." These rapid fragments of dialogue are cheered to the echo and repeated all over the country.

The Hebrew in Germany is a tolerant creature. He has suffered so long himself that he can appreciate the joys of independence. He bears no malice, and shows

[1] These comic papers actually print all the words that are supposed to be funny in spaced letters. It is a method of pointing out to the German reader when he is supposed to laugh.

indeed quite a preference for the company of Gentiles. Each Jewish family attaches itself to a Christian on whom they lavish the utmost affection. They call this individual their "*goy*" (tame Christian). It not infrequently happens that unscrupulous people abuse this habit and trade shamelessly on the devotion of their Jewish friends.

When I lived at Munich I was in touch with a Jewish family which consisted of three unmarried brothers called Deutsch. Three marble slabs, one on top of another, adorned the entrance to the flat where they dwelt with their old mother. The brothers were numbered, in order to avoid confusion of Christian names. Deutsch I was a doctor, Deutsch II was a lawyer, and Deutsch III was a dentist.

As I was very young and my struggle for a livelihood was a hard one, they proposed to me a plan advantageous to all parties. I was to give them French lessons and, in return, Deutsch I would look after my health, Deutsch II would defend my interests, and Deutsch III would keep my teeth in order.

It was the first time that I had grown familiar with a Jewish family who lived on real Old Testament lines. Their talk and their behaviour were a permanent source of amazement to me, at which they were highly amused.

They made me eat unleavened bread,[1] beef sausages and smoked goose breast. I began taking my meals with them regularly. They introduced me to their

[1] German: *matzes*; Anglo-Jewish: *motzas*.

relations and friends and were proud to show themselves in public in my company. I have always felt great gratitude to them for their friendship, for certainly I had the best of the bargain, and the services they rendered me were of infinitely greater value than the useless lessons in French pronunciation which I gave them.

When I came into the study of Deutsch I, Deutsch II and Deutsch III would come running up full of talk and press upon me cigarettes as big as cigars or cigars as big as carrots. If I was wearing a new hat or a new suit they would finger it with interest and efficiency, and finally Deutsch III would ask:

"How much did you pay for that?"

I stated the price; immediately Deutsch I and Deutsch II would cry out:

"You have been done":

—and this used to fill me at once with regret and admiration.

They loved to have interminable discussions as to the relative value of their various purchases. I remember once Deutsch II brought back a Tyrolese felt hat adorned with the tuft which in Bavaria is called a "chamois beard" (*Gamsbart*). Deutsch I, evidently slightly envious of this wonderful acquisition, opened hostilities:

"How much?"

"Seven marks."

"With a genuine chamois beard?'

"With a genuine chamois beard."

" That is not a genuine chamois beard."

" I tell you it is a genuine chamois beard."

" For seven marks it is impossible to get a genuine chamois beard."

" All the same, for seven marks I have purchased a genuine chamois beard."

And they argued on, snatching the hat from each other and talking interminably, until I saw, not very far distant, the moment when the famous chamois beard would be little but a legend.

Nothing worried them for long. Their vitality always brought them fresh optimism. Once Deutsch II lost a case in which he had been deeply interested. He was much affected, and said to me with a sigh :

" I have lost my case."

But the moment afterwards he remembered the vindictive character of his adversary, and added :

" But, after all, if I had won he would probably have put a bullet in me ! "

Their quick gaiety contrasted strangely with the proverbial stolidity of the native Bavarian. These three brothers would have more ideas in five minutes than two Munich shopkeepers in a whole day. I shall never forget one morning going with them to the *Hofbräu*. They sat there telling stories the whole time while, at the next table, two working-class men sat in front of their beer mugs without exchanging a word. They were strangers, but either the silence embarrassed them or my talkative companions were infectious, for at last one pulled himself together

and opened his lips. I transcribe their conversation literally :

" Heh."

.....

" Heh."

" What's that ? "

" You."

" Who ? "

" You."

" Me ? "

" Yes."

" Well what ? "

" Ever been a soldier ? "

.....

" Ever been a soldier ? "

" Who ? "

" You."

" Me ? "

" Yes."

" No."

And this conversation lasted them till they had finished their fourth *Maass*.

. . . . . .

The Jews have certainly played their part in the rapid rise of Germany. They combine the two dominant characteristics of German culture—an unreasoning love for everything new and an admiration for whatever is large and magnificent.

At Vienna, a group of German artists, painters,

architects, lecturers and sculptors, all subscribing to the most modern theories, Klimt, Kolo Moser, Hoffmann, Wagner, Löffler, Zeschka, etc., attempted in 1902 to start a decorative movement, based on the principle that no object of daily use is too humble to be created by sympathetic co-operation of designer and actual producer. As a result of course, no more manufacturers' products. A multi-millionaire Jew spent his entire fortune in the service of this expensive and somewhat unpractical programme. He founded the *Wiener Werkstätte* and attached to the studios a shop on the *Graben*, which, when it was opened, created several small riots on account of the oddity of the goods exposed in its windows. Amazing materials, devastating jewels, every kind of idiotic trifle, were bought feverishly by cultured Jews. The movement spread and similar societies were established at Munich, Dresden and Berlin.

In 1901 the Baron von Wolzogen, author of the famous novel *The Third Sex*, determined to endow intellectual Germany with an artistic-literary theatre of the *Chat-Noir* type, in order to counterbalance the degrading influence of the music-hall. Needless to say his imitation of the Montmartre Cabaret was palpably made in Germany, the building being smothered in showy mid-Victorian decoration and distinguished by the extraordinary title *Uberbrettl* (or Super-Theatre).

The undertaking made such a stir in Berlin that the tickets for the first twenty performances became positive investments. At one time they actually went up

to 250 marks each. The whole of Berlin W. went crazy about this novelty. The very dress fashions were affected. Wolzogen's influence permeated Germany and triumphal progresses were organised, which even penetrated Roumania and Bulgaria.

A new theatre was built at Berlin with Jewish capital and under Jewish management. The artistes who performed at this cabaret became the darlings of fashionable drawing-rooms. Some of them were paid as much as five thousand marks a month, thus earning about fifty thousand marks a year, allowing for two or three months off duty. The songs and sketches from the repertoire were reproduced for the phonograph, and published for the pianoforte and sold in the music shops by millions. Oscar Strauss, future composer of the *Waltz Dream*, won fame and fortune by setting to music a simple song *die Musik kommt* (The Band is Coming) from one of Detlef von Liliencron's books of verse.

This folly lasted for three years and imitations sprang up on every side. Every Jewish restaurant keeper with an empty room or an inadequate income hastened to fit up a cabaret to which he gave some exotic name : *Bonbonnière, Bijou, Chat-Noir*, etc. Naturally enough the French word *cabaret* became Germanised into *Kabarett*.

The history of Max Reinhardt illustrates strikingly enough this Jewish passion for novelty.

Reinhardt was involved in an enterprise somewhat similiar to that of Wolzogen. It was called *Schall und*

Rauch (Noise and Smoke), and was a group of professional actors, in contrast to the Super-Theatre, which was merely a collection of dilettantes. Once the bloom was off the Super-Theatre, Reinhardt, who had undoubted qualities as a manager and mounter of spectacles, produced with his company Max Gorky's *Dregs of Society*. The success was immediate. The play was performed three hundred times and Reinhardt was famous throughout Germany. Fellow Jews at Berlin came forward with offers of capital and Reinhardt showed his skill in collecting about him a group of intelligent helpers. His brother, Edmund Reinhardt, took charge of the administrative and financial side. Doctor Felix Hollander became literary adviser. Ernest Stern, from the Munich School of Art, took charge of the decoration. By this means Reinhardt started two theatres, which he was still running when the war broke out—*Deutsches Theater* and the *Kammerspiele*. Both were fitted with all the latest technical devices. Studios for costumes and scenery were attached to the theatres themselves. Every garment, every piece of furniture, every dab of colour, was conceived and carried out under Reinhardt's own control. For five years he seemed to swallow money, but his company stood by him and in the end his perseverance triumphed.

He then had the idea of transferring the theatre to the circus, with a view to increasing the possibilities of the stage and manipulating great numbers of performers. The Austrian writer—von Hoffmansthal—

prepared for him an adaptation of the *Œdipus*. Once again Berlin was beside itself with admiration. This revival of the ancient theatre took place at Schumann's Circus before an audience of four thousand. *Œdipus* was performed twenty times to crowded houses, with net takings of thirty thousand marks per evening. Then another writer—Vollmöller—adapted for the circus the old mystery play *Every Man*, which had equal success. When war broke out Reinhardt had definitely annexed Schumann's Circus and was busy with its adaptation into *The Theatre of the Five Thousand*. In the meantime he visited London and Petrograd with Vollmöller's *Miracle*—a story of the Middle Ages—with a caste of three thousand and, among other incidents, the burning of a cathedral full of worshippers.[1]

Reinhardt had certainly a great influence on the dramatic literature of Germany.[2] He introduced the works of Strindberg, Tolstoy and Gorky. He completely revolutionised the treatment of Shakespeare, and that with undeniable originality. His revolving stage enabled him almost to perform miracles. He produced scenic frescoes of remarkable harmony, every costume and every colour being chosen with meticulous care. The majority of modern German authors owe their success to him—von Hoffmansthal, Leo Greiner,

[1] Doubtless a foretaste of Rheims.

[2] He was at one time himself an actor, but of no great talent. He had no personal culture and no particular education. He was a self-taught man whose vocation lay in grasping and putting to practical use the good ideas of others.

Frank Wedekind, Vollmöller, Fritz von Unruh and especially Carl Sternheim. But Reinhardt's influence would have been impossible but for public support, and his public support was mainly Jewish. In the wings and in the offices of his theatres the Gentiles could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Examples of Jewish passion for novelty are inexhaustible. The Jews were the supporters of the earliest "Secessionist" painters. They welcomed the French impressionists and, later, the Pointillists. The finest works of van Gogh and Gauguin adorned the collections of wealthy Jews. The Jewish art critic Fritz Stahl praised the pictures in the *Berliner Tageblatt.*[1] Cubists and futurists equally found admirers. Kahnweiler at Paris collected such works for Jews in Germany.[2]

Not only in art but also in medicine existed this passion for modernity. Physical culture, massage, the theories of Kneipp, sun baths, all became the fashion in Jewish circles. Jewish doctors built enormous sanatoria (or, as the Germans tersely put it, *Naturmittelheilanstalten*) in the Harz mountains, the Taunus and the Black Forest. Neurasthenia, indigestion, bad circulation, were treated there by water cures, sun

[1] Stahl is responsible for the magnificent picture collection of Rudolf Mosse, owner and publisher of the *Tageblatt*. Two more Jews—Bruno and Paul Cassirer—introduced to Berlin Manet, Sisley, van Gogh and Cézanne.

[2] It is interesting to note here that the musician Ferrucio Busoni bought at Berlin the first futurist picture. Herwarth Walden, Jewish founder of the paper *Der Sturm*, organised in the same city cubist and futurist exhibitions.

cures, every kind of gymnastics and by vegetarianism. The most famous of these establishments was Doctor Lahmann's *White Stag*, near Dresden.

Rich patients, whose stomachs had been spoiled by over-eating or whose nervous systems had suffered from excessive thought, came during the holidays to enjoy in this establishment the simple and well-disciplined life. They would get up at six o'clock in the morning and proceed to the air baths, where, in a complete state of nature, they threw themselves about and wandered in the woods. They came in to breakfast. Every pat of butter was counted, for Doctor Lahmann's basic principle was that everyone should always be hungry. After this banquet came tepid baths, with under-water massage, carbonic acid baths, pine needle baths, fluorescent baths. Then tennis or golf. In the afternoon, if the weather was suitable, sun baths, partial or total, followed by more or less prolonged exposure to violet, blue or green light. As physical labour is excellent for people who are usually waited on too much, the patients were compelled to dig and weed the kitchen garden, plant vegetables, pick fruit, cut up wood, carry coal and do elementary carpentry—all of which had the extra advantage of saving the proprietor a lot of expense. For the privilege of enjoying sunshine and water (which cost nothing) and of absorbing three purely mythical meals, the fortunate patients paid 20 to 25 marks a day. It is obvious that in these circumstances the sanatoria rapidly became palaces and absorbed more and more of the surrounding land.

Elizabeth Duncan started a dancing school at Darmstadt; Jacques Dalcroze a rhythmic institute near Dresden. Immediately, every good class Jewish mother sent her daughters to benefit by the new methods; for, above all, one must be up to date.

It is inevitable that all this tends to make the German Jew somewhat romantic in his statements. He loves exaggeration. Only the natural subtlety of his mind and his critical power prevents him from becoming a dupe of his own imaginings. A moment always comes when he turns and laughs at himself.

The following typical anecdote I will attempt to relate in, so far as possible, the original language:

Zadoc, Isaac and Aron were talking of miracles. Isaac asked Zadoc:

"Have you ever seen a miracle?"

"Well, I have not exactly *seen* one with my own eyes, but I have an uncle who knew a Rabbi who performed a miracle. On his way home to dinner this Rabbi met two friends whom he invited to join him. His wife was much annoyed at the arrival of the guests, seeing that she only had two small fish in the house for the evening meal.

"'Fear nothing, but go and fetch the fish,' said the Rabbi. So the four sat down to table and ate the two fish, and on the dish there appeared two more fish and they ate them, and once again on the dish were two more fish and they ate those, and once again . . ."

"Oh, confound your wretched fish!" cried Isaac impatiently, and went on himself:

"I had an uncle who actually *saw* a miracle. He was playing cards with one of his friends and hearts were trumps. He played the nine of hearts and his adversary took it with the king of hearts, and then he played the knave of hearts and his adversary took it with the king of hearts, and he played the queen of hearts and his adversary took it with the king of . . ."

"Oh, damn your kings of hearts!" shouted Zadoc, now thoroughly angry.

Isaac suggested peaceably:

"Well, if you will suppress a few fish I will suppress a few kings of hearts."

Aron now opened his mouth:

"As for me, I met yesterday a very holy Rabbi. He asked a cripple, 'Do you believe in Jehovah?' 'Yes,' replied the cripple. 'Well, if you believe in Jehovah, throw away your crutches,' and the man threw away his crutches——"

"And did he instantly begin to run and jump?" cried Zadoc eagerly.

"No, he fell full length on the ground."

"That is not a miracle," said Isaac, disappointed.

"I never said it was a miracle," said Aron. "All I said was that I had actually seen it."

. . . . . .

Berlin, the supreme city of the parvenu, provides the Jew with a real opportunity of carrying out all his operations on a frankly American scale.

In the Leipzigerstrasse, in the heart of the city, there is a famous restaurant called *Kempinski*. This building has three floors, is constructed throughout of marble, contains a number of lifts, three huge entrances, a post and telegraph office, twenty public telephones, a barber's shop, a manicure parlour, a flower shop, a reading and writing-room, in addition to the ordinary restaurant accommodation where one can eat anything at any hour, and which, at meal times, holds about two thousand people. The bill of fare, which is changed twice a day, lists most elaborate and exotic dishes at highly reasonable prices. Everything is served with luxury. The cellar is so well stocked that the wine list is like a small book. The proprietor has his own fishing ground and his own oyster beds in the North Sea. He has vineyards in Germany, France and Austria. He has a champagne factory. All the great produce houses of Germany and abroad have special contracts with him, by which Russian caviar and Isigny cream reach him every day, done up in specially designed small jars, which he is able to supply to his clients at prices which put him beyond the reach of competition.

All classes frequent this restaurant, for the dishes supplied vary from 35 pfennig to 1.50 marks a portion. Another palace of the kind, only even larger, is the *Rheingold* between Leipzigerplatz and the Tiergarten. This restaurant has three ballrooms, which can be used for banquets with music and hold as many as five thousand people. The whole building is fitted with jasper, porphyry, marble, gilded bronze, statues, bas-

reliefs, fountains and exotic woods, with all the profusion of bad taste. The German Jews love to wallow in the extremes of ostentation.

But the triumph of the "Kolossal," their shrine of magnificence, is Wertheim.

About fifty years ago Wertheim père and his five sons had a little haberdashery shop in the Leipzigerstrasse. To-day the father is dead and his sons control the great store, compared to which the rival establishments of Paris and London are the merest hovels. The huge block of houses between the Leipzigerplatz and the Wilhelmstrasse and forming one side of the Leipzigerstrasse, the principal shopping street of Berlin, has been gradually absorbed by this enormous shop and completely rebuilt. The architectural style of the building is not disagreeable. The severe lines of the façade are attractive and suit admirably a modern palace at once practical, powerful and simple.[1]

Every aspect of modern commerce is represented in this place. One can buy a motor-car, a piano or a complete sanitary installation. There is a special section for the sale of theatre and concert tickets. Berlin's pleasures can be bought there between a piece of silk and a yard of flannel.

Special telephones connect the booking office with the theatres, music-halls and concert-rooms of Berlin. A vestibule filled with posters, lithographs and photo-

[1] The architect of this building was A. Messel, while sculptors such as Westphal, Ignatius Taschner, Gaul, etc., collaborated in the decoration.

graphs enables visitors to decide where they will spend their evening and reserve their seats in advance.

An enormous greenhouse, through which runs an artificial river, is filled with the rarest flowers and every imaginable kind of plant. A luxurious photographic studio is fitted up under the roof. There are restaurants, tea-rooms, bars, even an ethnographical museum, in which are pavilions built in the styles of various exotic countries, each pavilion dedicated to the sale of the special products, embroideries, costumes, decorative art, etc., of the land from which they have been copied.

Wertheim has its own publishing house—the *Globus-verlag*—which specialises in the issue of cheap books. An army of authors work specially for this organisation. Books for presents, manuals of sport, handbooks of gardening and cooking, albums of music and popular novels sell in thousands. The whole book market is affected and the large wholesale booksellers of Leipzig obtain special terms from Wertheim which secure to them an important market. The tentacles of the enterprise spread over the whole of Germany.

A few years before the war, Wolf Wertheim—one of the brothers, married to an adventuress well-known in Bohemian circles—separated from his brothers and withdrew from the firm his share of capital which now amounted to twelve million marks. He tried to start a rival business, and opened two other shops in Berlin, but he ran through his fortune in two years and went bankrupt. His four brothers came to his help and supplied him with an annual income of 150,000 marks

on condition that he pledged himself never again to enter business.

Wertheim stops at nothing likely to be to the advantage of the house. When the Berlin municipality decided to extend the Underground Railway which hitherto had stopped at the Potsdamerplatz, the new line was planned to pass under the Wertheim shop. The proprietors offered the municipality to build themselves the piece of line which was under consideration in such a way that the station opened at their very door, on the condition that this station should be called "Wertheim," and that a special staircase should connect the store with the platform. The municipality, after a long discussion, refused the offer, as they were afraid of creating an irritating precedent.

In 1912 Wertheim, as ever desirous of expansion, determined to buy an old building in the Leipzigerplatz in which were lodged the offices of the German Admiralty. The Government made difficulties on the ground that there was no suitable building to which the Ministry could be moved. The price to be obtained by the sale of the present quarters was not enough to pay for the building of a new office. Wertheim brought the negotiations to a close by buying a site on the Victoria Luisenufer, a canal running through the most fashionable quarter of the town, and on this site built, at their own expense, a model Admiralty conceived in the most modern and practical spirit. This patriotic gesture, celebrated incidentally by a marble tablet, cost the store six million marks, but, as consolation, Wertheim

were able to transform the old Admiralty into part of their store and thus satisfy what had become a determination.

. . . . . .

His untiring struggle for honours, success, money and backstairs influence naturally creates in the active Jew a great desire for distraction and relaxation after his work. Consequently the gayest towns of Germany are those in which the Jewish element predominates. It is a Jewish crowd that fills the night-clubs, the small theatres, the cabarets and the bars. Without them, Berlin would lack all the riot of its night-life and the exaggerated number of its places of amusements.

The business Jew has no use for the boredom of high art drama, beyond the minimum which is demanded of him by fashionable taste. What he wants is gorgeous spectacle and gaiety. To ask a Jew his opinion of the latest play is to elicit, as the best compliment he can pay, the remark, "It is very amusing." This state of mind produced the recent outbursts of so-called Viennese Musical Comedy, whose superficial tunefulness has spread the world over, thanks to the enterprise of the impresarios. *The Merry Widow, The Waltz Dream, The Chocolate Soldier* and others of their kind, are written as well as composed by Jews. The libretti are by Grunbaum, Dörmann, Schanzer, Friedmann, Lothar, Bernau, etc., while the publishers—Slivinski, Bloch Erben, etc.—are equally Hebraic. These futilities have held the placards for years.

I remember one day being in Wertheim and in the actual private room of the director of the theatre agency. The telephone rang. The director took up the receiver and I heard the following half-conversation.

..... ?

" Certainly, Mr. Councillor."

.....

" This evening, excellent. Where would you like to go ? "

..... ?

" I recommend the *Leibgardist* of Molnar at the *Kleinestheater*."

..... ?

" Yes. Very amusing indeed, I believe."

..... ?

" No. I understand that the Jews are not made fun of unduly."

.....

" Well then, supposing you go to *Stall Number* 174 at the *Nollendorfplatz ?* "

..... ?

" Sheer farce. I can assure you that the play has no literary pretension whatever."

.....

" Excellent. I will send them by a special messenger.

The manager hung up and turned to me :

" That's the boss. Wants to go to a theatre this evening."

Many of the German Jews who are to-day rich, but

who a few years ago were poor, are entirely without education. They know nothing of modern art or literature. When they have to attend some artistic ceremony in order, like everyone else, "to see and be seen," they do not disguise their boredom when they think that they are surrounded only by their kind.

One evening at a performance of Oscar Wilde's *Salome*, I happened to be sitting next a *Kommerzienrat*, who was accompanied by his daughter. My neighbour preserved a correct exterior, but I could see that he was not enjoying himself particularly. In the interval I came across them at the bar, eating ices. The father was complaining bitterly of the waste of his evening. The daughter, slightly more up to date in theatrical matters, reproved him gently:

"You do not understand, papa. It's a secessionist[1] play."

"What do I care for your 'secession,'" replied the father angrily, "the thing's hopelessly boring and that's all about it."

On another occasion, during one of Reinhardt's performances of *Hamlet*, an old banker leant towards me after the gravedigger's scene and remarked gloomily:

"It appears that life is not sad enough and that it is necessary to pay 15 marks in order to see how a grave is dug on the stage."

[1] A generic term applied by the middle-class German to everything that he considers decadent, symbolist or ultra-modern.

The agrarians and the aristocrats, who form the conservative and reactionary party, harbour a sullen resentment against the Jews for the speed with which they have, in forty-five years, captured the liberal professions and the big business of the Empire. They make use of the smallest financial scandal in order, through their newspapers, to cry out against the "Judaising" of middle-class Germany, and to recommend in high quarters coercive measures against the intruders.[1]

The Emperor has never approved this policy, although he respects the spirit of caste which the long Prussian tradition still maintains in all its rigour. He has always shown himself tolerant towards the Jewish element in his Empire, among which he counts personal friends. Dernburg, for instance, is of Jewish origin, but this has not prevented him from becoming Minister of State. Indeed, William II, a few years ago, conferred on the Jewish colony in Berlin a very particular mark of his favour.

[1] In a recent number of the *Preussische Jahrbücher*, an ultra-conservative Review, appears a learned article discussing the possible migration into Germany of the Jewish population of occupied Poland. The author expresses horror at this prospect, and recommends exclusion laws to preserve the Empire from the invasion. The tendencies of this review are frankly anti-Semite, but it is probable that the Jews themselves already in Germany will not welcome an influx of their co-believers. They have fought for a long time to win the place they now occupy, they have adapted themselves to their surroundings, and they know the resources which they have won and those which they may still hope to acquire. Any violent inrush of fresh Judaism will upset the balance to their disadvantage. As evidence it may be noted that not a single one of the German-Jewish papers criticised this article in the *Preussische Jahrbücher*.

During the building of the new Synagogue opposite the *Theater des Westens* in Charlottenburg, the Emperor offered to line the interior of the Temple with tiles from the *Kadinnenwerke*, pottery-works of which he is the owner. He was himself present at the opening ceremony.

More recently, the Emperor has even gone so far as to admit into the commissioned ranks of the Army the sons of a few Jews who have changed their faith.[1]

Such, more or less, was the position of Jews in Germany at the outbreak of war. They had made the best possible use of the organisation of the Empire to consolidate their freedom, increase their well being and extend their influence. In the life of Germany they form a solid and powerful nucleus of a frankly liberal tendency. Hostile to war and to revolution, they have laid hands, one after the other, on the press, on the theatre, on commerce and on banking, the four mainsprings of public life. If ever the inevitable defeat of the Hohenzollerns produces in Germany a political revolution, I am sure that the Jews will play their part and take their revenge, for they are too intelligent to forget the lies from which they have suffered and the criminal theory of Prussia which plunged Germany into the abyss. In their favour they have stubborn-

[1] The Jews are not shut out of the officer class by law, but every cadet must, before receiving his commission, obtain the unaminous vote of his future comrades and his superiors. It is the custom to refuse this unaminous vote to Jews except on the direct intervention of the Emperor, who is supreme head of the Army.

ness and wealth. Their nature is, on the whole, more sympathetic to the Latin mind than is the primitive Teuton. I have spent among the Jews the happiest hours of my long sojourn in Germany. They have often amused me. They have never been repellent. I can sum it up by saying that they have risen, while the clique which govern them has fallen ever lower.

There comes into my mind a suggestive street scene in Berlin.

I used to live in Charlottenburg, opposite the Tiergarten, in a little square with the curious name *Am Knie* (literally: "on the knee," the name having doubtless arisen from the fact that the avenue took, at this point, an obtuse-angled turn) and every day, coming back from the restaurant where I had my meals, I walked along the Hardenbergerstrasse, a broad street bordered with trees. Just beyond the railway bridge was a cab rank, on which stood a number of ancient and melancholy cabs with scraggy horses. The taxis have stands of their own and do not mix with the vulgar "growlers." As a result, the latter are tending gradually to disappear. Every time that an old cabman dies, the licence is not renewed; the registered number of the cab is suppressed and vanishes from circulation. Hardly anybody uses these ancient vehicles. The authorities feel a kindly reluctance to deprive of their only livelihood the white-haired drivers with their shining hats, who are now too old to master the complexities of motor driving. On my daily walk past this cab rank, I noticed that the

numbers of the cabs hardly ever changed. The wretched men got so few fares that they would often stay there many days on end, huddled in their big cloaks and gossiping interminably. I used to wonder however they made ends meet.

Just opposite the cab rank was a large private house, separated from the road by a garden with carefully raked flower beds. The house belonged to a famous Berlin *Kommerzienrat,* many times millionaire. Through the great bronze gates one could see the tall shuttered windows. The owner was always absent. In winter he went to St. Moritz or to Davos ; in spring to the Riviera ; in summer to Heringsdorf, the smart watering place on the Baltic where all Berlin Jews go ; in autumn to the Italian Lakes. The house looked absolutely unoccupied. In the garden was neither turf nor flower. What was the use if the proprietor was never there ? But a magnificent cock, followed by ten Cochin China hens, stalked about the deserted garden with serious dignity. I used to wonder who looked after this healthy looking poultry and fed them with such apparent regularity and care. The bare soil did not look as though it would provide sufficient grubs to produce that air of plump well-being. Eventually I solved the mystery. The old cab drivers, before they hung the nosebags on the necks of their wretched horses, would take out a few handfuls and hurl them through the lordly grille of the shuttered palace. The hens had gradually come to regard this voluntary contribution as a ritual and, no doubt, con-

sidered it as a natural expression of gratitude. In any case they accepted it without sign of emotion.

And the poor old cabmen forgot their days of waiting, their miserable existence, their old age, perhaps even their hunger, for were they not nourishing the hens of Israel . . . ?

CHAPTER VII. MASTERSINGERS, STUDENTS, OFFICERS AND POLICEMEN

" Personal distinction is an old-fashioned virtue. Self-submission, obedience in public or in secret, is the whole of German genius."

NIETZSCHE.

The *Meistersinger* of Nürnberg—Nürnberg to-day—The Mastersinger of Berlin—We give a masked ball at Munich—" Through Darkest Germany "—" *Alles ist verboten !* "—Prussia as the *Bravo* of Germany—The German policeman, the " man-who-protects "—We climb the towers of the *Frauenkirche*—And make too much noise—The triumph of snobbery—The German officer—The " Köpenick Captain "—The German student—His clubs—His duels—His drink—And yet one student fell, in 1848, in the cause of freedom.

HANS SACHS, mastersinger of Nürnberg, was not without humour. Under a veneer of honest geniality he gave play to a keen satiric sense. Some of the scenes in his *Festnachtspiele,* particularly " The Peasant in Purgatory," have quite a Rabelaisian savour. Wagner has shown us Hans Sachs as the friend of youth, as a sympathetic spirit at once broad-minded and kindly. While his colleagues—Pogner the goldsmith, Vogelgesang the furrier, Kothner the baker, Eisslinger the grocer, preoccupied to the exclusion of all else with their childish science and their absurd pomposity, reject Walther von Stolzing because he is

unable to sing after the established rules, Hans Sachs the cobbler recognises the talent of the young aristocrat and takes his side. He has no illusions about his fellow citizens. He does all in his power to throw ridicule on one of them, Beckmesser the registrar. When von Stolzing asks him :

Wer war es, der die Regeln schuf ?

Sachs replies frankly :

Das waren hochbedürft'ge Meister
Von Lebensmüth' bedrängte Geister. . . .

I think that in this reply the revolutionary spirit can already be seen at work ; the battle against routine and foolish formula is beginning, the battle which seeks to overthrow all laws which claim to limit genius. One expects to hear him cry, " Down with all restraints. Liberty for ever . . ." except that, unfortunately, Sachs is a German and, like every German, honours discipline and rule. When his pupil triumphs at the end, he shakes his finger at him :

Verachte mir die Meister nicht !

There you have the final word of advice of a master singer.

I know Nürnberg well. The narrow, cobbled streets slant between the carved fronts of the houses. Slender spires and an occasional squat tower rise above the grey sea of pointed roofs. At every crossroads are ancient fountains with water falling musically into the bowls of stone, while above the basins stand primitive statues of bronze. Tremulous chimes tell the hour from every church. In the cool shade of the little squares,

ancient taverns droop their wrought-iron signs over the heads of the passers by. High-pitched bridges cross the smoothly flowing river, whose placid surface reflects the pale greenery of little gardens. All round the town runs the black chain of the ancient fortifications with, here and there, great round towers, moated and pierced with Gothic doors.

Indeed I know Nürnberg, the city of the master singers. Each time that chance brought me there I felt an intense satisfaction. Ancient things speak more clearly to the soul than modern things, for they know how to envelop us and soothe our nerves. On my arrival I would start for a walk round the city, to renew acquaintance with each favourite corner.

But my arrival never disturbed the cool indifference of the bronze nymphs near the Lorenzkirche, and from their shining breasts the water still curved monotonously into the basin. The bagpipe player behind the old minster still distended his cheeks to bursting point, balanced on his circular pedestal; and the bronze shepherd pressed against him the two geese, who with open beaks spat water into the fountain bowl. The great coloured fountain on the market-place pointed its Gothic tower to the dappled sky. Above the cathedral porch the twelve Prince Electors did homage, as always, before the throne of Charlemagne, while the ancient chime counted the twelve strokes of noon. For centuries everything had been the same. Why should it change because I chose to disappear and then later to come again?

Nothing is more immovable than an ancient city. Nowhere else does one feel so vividly the contrast between the hurry and chance of daily human life and the contemptuous and magnificent permanence of the city in which this life runs its course.

At the end of a few days the weight of all this ancient stone would begin to oppress me ; I could hardly breathe in those narrow streets ; the gables and the towers shut in my horizon ; the steep fortifications crushed me in their embrace, as though they wished to strangle me. My admiration turned to hate, and I came to loathe Nürnberg with its wrinkled face and heavy air of medieval charm.

I despised it as essentially the narrow and gloomy town fit to harbour dull bourgeois, maniac collectors, self-satisfied grocers and cobblers, slaves to convention, whose little souls were obstinately shut to all that is free and generous.

As I write I can see again, behind the fortifications, the little house of the great Albrecht Dürer with its steep staircase, its low ceilings, its leaded panes. In the wall of the studio is a round hole closed with a wooden cork. Dürer's wife had invented this peep-hole, for, being of a jealous mind, she liked to watch her husband when he was working with a model. It is to Nürnberg that I owe the knowledge of this evil littleness in the life of a great artist.

. . . . . .

Hans Sachs is dead ; mastersingers have disappeared. The nearest thing to them nowadays is the

ridiculous *Gesangverein*, which one meets sometimes on the Rhine steamers. Members of these choral societies stuff themselves during the whole voyage with meat, beer and wine. When they pass the rock of the Lorelei, they rise, and, with their mouths full, recite sentimentally Heinrich Heine's famous verse :

" Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedenten
Dass ich so traurig bin. . . ."

The modern German who wishes to sing according to rule crosses the Alps and studies in Italy the gentle art of musical elocution. His guttural tongue softens a little in contact with the Latin race, the harsh vowels leaving the throat and coming forward to the lips.

The old Landgraves of Nürnberg, whose ruined castle broods over the ancient city, are the Hohenzollern who are now the all-powerful rulers of modern Germany. If they do not sing themselves, they are active in making others sing. In this ingenious way they carry on the rôle of the old mastersingers. Thus the evolution of a race changes the exact significance of a word. Since the war of 1870 and the Treaty of Frankfurt have ensured to the Hohenzollern preponderance in Europe, they have welded Germany into a weapon of intimidation. Directly or indirectly their mouths are always full of threats. They make a gesture of peace with one hand, but in the other is a weapon and of this Germany is aware.

About 1905, together with a number of painters and writers, I organised at Munich a masked ball, destined

to become famous. It was the last night of the Carnival. We had rented the huge rooms of a beer hall in Schwabing, one of the smart quarters of the town not far from the Siegesthor. In order to avoid the intrusion of the police and the censorship into our festivities, we were careful to give the performance a strictly private character, inviting the guests personally and delivering the invitation cards at the doors of their houses. More than two thousand people accepted. The name of the ball roused curiosity. It was called *Through Darkest Germany*. Under this title Heine had published regularly in *Simplicissimus* a series of satirical drawings, ridiculing the absolutist and reactionary spirit of the ruling classes.

On entering the building our guests were at once apprised of the spirit of the entertainment. At the only door in a great barrier draped with German colours, a group of people dressed as customs-officers and frontier-guards only allowed the guests to enter one at a time, after a great show of questioning, searching, measuring and photographing. The largest room of all was got up to represent a broad street in Berlin, with buildings designed in the heavy official style. There were crossroads, each one showing a *Denkmal* in white marble, of the kind dear to the Imperial heart. A greenish, almost ghostly, light bathed people and things. A black cloth picked out with golden stars and stretched over the houses represented the sky. Here and there were hung chains, bayonets, guns, blood-stained swords, deadly weapons

of all kinds. A triumphal arch led from one room into another in the form of an immense policeman, who, leaning forward with his hands on his knees and his legs wide apart, glared at the crowd passing beneath him with great, gleaming eyes. Everywhere were living caricatures of policemen, mounted and on foot. We had imported, for this purpose, two hundred pupils from the Munich Royal School of Art, and they took great pleasure in exaggerating police manners with every extravagance of phantasy. They jostled everybody, walked on people's feet, shouted threateningly, made arbitrary arrests and parodied in an admirable manner the general brutality of the Prussian regime.

The walls were adorned with scrolls setting forth the official epigrams pronounced from time to time by William II. Each one expressed subtle menace, shameless conceit or cynically hinted at blackmail, alike when addressed to foreigners or to the German people themselves. "No quarter." "Blood is thicker than water." "Forward against the enemy in our midst."[1] "Our future lies upon the water." "We must keep our powder dry." "You must set your face against these modern tendencies." "These people rattle my sabre too noisily."[2] Such were favourite choruses of the modern master singer. He is indeed a worthy descendant of old Fritz, who claimed that it was

[1] Social democrats of course.

[2] At the time they were spoken, these words were intended to check the excessive ardour of the Austrians in the Balkans.

always right to take something but without obligation of giving it back.

Similarly upon the walls appeared those injunctions so dear to Prussian arrogance. "Keep to the right." "Head up." "Shut your mouth." "Spitting is forbidden," "Shouting is forbidden." "Walking is forbidden." "Standing is forbidden." "In fact everything is forbidden."

This somewhat violent satire gave our guests great pleasure, for they themselves played an active part in the game, being bidden to parody by their costumes official personages, wearing, pinned all over them, such famous decorations as the Order of the Red Eagle and the Cross *Pour le Mérite.* I met in the crowd several Ministers of State, as well as the Chief of the Police.

Everybody could amuse themselves as they liked, the ball being private. In addition to the usual licence of the Munich carnival, we had the satisfaction of expressing the old rivalry of two races and dynasties. The Bavarians never hesitate to show their contempt for the Prussians *provided that in so doing they do not run any danger themselves.* German frankness is always subordinate to fear. Anyone who has travelled over Germany will have observed the sentiments cherished by the Bavarian, the Saxon, the Württemberger and the man of Baden towards the Prussian. But they all submit to the rule of Berlin, partly because they think that Prussia is stronger than they, partly because they hope, under shelter of this strength, to increase their personal profit. That is the secret of German unity.

At the time of the Renaissance many powerful Italian families had attached to them a *Bravo*, a kind of bully who was pledged to take care of the safety of the family in every way. He got rid of troublesome enemies and put ambitious rivals out of the way. Prussia has become the *Bravo* of Germany, and she abuses the position in order to make slaves of those who employ her. So long as she is strong and victorious, she will be supported and obeyed. The day she falls she will have no enemies more deadly than her former Allies. The only question is to which one among them will fall the joy of giving her the death blow.

But until that time comes they are silent and submit to every indignity, because it profits them and because they are afraid.

And this fact was brought home to me, once for all, on that carnival night in Munich, as I wandered through the luridly decorated rooms of the Schwabingerbräuerie. The Viennese poet, Peter Altenberg, has said, with some wisdom : " Without our masks, we are still nothing but masks," and in Germany the masks have often more frankness than the beings beneath them.

When the lights of the hall grew dim in the dawn, our guests dispersed. Outside they found the inevitable orderliness of German life ; real policemen watched their exit, who, with pointed helmets, padded shoulders, dark uniforms, heavy boots and curved swords, put an end to the story of the night's gaiety with, as it were, a brutal full stop. They were the

valuable reminder of that obedience which is the *sine qua non* of a greater Germany, a distant mirage cherished as the due recompense of endless servility. And once again I remember the final saying of Hans Sachs to Walter von Stolzing :

" Never despise the masters. . . ."

. . . . . .

No doubt there are as many policemen in France or England as there are in Germany. A bit is necessary for controlling a nation, as for controlling a horse. But the German policeman is more ubiquitous, thicker, heavier, and, as he smells of the barrack yard, he is more noticeable.

To begin with, there are in Germany more valuable lives than in other countries to be protected against the anonymous mob. Where else is there such a crowd of kings and kinglets, grand dukes and serene highnesses, who, scattered about the Empire, retain, by the Grace of God and by the grace of William II., a miserable remnant of power ? They swarm from their palaces at every great festival, peaceful or warlike, lay or religious, and their appearance is the signal for the police to come out in crowds and stand like a brutal hedge along the route of the official processions, a curtain between the weary curiosity of the onlookers and the bored indifference of the Princes. When the Kaiser himself is in question, policemen spring like mushrooms from the ground. Every footwalk is crowded with them. Their black uniforms and their revolting helmets swarm in every street. Even in the

suburbs they can be seen, hiding one behind each of those absurd pine trees, which line the long road from Potsdam to Berlin. Woe to him who does not keep moving! A square face with prominent jaw bones is thrust into his. The fists of authority clench. Let us therefore cheer loudly and heartily, waving our handkerchiefs, for if we fail—look out for blows!

In memory I am once again in Unter den Linden. The street was black with people, for William II was returning from his famous journey to Jerusalem. I was crushed between the trunk of a tree and the stomach of a policeman with a scarlet face. I neither dared to move nor to complain. Perhaps my accent would have betrayed me.

A street arab had climbed into the branches of the lime tree above my head and through the Brandenburgertor he looked down the length of the Tiergarten. The spectators were nervously strung up. Signs of impatience were shown. Suddenly the boy cried in his Berlin slang from the tree-top: "No sign of the ape!"

Smothered laughter all around. The policeman's scarlet face turned purple. His stomach, swelling with anger, crushed me even worse than before.

"What are you saying up there?" he demanded, raising his eyes.

"I said there was no sign of the ape," said the boy calmly.

The policeman snorted.

"Who do you mean by that?"

" I mean my brother, of course."

And still the crowd laughed, but prudently. The policeman stamped with anger. A long silence followed until the voice from the tree was once more heard :

" And who did you think I meant, cop ? "

At last the Emperor arrived in an open motor-car. The throng of people cheered gently. William passed at a high speed, glancing hurriedly to right and left. He saw nothing but the policemen, four deep, lining the route. They stood between him and his people. Perhaps they were protecting the people. . . .

. . . . . .

The very word " *Schützmann,*" given by the Germans, to their police, expresses the German mind to a nicety, for it means : " The man who protects." In this word there is servility and the perpetual need of the race to be sheltered by the strength of someone else. There is the fear of the unknown, the fear of the unusual, the fear of genius, of the apache and of the revolution. The Germans need protection and the *Schützleute* crush them, trample on them, thrash them if they speak of liberty. Liberty is the German's worst enemy.

There is further hypocrisy in this word *Schützmann.* It is as though the police were thus named in lying flattery to conciliate them and soften their brutality. The dog licks the hand that strikes him. Every German knows well enough that the policeman only protects his masters. Did not ten of them in 1913 enter the sacred precincts of the Reichstag and brutally eject two Deputies ? Some years before the war I went

into Moabit, the Berlin suburb, at a time of industrial disturbance. The crowd was orderly enough ; they only asked for a few concessions, a juster suffrage. The police were hurried to the spot. Without the least provocation, they leapt on the people with sabre in one hand and revolver in the other. With my own eyes I saw them kill their man.

Parliamentary immunity, citizen's rights—what do these mean in Germany ? The irony of a language, which builds on the same plan the word for policeman and the word for guardian angel, *Schützmann* and *Schützengel !*

One night, at Munich, a policeman shot dead with his revolver a poor, inoffensive drunkard, who refused to stop shouting the moment he was told. The victim was a student. Unfortunately he happened to belong to no aristocratic students' society. The business was hushed up. At Bonn, on the other hand, members of the *Borussia,* the smartest Students' Club in Germany, which includes among its ex-members Ministers, Princes, Kings and even Emperors, took upon themselves to throw a number of policemen into the Rhine and break the heads of several others. Such notice as was taken of this affair was purely formal,[1] and once again the matter was hushed up. In Germany all conflicts likely to reflect unpleasantly on those in authority are hushed up. The immunity of parliament is violated in the Reichstag, the civil power is bullied

[1] The offenders were, as a matter of fact, forbidden for some time to wear their club colours.

by the military at Zabern, and immediately there are cries of indignation, excitement among politicians, talk of upsetting the Government, violent speeches—and then, all of a sudden, everything dies down and nothing more is heard. Germany submits.

They will never be capable of a revolution, these people, while they have so many " protectors " about them.

Five of us, one day, decided to go up the towers of the *Frauenkirche*, the Cathedral of Munich. This red-brick church, built in a simple Gothic style, has only two remarkable characteristics : the first is the pair of onion-shaped copper spires which cap the tall towers, the other the fact that the church was built in 1468 by an ingenious master-mason on top of a smaller church, which continued to be used until the larger building was finished in 1480.

From the top of the towers can be obtained a beautiful view over the Bavarian Alps and the winding valley of the Isar. To give our climb a certain local colour we assumed mountaineer's costume ; chamois leather breeches ; bare calves ; heavily nailed shoes ; embroidered braces ; green hats and rucksacks. We bought at a wine shop near by two or three bottles of Rüdesheimer, which we put in our sacks. The sacristan, who thought it unnecessary to accompany us, opened the heavy door at the bottom of one of the towers and left us to climb the dark, spiral staircase unattended.

After having enjoyed the view for a while, we drank our wine. We were young and merry. The wine

loosened our tongues and we began to sing at the top of our voices, as we came once more down the stairs. The whole tower formed, as it were, an immense trumpet and our voices echoed up and down the spiral staircase producing a veritable roar, which amused us very much. We agreed to sing in unison an old song popular on the banks of the Rhine :

THE GROWING HAY

A farmer had a pretty wife,
Who liked to stop at home,
But she urged her husband every day
To go and look at the growing hay
Look at the growing
Trala Tralala,
Tra-diddle-a-da,
Look at the growing hay.

" All very well," the farmer thought,
" But I should like to see
How the missus spends her time alone ;
So behind the door I'll hide and say,
I've gone to look at the growing hay
Look at the growing
Trala Tralala,
Tra-diddle-a-da,
Look at the growing hay."

A smart young groom came riding up
To be greeted by the wife :
" My husband has gone his own sweet way,
Gone to look at the growing hay
Look at the growing
Trala Tralala,
Tra-diddle-a-da,
Look at the growing hay,"

The groom put an arm about her waist,
And tickled her here and there,
Till the husband burst from behind the door.
" You thought I was safely miles away—
But I've not yet gone to the growing hay
Gone to the growing
Trala Tralala,
Tra-diddle-a-da,
Gone to the growing hay ! "

" Oh ! husband dear, this once forgive !
I'll slave for you indeed,
And cook the dainties that you love—
Oh, husband dear, forgive, I pray—
I thought you'd gone to the growing hay
Gone to the growing
Trala Tralala,
Tra-diddle-a-da,
Gone to the growing hay."

" And suppose I had ? What right have you
To kiss this fellow here ?
No, no. In future at home I stay,
And the devil can take the growing hay
The devil can take the
Trala Tralala,
Tra-diddle-a-da
The devil can take the hay."

The man who sings this little song
Is the groom so young and smart.
For he has become a farmer gay,
And is careful to watch his growing hay
Careful to watch his
Trala Tralala,
Tra-diddle-a-da,
To watch his growing hay.

As we reached the last verse we arrived at the door of the tower. We groped for the heavy bolt The door

opened ; and there we were on the threshold of the church, half-blinded by the light after the darkness of the staircase. A vast crowd surrounded us with cries and threatening gestures. Three priests, several beadles and a number of worshippers who had hurried from the Cathedral, cursed us for the sacrilege, because, it appeared, we had interrupted a service. Our profane song had penetrated into the church and fallen from the roof on to the heads of the faithful. Scandal indeed ! It was useless for us to protest of the excellence of our intentions, of our ignorance of the acoustic mysteries of the building. We must expiate our fault. A policeman, sent for in haste, silenced the crowd with a gesture of his enormous fist. He questioned us and took our names. I saw the moment approaching when he would take us in charge, but it happened that one of us was nephew of the Prussian Minister at the Court of Bavaria. That settled it. The policeman, winking heavily at us, got us out of the crowd and, pretending to arrest us, took us round the corner into a narrow street where he asked us apologetically to get away as quickly as possible and not be seen near the Frauenkirche for a few days to come. A thousand thanks, protector ! A thousand thanks, guardian angel !

. . . . . .

There are certain mineral waters which, when mixed with red wine, cause it to decompose. In the same way the German character spoils some of the noblest sentiments in the world. The obedient becomes the servile ; the proud the arrogant ; the polite the obsequious.

Have you ever seen a German officer when he is introduced or when he takes his leave? He breaks himself gently in two, and clicks his heels together with a gloomy rigidity which is, to him, the last word in distinction. If you meet a German travelling in a hotel, on a train, in a restaurant or in any of those places where two people either pass without speaking or, at most, exchange an occasional commonplace, the German insists on a semblance of intimacy. He makes a point of impressing his personality on your memory; he waits his moment, comes forward, bows and tells you his name, and then he is satisfied.

I remember an amusing set of drawings by Gulbransson in *Simplicissimus*. On the bridge of a channel steamer an Englishman, stretched on a deck-chair, is reading *The Times*. A stout German bows before him: "My name is Meier." The Englishman, without stopping reading, gets up and moves his chair the other way round. The German follows, stands before him, bows again: "My name is Meier." Furious, the Englishman hunches his knees to his chin, buries his head in his shoulders and opens *The Times* as widely as possible in order to shelter behind it. Unmoved, the German with a remorseless finger puts aside the interfering paper and murmurs in his most insinuating voice: "My name is Meier." Nothing can discourage him. He goes on repeating: "My name is Meier."

"Well, what the devil do you want me to do about it?" shouts the Englishman at last, losing all patience.

This clumsy politeness, sometimes crawling, some-

times rigidly crushing, is the screen behind which works the soul of the modern German. To understand him it is necessary to know one whose assured position or whose insolent youth allows him to be sincere: that is to say an officer or a student.

German officers are the most favoured caste in the Empire. They are not citizens of a great nation, not servants of the State, but essentially the props of the dynasty. William talks continuously of: "My Army," "My soldiers," "My fleet." The officer who has sworn fidelity to the Emperor says: "I wear the Imperial uniform."

The rest does not count, but unfortunately it happens that the rest is Germany and the German people. The officer class is recruited largely from the aristocracy and essentially from the most reactionary sections of the population. As in the Middle Ages the knights rallied round their sovereign, who rewarded their fidelity and zeal by decorations and honours, so a similar feudal conception of their place in the Empire has taught to the German officers an unbelievable arrogance. When they are young, this conceit takes the most violent forms. In little towns they clink along the streets with their sabres, monopolising the best part of the pavement, openly showing their contempt for civilians and mixing with none but those of their own type. Thöny in *Simplicissimus* has immortalised their faces, at once smooth and wrinkled, like children precociously old, the insolent sneer of their lips, the eternal monocle in the right eye, their padded

shoulders, their corseted waists, their whole air of cruel, vicious and degenerate dolls. Those who belong to the cavalry (and this is a sign of wealth and high birth) are even more conceited than usual and relax no effort to make the German bourgeois feel his inferiority. I knew one of these men, who once remarked :

" First of all comes a cavalry officer. Then there's nothing and again nothing. Then comes the horse. Then there's again nothing and again and again and again nothing. Then comes the infantry officer. Then there's nothing and again nothing and then comes the good God, and after the good God there's nothing, nothing, nothing and then comes the artillery officer and far, far away, almost out of sight, the German people."

When the Kaiser was particularly pleased with the loyalty of any small town, he would issue an official promise to the young girls of the neighbourhood to station one of his best regiments there as garrison. He did this at Elberfeld, two or three years before the war, to the great delight of the comic papers.

The officer is, naturally enough, little beloved by the people. Since the Zabern incident he has been personified in young Förstner, and frankly detested. But once again the German, faithful to type, submits. He is afraid of a powerful class whose help he may some day require, and so he contents himself with making mock, when opportunity offers.

The whole world remembers the adventure of the

Köpenick Captain, the cobbler, who, disguised as an officer, appropriated a company of soldiers, arrested the burgomaster in the Town Hall and emptied the municipal chest. The joke threw the whole of civilian Germany into paroxysms of delight. This living satire on German militarism was almost too good to be true. General sympathy for Voigt, the cobbler in question, brought interest in his fate. I saw him when he came out of prison. He had already an income of his own. A committee had been formed to collect money for him and he went all over Germany, well clothed and well fed, selling in the smartest restaurants picture-postcards of himself, which he signed below the portrait "Yours truly, the Köpenick Captain." The Germans thought they were admirably pulling the leg of the officer class and of that class, supreme chief. They little thought that the story affected them as much as the army. One of themselves, the bourgeois burgomaster of Köpenick, had let himself be arrested by an army captain, whose uniform was not even according to rule. His assistants had fallen into the same trap. A railway official, a stationmaster, a student conscript and a number of other witnesses had been tricked with the same ease, and so the moral of the story is that any scarecrow got up like an officer can frighten the whole of the German nation from Königsberg to Munich and from Breslau to Coblenz, despite their boasted critical sense and the famous German "thoroughness."

As time went by, the young officers chafed and cursed the long peace, longing for an event which would

give scope to their ambition. A rich marriage or a glorious war—one of the two was necessary, and the civilian ssuffered from the soldiers' consequent impatience and bad humour. Those officers who have not private means live their lives of gilded misery stoically enough. Midday they dine with their comrades at the mess. In the evening they eat alone a scanty supper.

The orderly runs into the grocer's shop, to buy a little liver cheese, a cheap and common food.

"Pennyworth of liver cheese,"

he says, as he enters the shop, but adds, in order to keep up appearances,

"For the lieutenant's dog."

But the next day, when he returns to buy another pennyworth, he forgets and says:

"The lieutenant wants better quality than yesterday's, which was hardly eatable."

. . . . . .

On the walls in large restaurants in Munich, Berlin, Leipzig or other of the great University cities, there may be seen, hung on pegs, white, red, green, blue, orange or violet caps, decorated with bi-coloured and tri-coloured ribbon. Near each group of these caps is a table, bearing a card "Reserved," which card is supported by a bronze figure holding a flag of the same colours as those of the adjoining group of caps. Cryptic initials are embroidered on the flag. The shelf behind the table carries a few old tankards of wood or pewter,

a Römer[1] of large size, several coloured porcelain pipes and a little cupboard of pine wood got up to look like walnut and showing on its panelled door a painted shield coloured like the flag.

At various stated hours, this table is invaded by young men. They stroll in one by one, nod casually at each other, hang their hat by one of the caps on the wall,[2] take their place according to some obscure ritual, and, having drawn from their pocket a piece of silk which they tie across their shoulders like a bandolier, settle down to uninterrupted drinking. Sometimes one of them has his face all bandaged up with black gauze and the bitter odour of iodoform permeates the room, catching the other drinkers in the throat. This bandaged object is a hero, who, for the moment, has slightly deteriorated as a result of several sabre blows across the face. The group of young men talk in a loud voice, eyeing all others present with a kind of insolent pity and bullying the wretched girl who serves them. These are the students. This is the educated youth, the future of the German nation.

The German University custom of forming clubs

[1] "Römer," literally Roman, is a greenish coloured glass on a stalk, of the type called in England a "rummer." These glasses are used in Germany for drinking Rhine wine. Possibly the name is taken from the famous hall in Frankfurt where was crowned the Holy Roman Emperor. This hall is called the "Römer," and the chosen Emperor solemnly emptied a cup of wine as part of the ritual.

[2] In some of the smaller University towns, like Jena, Heidelberg Marburg, Bonn, etc., undergraduates wear their colours in the street, a habit which naturally stamps the town as having all too obviously a University.

goes back a long way, even to Martin Luther. But it was at Heidelberg in 1810 that the first students' club was founded. In 1848 the Government sanctioned the student organisations in the form they maintain to-day.

The details of this organisation are too long to enumerate. The main objects are intimacy between young men of the same generation; submission of the various members to internal discipline; growth of *esprit de corps;* contempt for physical suffering; and a cultivation of the sense of honour;[1] all of which seem highly laudable ambitions.

The undergraduates, therefore, form *Korps* or clubs, which hand on jealously from generation to generation the names of their heroes and the story of their fame. Each club has a special name, generally taken from the Latin form of the city or district of the Empire from which the members come: *Borussia* (Prussia), *Rhenania* (Rhine), *Ratisbonnia* (Regensburg), *Vindobonia* (Vienna), etc. The clubs jealously maintain that particularism, which is one of the sources of strength of modern Germany.[2] Each club has its colours and a monogram. It is composed of active and honorary members. The latter are always men who have once been active members and are called either "The old gentlemen" or the "Philistines." When the club

[1] The undergraduates themselves say, "*Erziehung der Mitglieder zu Honorigen.*" Every *Korpsstudent* must be what is called *Satisfaktionsfähig*, that is to say, must be able to give satisfaction with a sabre whenever necessary.

[2] This particularism prevents centralisation and preserves to each State in the Confederation its own life, but does not hinder the development of the Empire as a whole.

holds a commemorative dinner or there is some University celebration these old members reappear.[1] The active members choose three officers—a senior, a consenior and a sub-senior. The undergraduates themselves are either *Burschen* or *Füchse.*[2] Every *Bursch* adopts a *Leibfuchs,* who owes obedience in return for protection and advice. The body of custom regulating the relations of members and the programme of their common life within the limits of the club is contained in a manual called the *Komment.*[3] This work instructs the novice how to drink, how to eat and how to fight, under the graceful headings *Bierkomment, Trinkkomment* und *Paukkomment.*

To put it shortly, the customs of the German undergraduate clubs are theatrical and romantic, due doubtless to the time when the first student organisations were officially proclaimed. Each club has a uniform and a flag, as well as a duelling ground where the sabring takes place. The *Mensur,* or sabre-encounter, finds the antagonists protected as to chest, throat, nose and eyes. The rest of the face is uncovered. The weapon used is the *Schlager,* a heavy curved sabre

[1] A partial result of this custom is that the young men, when they leave the university, can count on the support and help of the elder members of the club.

[2] [These names correspond roughly to freshmen (Füchse) and second, third and fourth year men (Burschen), but the great English universities have not, of course, any of that formal submission of freshmen to their seniors which Marc Henry goes on to describe as existing in Germany.]

[3] Another Bosch " k." This is merely the French word *Comment?* Of course *Korps* is a similar transformation.

carefully sharpened and cleaned. As the regulation blow is given downwards, it is always the head which suffers most. Blood flows in streams, small trenches being made in the floor to enable it to run away. The general effect is that of a slaughter house. After the fight the wounds are sewn up, but they always leave an obvious scar of which the German undergraduates are very proud. I knew a Bavarian doctor whose closely cropped head showed more than twenty-two sabre cuts. Others have a sliced cheek, a chipped ear, split lips, a broken in chin. Heroism in Germany has to be rather obvious, for spiritual modesty is unknown and self advertisement remains supreme.

It must not be forgotten that these *Mensuren* are pure amusement and produce wounds which, although highly visible, are not dangerous. The dream of the *Korpsstudent* is a serious duel, with challenge, exchange of cards, witnesses, discussions on the choice of weapon and a final settlement with sabre or pistol. As a result, everywhere he goes the undergraduate glances keenly about him. He is seeking for an "affair" and, if one does not come his way, he creates it, either by lurching into somebody or walking up to a stranger and shouting in his face :

"You choose to stare at me, sir ?"

When not engaged in this bloodthirsty playfulness, the undergraduate spends all the leisure of his days and the whole of his nights in drinking. In this hobby he does not follow the dictates of inclination, nor the inspirations of fancy, but obeys a complicated but

rigid code laid down by the *Komment,* which transforms his stomach into a kind of collapsible bottle at the behest of his superiors. The President of the *Kneipe* (the table or restaurant where the group of undergraduates assemble) may, for example, give a ruling in favour of the *Salamander ;* all present carry their mugs to their lips. At the word *Pros' t ex,* every mug is emptied at a single breath. The unfortunate who chokes has to begin again immediately with a full mug.

Should he be slightly incommoded by the amount of liquid absorbed, the attractive undergraduate vanishes for a moment and, like a Roman, puts his finger down his throat. He returns feeling much better and starts drinking again. As a result students can be found at dawn in every stream, under every bridge, in every railway station. They have frequently to be taken to bed in wheelbarrows. These orgies naturally deteriorate the young German, physically and morally. A *Korpsstudent* is hardly ever seen with a woman, which is strange considering their age. They have neither respect nor love for women. At most they will slink in secret to some harlot or attach themselves in their own interests to a waitress. They promise mountains and miracles to this unfortunate girl who, trusting to their word, gives them their beer on credit.

. . . . . .

In this then, as everything else, one finds the basic atavism of the German mind ; the absence of personality, of individual character ; the need of group

organisation, group submission and group obedience ; and an irritating tendency to parody, by exaggeration, sentiments noble in themselves, such as pride, courage and natural solidarity. But in addition, in the students and in the officers are to be found two characteristic traits of modern Germany, of that Germany which has deliberately unchained this war—militarism and a foolish worship of force.

Forty years of intensive culture, forty years of success and of industrial and financial growth, has produced in the Germans these two monstrous obsessions.

The *Korpsstudenten* belong for the most part to the powerful families of the Empire ; they are sons of nobles, bankers, merchants, professors, landed proprietors and of those who, having profited by the triumphant development of the Empire, now group themselves round the throne.[1]

It is obvious that for young men, who have no time to work but plenty of time to fight ostentatiously and to drink too much, life is only worth living if one has, to the exclusion of everything else, a keen sense of reality. Down with sentiment and idealism ! Nature teaches that life is a perpetual battle, that one must eat in order not to be eaten, kill in order not to be killed,

[1] In addition to the Student Clubs, there were formed during recent years societies of young people with advanced and liberal ideas, for example, the *Freie Studentenschaft*, which organised lectures and theatrical performances. These students have, I need hardly say, no manual of conduct (*Komment*), but unfortunately the police and the Government were hostile to them and their influence was not large.

and that strength and cunning are the only means to success.

Let us look again at the Emperor's speeches and at the sentiments uttered by the Chancellor at the outbreak of war, at that tragic moment when the mask of the world was falling away, and we shall find with terrible logic an echo of that cynicism adopted by German youth: "Necessity knows no law." "The end justifies the means." "The weak have no right to existence."

I knew German students with scarred faces, shifty eyes and rigid bearing. They have become frenzied gamblers, who desire their place in the sun to the exclusion of others. They have no scruples. Their conscience is guided only by their appetite, and their appetite is of the size they feel themselves strong enough to satisfy.

This is the end of Bismarck's policy and of Nietzsche's evil teaching.

There was a time when the German student, in his black velvet tunic, his grey checked trousers and his tasselled cap, fought as an idealist for liberty and brotherhood. In 1848, at Vienna, Munich and Berlin, young thinkers felt the wind of revolution from France and rose as one man.

A year before the war, I happened to be in the studio of a celebrated Berlin artist, who was showing me some old costumes in which he dressed his lay figures, for he knew that I loved these ancient things. Searching about in a chest, he came across an old

student's cap, which he handed to me. I examined it with care and saw that the leather peak was broken, the ribbon faded and the top pierced with a round clean hole, such as is made by a bullet. . . .

"Yes, yes," said the artist, as he saw me looking closely at this strange tear, "that was made by a bullet. The student who wore it was killed outright on March 4th, 1848, on a barricade in the Holzstrasse near the Spree. You know the place, just opposite the house of the famous *Wundermädchen*, who lived during the day revered as a little Saint, receiving thousands of pilgrims, laying her hands on them, curing the sick, and, in the evening, went and prostituted herself at the other end of Berlin in the brothels and the music-halls."

"But how do you know this?"

"The cap belonged to my great uncle."

And I looked at the little object, worn by a German student who had opposed brute strength, who had revolted against his king, who had refused to submit, because he had ideals and wished to win a little more happiness for humanity. I wondered whether the whole of German idealism had vanished through that little bullet hole. . . .

CHAPTER VIII. VANITY FAIR

" This is Vanity Fair : not a moral place, certainly ; nor a merry one, though very noisy. . . . There are scenes of all sorts : Some dreadful combats, some scenes of high life and some of very middling indeed ; some love making for the sentimental and some light comic business."—W. M. THACKERAY.

My theatre at Munich—Wedekind's menagerie—The romantic tale of Alfred Walter Heymel—*Die Insel* appears and Bierbaum lives in clover—The clover withers—Ludwig Scharf, the honest poet—Danny Gürtler, the amazing charlatan—Literary thieves: (1) Wilhelm Bölsche—(2) Siegfried Jacobsohn—(3) Fritz Schlömp—(4) Maximilian Bern—The artist-advertiser : Roda-Roda—Advertisement mania : (1) Weingartner—(2) Richard Strauss—(3) Moïssi—(4) Grosz and Isadora Duncan—(5) Grosz and Vecsey—(6) Bonn—Evers and I write a play—But cannot introduce a Zeppelin—The cinema, its rise and fall—The scientist-advertiser : (1) Schrenk-Nortzing—(2) Magnus Hirschfeld—Wedekind expresses a " genuine literary opinion "—Grünfeld and the eager Philistine—The spoiling of Munich—Old Aschbé—The spoiling of Oberammergau—H. H. Evers and his mother : the fiction—Frau Evers and the French governess : the fact.

AS I live in the past among my memories, I see again the auditorium of my Munich theatre, oblong and fantastic in decoration, with its yellow silk walls and the shaded lights shining on the audacity of its pictures and its drawings. Near the entrance, at the corner on one of the boxes, an oak column carried a skull, which wore a white wig, and in that wig was fixed the shining steel of a long-handled axe, the axe of an executioner.

This symbolical column I called the *Schandpfahl*,

the pillory. It expressed the satirical and revolutionary aspirations of the young men who, under my guidance, gave themselves the proud title of the Eleven Executioners. Our chief delight was to attack everything which seemed to us conventional, and I remember that, on the evening of our first performance, we appeared before the astonished audience, wearing long red gowns and masks, and proclaimed, standing behind a black block on which we laid the points of our swords :

> The human puppets jerk and strut,
> As God would have them do.
> But we are waiting here to cut
> The guiding strings in two.

We were young and eager, all eleven of us, fed with the same ideals of liberty and beauty. We counted in our number an architect, a lawyer, three writers, two composers, a sculptor and three painters. The most violent disagreement could not destroy the spiritual bond which united us.

We would hang to the *Schandpfahl* the latest piece of political idiocy, the latest imperial blunder, the latest reactionary law, the latest utterance of snobbery. We would pillory whatever was praised by foolish advertisement, whatever insulted good sense or artistic feeling. And I think that our judgment was all the weightier in that our youthful independence allowed us to be sincere.

Frank Wedekind once dressed up as a travelling lion tamer, with white leather trousers and high boots. In

this costume he recited the prologue to his *Erdgeist*, which was to have such a success and prove the foundation of his fame. Cracking a whip with one hand, letting off a revolver with the other, he cried to the audience :

" Walk up, walk up. This way to the menagerie." The menagerie was the play, in which the author showed his various beasts with human heads, relentlessly revealing the complex movements of their muscles and of their passions, presenting them in turn in jealousy, anger, despair or love, forcing them to wallow in the mud or climb towards the light.

" Walk up, walk up."

To begin with, in order to stimulate the curiosity of the gross among the audience, the curtain rose and revealed the showman's most beautiful specimen, a tall and sinuous girl in skin tights, outrageously rouged, whom he called his serpent and whom he caressed softly with his whip. . . .

That was many years ago. Wedekind has elbowed his way onwards and made his own road, like the majority of my old companions. Our enthusiasms have gone the way of the balloons of childhood. First they were tightly blown and brightly coloured and tugged at the string in their efforts to rise ever higher. Gradually they emptied, their covers wrinkling as they fell slowly to earth, until finally they lay there, limp and blackened, poor, little, useless corpses.

Since then I have been many times all over Central

Europe. I have known every literary and artistic circle of Germany. I have been familiar with writers, musicians, painters, actors and the whole riotous world of the "Did you see me in that?" "Have you read this of mine?" "Did you ever hear this?" and so forth. The rosy spectacles of youth have fallen from my eyes and in the light of hard experience I have followed the foolish struggle for success, fame, money or honour; I have known the reverse side, the infamy, the passions, the egoism, the ambition. They are all, these intelligent German children, artificial and violent products of an uneducated society, poor in tradition, but rich in lust, incapable of understanding the sublety of tact, harmony or proportion. They cannot distinguish loutishness from strength, obscurity from depth, verbiage from fancy, sentimentality from emotion, the colossal from the sublime, organisation and discipline from culture, cruelty from courage, talent from genius. When they are amusing it is usually unknowingly, and, as often as not, at their own expense. . . .

And that is why I began this chapter with the picture of Wedekind in his white trousers and his high boots, cracking his whip and firing his revolver, and calling to the public to walk up and see his woman-serpent, his symbolical menagerie.

"Walk up, walk up, this way to the menagerie." . . . And I have walked up and I have seen.

About 1900 there was published in Munich a modern literary review called *Die Insel*, the first copy of which, got up with the utmost splendour, attracted consider-

able attention. Printed on hand-made paper, the wide margins of this periodical were decorated with woodcuts by the best known artists of Germany, among others Hugo Vogeler from Worpswede,[1] and counted among its contributors the best known names of young German literature: Hugo von Hoffmansthal, Arthur Schnitzler, Hermann Bahr, Frank Wedekind, Herbert Eulenberg, Franz Blei, Hermann Hesse, Max Dauthendey, Paul Scheerbart, Emmanuel von Bodmann, Gustav Falke, Richard Dehmel, Detlef von Liliencron, Richard Schaukal, Leo Greiner, Max Brod, Carl Sternheim, etc.

Well backed by money, *Die Insel* had great influence on the neo-romantic movement and also revolutionised the art of publishing. Not only the numbers of the magazine, but also the various beautiful books published in connection with it, were eagerly sought for by collectors. The founders and editors of the paper were the poet Otto Julius Bierbaum and Alfred Walter Heymel, a young unknown of twenty-five, who had become enormously rich through an odd adventure.

Two old bourgeois of Bremen, who had retired from business with a fortune, felt in their old age the torment of loneliness and the need of adopting a child in order to give their existence some purpose. As they had no relations, they put an advertisement in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. An abandoned mother, reduced

[1] Worpswede is a pretty village in the country near Bremen, which was the centre of a painter colony like those at Barbizon or Pont-Aven.

to the utmost poverty, gave them her son, and in this way little Walter Heymel found a home. His adopted parents brought him up with every care and then both died, leaving the young man absolute liberty and fifteen million marks.

Heymel, without fixed occupation, amused himself by writing bad poetry. He came to Munich, where life is gayer than at Bremen, and frequented literary circles, until he fell in with Otto Julius Bierbaum. This writer, whose amusing facility never amounted to more than a mediocre talent, was a person of many wants and energetic appetites. He was nicknamed "The gravedigger," because he had a genius for burying every enterprise as soon as he had taken it up, his sole interest being to fill his own pockets. He immediately grasped the advantage to be obtained from encouraging the literary ambitions of this young millionaire. He convinced him of the desirability of starting a new magazine, which should rally the literary élite of Germany. He offered his support, his friends and his genius, with the result that he became co-director of *Die Insel* with 20,000 marks a year guaranteed for five years. His experience taught him rapidly how to relegate his colleague to second place, and, armed with complete authority, he proceeded to distribute his favours right and left, and with them the money of the unfortunate Heymel.

The latter hired a magnificent flat in the Leopold-strasse, employed artists and decorators for its adornment, filled the rooms with priceless bric-a-brac,

costly fabrics, expensive pictures. He had motor-cars and horses, gave wonderful parties, lounged in the smartest restaurants and was always surrounded by an eager crowd of sycophants. Did Bierbaum know a poet whose finances were rather shaky ? Give him an allowance. Had Bierbaum a painter friend whose creditors were getting clamorous ? Put his affairs in order. Indeed they were halcyon days for Munich parasites, for all the sharpers and the snobs of the literary and artistic world. Champagne and gold flowed like rivers. This lasted for five or six years until Heymel, on the verge of bankruptcy, cut off everything in order to avert absolute ruin. He had paid eight million marks for the pleasure of publishing his bad verses on sumptuous paper among the work of famous men. He retired to Bremen once more and dropped literature for cattle breeding. On this he spent the rest of his fortune.

Otto Julius Bierbaum felt no gratitude to his young benefactor. Furious at the impossibility of renewing his contract, he wrote a novel called *Prince Cuckoo*, in which he savagely attacked his old colleague, mocked at his naïveté and his lack of talent, poured scorn on his vulgarity, his humble birth[1] and his vanished fortune.

There were, however, a few honest poets, genuinely absorbed in their dreams and without worldly ambition, who, having no pride but in their talent, passed by this rain of gold and scorned to share in it.

[1] Heymel, in his great days, used to make out that he was the illegitimate son of a certain sovereign whom, incidentally, he strikingly resembled.

I knew one, Ludwig Scharf, author of *Tschandala Lieder*,[1] whose soul was serene and clear. He must now be suffering in silence, as he has suffered all his life, from the injustice and ugliness of human lies. His name has not crossed the frontiers of Germany, but in that country he has an honourable place in the anthologies, and his genius is appreciated by those who really know. He is very poor, but he bears his poverty with dignity.

The man who introduced me to him, eighteen years ago now, had made Scharf's acquaintance in strange circumstances. Scharf, who had fled to Zürich to avoid the rigours of the law (he had been convicted of lèse-Majesté), had just returned to Munich, lonely and reserved. He would frequent every evening one of those little restaurants where one drinks light Tyrolese wine at a plain wooden table. An architect, Langheinrich, met him there by chance and they exchanged a few words. A subtle sympathy drew them together. Scharf was remarkable to look at; his bronze face framed in a great black beard, his black hair falling in heavy curls over his temples and setting off the breadth of his forehead. His two great eyes shone with an intensity that was almost disconcerting. His grave look was like a caress. He spoke little, but the richness of his voice gave his few remarks a persuasive charm.

The two men talked long and late and, when the tavern shut, walked together down the black and

[1] "Songs of Tschandala." Tschandala is the Hindu fatalism.

empty street. Scharf, who limped a little, had a long way to go and his companion, seeing that he walked only with difficulty, invited him into his studio which was close by.

Langheinrich did the honours of his home, got out cigars and a bottle of Rhine wine, and once more they started talking, until the poet fell asleep from fatigue and from the amount of wine he had consumed. He lay stretched out on a sofa. Langheinrich, himself under the influence of drink, had the unfortunate idea to remove his friend's boots, in order that he might sleep more comfortably. The first came easily enough, but the second resisted his efforts. He pulled harder, but without result. He redoubled his efforts. . . . Suddenly the boot gave and Langheinrich almost fell backwards, his eyes wide with horror. The whole leg had followed the boot, a strange, limp leg, trailing tails of leather. "I have killed a poet," thought the unfortunate architect, as he gazed first at the empty trouser leg and then at the fantastic limb he held in his hand. Finally he grasped the truth. Scharf had an artificial leg.

He had lost his own in a fire-damp explosion, when he was seventeen years old, for he used to work in a mine, and his poetry is always about the souls of the humble. I shall never forget the first evening that I heard him recite. He got up, with his hands at the back of a chair, his left shoulder slightly raised, his head bent forward. The ceiling lamp lit up his mass of black hair, and his great eyes flamed like torches.

Then he recited his well-known poem, *Proles Sum*, which begins :

Ich bin ein Prolet ; vom Menschengetier
Bin ich bei der untersten klasse.
Ich bin ein Prolet ; was kann ich dafür,
Wenn ich kein Zier eurer Gasse ?

Some years later I went with Scharf to an evening entertainment given by Danny Gürtler. At once actor and poet, with a thunderous voice that made the walls and ceilings resound, this Gürtler was a truly extraordinary type—a sort of medieval buffoon. He called himself " The last of the Romantics," and went abroad wrapped in the folds of a great Spanish cape, wearing a scarlet shirt and a large brimmed hat. Before his performance in any town he would gallop through the streets on horseback, blowing an enormous copper trumpet. This excited the population and Gürtler would harangue them in an inflated style, ringing the changes from mysticism to patriotism, from patriotism to cynicism, claiming to be the defender of the humble, the restorer of wrongs, an apostle of liberty. He roared at the staring townsfolk that there were only two interesting people in Germany—himself and the Emperor.

From the moment of his appearance on the stage he never ceased to shout, to sob, to laugh or to sing. Sweat poured from his face. He alternately cursed and flattered the audience, playing with them as a tamer plays with wild beasts. His monologues and his recitations were interlarded with ridiculous patter ;

he would suddenly settle upon some nervous spectator and talk exclusively to him, to the great delight of the others. When he had finished a tragic poem and felt the emotion of the spectators, he would hold out his hand and, dropping his tragedian manner, would shout :

" Silence. Do not applaud. You have not understood the thing I just recited. You are too stupid. All you are good for is a dirty story."

And he would immediately tell one. The hearers writhed with delight, and Gürtler would put out his tongue at them.

Seizing his trumpet, he would shout " *Stimmung!* "[1] and immediately go on to the next item on the programme. He was so full of life and so overflowing with temperament that, having once escaped hisses or stoning, he became a triumphant success. When the curtain fell, the public battered, exhausted and won over despite themselves, applauded furiously. Gürtler would appear in the auditorium, striding about among the stalls, selling his book of poems, whispering to the pretty girls, collecting money from the most miserly, until he finally disappeared, worn out. By these exhausting means he earned quite a fortune. He was a charming scoundrel.

[1] *Stimmung* is an untranslatable word. It is used to express the diapason of a crowd, of an individual, or of a work of art. German critics speak of a picture having a beautiful *Stimmung*, and Gürtler, by his use of the word, was commenting ironically on the speed with which his obscene anecdote had called forth an answering delight in the minds of the audience.

His poems were unreadable. Their only merit was the theme and the theme was never Gürtler's. He dipped into de Maupassant, Gorky, Kipling and Poe, choosing the most dramatic situations and putting them into doggerel. He signed his name to these skilful plagiarisms. As Scharf and I entered the room in which Gürtler was performing, the creature was shouting "*Stimmung!*" down his trumpet. That over, he shook his hair back over his shoulders, threw forward his head and roared :

"A little thing of my own. 'The Song of the Worker.' A Socialist poem."

After a pause he began :

> Ich bin ein Arbeiter ; vom Menschengetier
> Bin ich bei der untersten Klasse. . . .

It was Scharf's poem. Gürtler had merely substituted the unusual and foreign words such as *Proles sum, Prolet,* etc., by more familiar words to make the sense more easily understood. I glanced cautiously at my companion ; his lips were trembling and his eyes were stormy. Poor poet, he was standing there listening to the triumph of his stolen verses.

The recitation finished. The public were about to applaud, but Gürtler quelled them in an instant with a gesture of his arm.

"Silence ! No applause !"

Scharf got up trembling with rage.

"I wrote these verses," he cried.

Everybody turned to look at us. Gürtler let his eyes

wander over the hall, caught sight of the poet, shook his head with dignity and remarked gravely :

" Yes, yes, dear old Scharf. You wrote them also."

And the public, who of course knew nothing of the matter, laughed at my companion's discomfiture.

. . . . . .

Examples of literary theft are very common in Germany. The desire " to get there " as quickly as possible destroys in many authors all sense of scruple.

Wilhelm Bölsche, an intimate friend of Gerhard Hauptmann and like him a native of Silesia, won a great reputation by publishing, about twenty years ago, a book called *Love Life in Nature.* He analysed the mating habits of animals and insects, and organised on the same subject a profitable course of lectures, illustrated with lantern slides. As a matter of fact, all that Bölsche did was to appropriate the greater part of the work of the French entomologist, Fabre, who at the time was little known in Germany. Not a soul reproached Bölsche with this plagiarism, on which the whole of his reputation was founded, but then of course Fabre is a Frenchman. . . .

Some years ago, at Berlin, a dramatic critic, whose newspaper judgment had considerable authority, was completely unmasked. One of his colleagues, searching about in files of old newspapers, discovered that Siegfried Jacobsohn (the name of the critic in question) had textually reproduced the more striking passages in critical articles, written by a man who had died un-

known. From this source, Jacobsohn obtained his wise reflections on the subject of Ibsen, Strindberg, Shakespeare and the French Classics. The comic thing is that Jacobsohn, after a brief period of obscurity, soon rose once again to his old position of authority and influence.

The utilitarian German has made of literature a trade in the most vulgar sense of the word. Any form of paper blackening is a means to livelihood. One never meets people who divide their lives between two occupations—one modest but sufficiently remunerative to insure the daily bread, the other purely intellectual and literary. Is it that the Germans read more than the French or English ? In any case their publishers, their magazines, their newspapers, make more money than ours. But there, as elsewhere, talent and skill do not always mean success. There are real poets who starve and nonentities who grow wealthy ; but everywhere is to be met with a practical spirit which is foreign to our idealism. There are even cases of men, who are writers only in name, and who earn much more than if they actually wrote. I will give you an example.

Fritz Schlömp, in his twenty-fifth year, left college with a fixed determination to devote himself to literature. He had neither imagination nor talent, but this did not worry him. He had noted the popularity of the riddles and so-called witticisms, printed in the comic papers in heavy black type in order to draw the attention of the public. The German may take

his time to understand a joke, but once he has understood it, he swallows it eagerly and loses no opportunity of chewing it over afresh in public. Anyone who has travelled about the empire can bear witness to the natives' tiresome habit of rattling off jokes that have been learnt by heart.

Schlömp sat down with a pair of scissors, a bottle of paste and a large number of old copies of the *Fliegende Blätter, Meggendorfer Blätter, Lustige Blätter*, etc. He proceeded to cut out what seemed to him the most successful jokes, paste them on huge sheets of paper, number the pages, rack his brain to think of an original title and then carry this great work, of which the paste was the only original contribution, to the first publisher he came across. He was not long in finding someone to give him favourable terms. The first collection appeared. Others followed at fixed intervals. They were not, as you may imagine, cheap paper-covered publications for the lower classes, but solid books bound in boards, illustrated and carefully printed and selling in editions of twenty-five thousand at 3 marks a copy. They were called *Die Lachende Erdballe; Der gekitzelte Æsculap; Die meschuggene Ente*—every volume "Issued by Fritz Schlömp." And there he was, launched.

But eating creates appetite and Schlömp was not long in deserting comic snippets for real literature. His method and his tools, i.e. the paste and the scissors, remained the same. He published *Twelve Ghost Stories*, compiled after a careful study of Kipling, Poe,

Hoffmann, de Maupassant, etc. Other books followed. *The Best Hunting Stories, The Most Beautiful Love Stories,* and every time—" Issued by Fritz Schlömp." He then had the idea of asking some well-known writer to produce a preface (paid for by the publisher), a scheme which enabled him to print under his own name " With Preface by ....." His reputation grew and his income was assured.

Nor was he the only one. Maximilian Bern, who gave himself out as a poet, based his claim to this title on an anthology of modern light verse, which included one sonnet of his own and a hundred poems by his better known contemporaries. It must be added that his book was called *The Eleventh Muse,* and that he whispered to me one evening, quite seriously :

" It's the title that counts, my dear old chap. The title's the important thing."[1]

There are, of course, writers and poets in Germany, who are not mere exploiters of other people's ideas. I am not so childish as to deny to many of them, both talent and originality. I cannot, however, shut my eyes to one side of their activity, their boundless love of advertisement and their hustler's view of life. The more a German exaggerates, the more he thinks himself interesting, and the more he believes that he is giving proof of independence and originality.

It is a natural consequence that intellectual circles

[1] I notice that Max Bern has just published an anthology of patriotic and war-like songs under the resounding and ingenious title, " *Deutschland über alles.*"

in Germany contain eccentrics, who can be found nowhere else.

Any writer with a modicum of talent distributes it in chunks, and so rapidly that any non-German reader would be glutted in a very short while. German stomachs are more solid. To satisfy the national greed, a man of letters becomes a veritable factory of literature and places his goods with all the skill of a commercial traveller. In addition he advertises in the most shameless fashion.

Roda-Roda, formerly an Austrian officer, abandoned the Army for literature and became a professional humorist. As he wanted to make money, he set himself up on a grand scale, engaged two secretaries and six lady typists, dictated the whole day (many of his productions are genuinely amusing), catalogued his works, issued an alphabetical index of his jokes and in this way avoided repeating himself. He developed a habit of travelling himself, in order to sell his productions. He had a special sample valise made, which contained, in order of size and by subject, all his novels, his fantasies, his dialogues, carefully wrapped up in green canvas and fitted into little compartments. He would go into a publishing office, open his bag, and with a charming smile remark :

" My name is Roda-Roda. Is there anything in my line that you would like to-day ? "

And then, still polite, he would produce a manuscript or two :

" Here we have a nice little satire on military life.

300 lines, shall we say 100 marks? or a humorous story, rather improper, 250 lines, 80 marks?"

Thanks to his obstinacy and his original method of doing business, he sold his works wherever he went. It was impossible to open a magazine or even a daily paper without seeing his name. He had picture post-cards printed, which he sent far and wide. They showed a view of Munich and on two or three house gables in the foreground were printed in enormous letters: "Roda-Roda's Novels are the best"—exactly as if he were a manufacturer of mustard.

. . . . . .

I think it is not difficult in this anecdote to see the reflection of those sky signs, which wink and flicker every evening across the fronts of the Berlin buildings.

I remember walking one evening down the Friedrichstrasse. Every now and again the crowd of passers-by would drift apart and leave empty for a moment a little patch of pavement or roadway. Instantly, from some invisible coign of vantage, there would flash downwards the picture of some strange beast, a salamander, a crocodile, an unicorn, a tiger. The monster would glitter there on the ground, its limbs quivering, and the crowd would instinctively draw back. Profiting from this movement, the hidden operator would replace this appalling monster by some comparatively calm advertisement, which came as a relief to the eyes. Then, once again, the light would go out and the street would stretch as before, grey under the arc lights, and the crowd would move onwards.

One evening I was at the *Kaffee Princess* with Hans Heinz Evers. The waiter called us to the telephone. An engineer of our acquaintance begged us to come to him immediately on the terrace of the *Halensee*, a huge park, where on Sunday afternoons the middle-classes crowd to drink café-au-lait and eat the eternal *Sandkuchen*. We hastened there with some interest.

The cause of the excitement was the first flight of a dirigible built by the A. E. G.[1] There were about ten people besides ourselves in the car of the airship, which rose softly into the calm air and sailed off over the town, almost touching the roofs. Below us we could see the brilliance of the great streets, the illuminated façades of the theatres, the swarming crowd who stood foolishly about cricking their necks, in order to find out whence came the purr of the motor. Suddenly I was blinded by a ray of light. Our whole car seemed lit up, coloured electric lamps flamed out along the length of the airship and a rain of brilliant hued pamphlets descended on to the heads of the crowd below. The dirigible was merely a new advertisement. It wandered over the capital in a glare of Bengal fire, advertising the latest theatrical success, the best Egyptian cigarette or the novel of the moment.

[1] The A. E. G. was only too well known in France and England before the war. In Paris some one ventured to give these mystic initials their full and genuine expression, i.e. *Allgemeine Electricitäts Gesellschaft*. One of the Parisian directors, who heard this, explained that it was quite a mistake to translate the letters in this way, as what they stood for was : *Anciens Establissements Guimard* (which was a firm that the A. E. G. had bought up).

Such is Berlin, the ultra-modern capital, where bad taste has attained the proportions of an epic.

. . . . . .

To " make a hit " is the aim of those who are in any way in the public eye. The Emperor's extravagant language, his constant volte-faces, his political incoherence, his fancy-dress progress from North Cape to Jerusalem are nothing but manifestations of the mind of modern Germany; and his subjects follow his example religiously. Everyone plays to the gallery. It is indeed Vanity Fair, where ambition wears spangled tights and even talent struts as on a stage.

The individual who is still little known shouts by himself as loudly as he can. Once he has attained success, he has an orchestra and his imitators and flatterers follow in his wake. These, with their trumpets and their big drum, produce a deafening tumult.

About 1908, Weingartner, *Hofkapellmeister* at Berlin, was summoned to Vienna to conduct at the Opera. He broke his contract with the Prussian Court and was heavily fined. His reign at Vienna was short, as he showed an excessive interest in a singer of little talent, an obsession which brought him unpopularity. He was forced, therefore, to resign. Weingartner was undeniably a good conductor, and many people wanted to get him back to Berlin to run a series of symphony concerts. Unfortunately the tribunal, which had fined him for breach of contract, had forbidden him for ten years to appear as orchestral conductor in

Berlin or within fifteen miles of the city. A certain impresario hired a large concert hall at Fürstenwald, an insignificant place, sixteen miles from Berlin. A service of express trains was organised, twenty minutes there, twenty minutes back. The railway tickets included the price of the concert. A wild advertisement prepared the public. These symphony concerts were a prodigious triumph, and the whole of smart Berlin made the pilgrimage to Fürstenwald to cheer the persecuted conductor.

The same "boosting" has welcomed the recent productions of Richard Strauss. This musician's exaggerated reputation dates from the production of *Salomé* and the *Rosenkavalier*. It is interesting to note that before these productions no insult was bad enough for him. His first appearances as musician were difficult enough. He had talent, and while he was forced to struggle he remained an artist, but from the day when he became a master, he was an artist no longer. The whole press was at his service. Hardly had he started on a new work than the papers published daily paragraphs, hinted indiscreetly at the progress of the composition, dragged in little rags of interviews. For ten or twelve months before the work appeared the name of Strauss was in every great daily. A masterpiece was prophesied; the readers were kept informed of every new element in the future Opera; the demigod had invented a new instrument in order to get a special sound; the names of the painters who were designing the costumes were given; there were

endless discussions as to which tenors and which sopranos would receive the unforgettable honour of interpreting the master's thought; the price was announced which the theatrical manager had paid for the right of the first performance; every musical pundit was mobilised. . . . All this pretentious rubbish used to make me sick enough, but I had my amusement when the mountain brought forth the mouse, when, for example, after all the hullabaloo, a stupefied public was privileged to listen to *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Simplicissimus did not fail to make fun of this absurd adulation. *Strauss*, translated, means "ostrich," and Gulbransson represented the composer in the form of this engaging bird. The theatre managers and the fashionable musical critics were shown examining the creature, trying with magnifying glasses to judge the size of the new egg that she was going to lay. Finally, when the egg, crowned with laurels, fell to the ground, the whole poultry-run of journalists and professors clucked and crowed aloud, the cocks (every one a portrait) shrieking the marvel to the world, each from his dunghill.

. . . . . .

In many cases artists have become, despite themselves, the central figures in this advertisement mania. Indeed artistic manners in modern Germany are largely regulated by innumerable impresarios who swarm in all the great centres. These pushing and unscrupulous individuals are constantly on the watch for anything likely to increase the commercial value

of a man's personality, for any scandal of a kind calculated to excite public curiosity. If none can be found, they are invented.

Celebrity pays better in Germany than in any other country in Europe. This is partly a result of decentralisation, of the autonomy of each of the different countries which make up the Confederation. Each great city has its newspapers, its magazines, its concerts, its theatres, its independent artist life. A play which has been successfully performed at Berlin or Munich, is immediately bought and produced at Cologne, Hamburg, Leipzig, Dresden, Königsberg, Breslau, Posen, Nürnberg, Barmen-Elberfeld, Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Vienna, Graz, Prague, Budapest, Hanover, Stuttgart and Bremen. I have listed merely the towns of at least 300,000 inhabitants. There are fifty others which, although not so populous, are far from negligible, for example, Weimar, Darmstadt, Freiburg i/Br., Rostock, Lübeck, Danzig, Halle, Heidelberg, Mainz, Wiesbaden, Stettin, Chemnitz, and others.

Every royal or grand-ducal princeling has his court theatre, richly subsidised from the monarch's private purse. The municipal theatres of big towns like Düsseldorf, Cologne or Leipzig receive annual subsidies of between 600,000 and 900,000 marks.

One can see clearly, therefore, the immense field open to the active impresario, which is all the greater if one includes the countries not purely Austro-German but largely under Germanic influence. Holland, German Switzerland, Scandinavia, Poland, and, just

before the war, even Petrograd and London,[1] were more or less monopolised by German theatrical and musical enterprise. Finally the United States, with its immense German-American population, naturally welcomed anything coming from the Fatherland.

The rapid industrial growth of the German Empire has evidently not been without effect on music, literature, drama and the arts. Amusement has been organised like society, finance and politics. Bluff and conceit ruled on the boards and in the concert halls, as at the Prussian Court, in the Imperial offices or in the Reichstag. The national soul was drunk with its own importance.

Before the war, Moïssi, one of Reinhardt's company, gave recitations, at the end of which he was literally covered with flowers by the ladies and girls of the audience, and almost crushed by these people's struggle to touch the border of his garment. This Italian, who a few years before could hardly speak German at all, became the idol of Germany and the object of the most extravagant adoration. More than once the police had to intervene to stop these scandalous exhibitions.[2]

[1] Of recent years before the war Petrograd had every year a highly popular German season at the Michel theatre. Further, Max Reinhardt had won enormous success both there and at Moscow. In London the music season was almost exclusively German controlled, whereas Reinhardt visited the English capital on several occasions, and even found financial support there. Vollmöller's *Miracle* was performed at Olympia every evening for a month before 10,000 spectators.

[2] Moïssi, who is of purely Italian descent, has denied his native land and become Lieutenant of Reserve in the German army. He is under the personal protection of the Crown Prince. While the latter was in Champagne, Moïssi was with him every evening at

Every large town of Germany made a point of engaging Caruso. Skilful advertisement sent the prices of seats up to a fantastic figure. On one occasion, Emmy Destinn was given 50,000 marks to sing in a cage full of lions. This achievement also was trumpeted far and wide. Eugen d'Albert was to give, one winter, six recitals in the hall of the *Philharmonie* at Berlin, and, in order to fill the hall with the necessary five thousand auditors, d'Albert's manager filled the newspapers with the musician's matrimonial adventures, his six marriages and his five divorces, an inspiration which enabled the prices of the seats to be doubled, and the famous pianist to receive 4000 marks an evening.

Another celebrated impresario, Grosz, launched Isadora Duncan in a manner equally original. He arrived one day with the dancer at Munich, at which place she was entirely unknown. The first performance, widely advertised, attracted considerable attention, as the manager had cleverly laid great stress on the scanty costume worn by the performer. The Censorship, in a panic, forbade the entertainment to be given. Immediately Grosz went to every newspaper office in the city, rousing the Press in his favour. He put Isadora Duncan, in her filmiest costume but wrapped in a large cloak, into a carriage and drove her, without more ado, to the well-known painters: Lenbach, Stück and Kaulbach. The young woman danced before each one of these great men, and Grosz slid a

headquarters, and sang to him with a guitar, French, German and Italian songs. He was taken prisoner by the French, but was exchanged.

paper into their hands, asking them to sign on the spot a declaration that the performance was purely artistic and not indecent. Charmed by the skill of the dancer and the persuasive manners of the manager, the painters signed, the newspapers reproduced the declaration, and, as the Munich Court is respectful of artistic opinion, the prohibition was removed. There could of course have been no better advertisement. Isadora Duncan was immediately famous throughout the whole Empire.

Grosz took a pride in overcoming difficulties. Walking one day in the suburbs of Budapest, his native city, he heard someone playing a violin. He stopped surprised, listened, and then, ringing at a little house, asked the old woman who opened the door the name of the player. It was young Vecsey, the old woman's son and an infant prodigy at the time unknown. It only took Grosz an hour to tie the mother down to a contract by which she handed over her son entirely to Grosz for two years in return for an annual payment of 6000 crowns. The first year Grosz netted 80,000 crowns, and the second 170,000. The poor little prodigy, ignorant of the way in which he was being exploited, was rushed over Europe with his mother and his manager. The child's chief amusement was to go up and down in the lifts at the luxurious hotels in which he was lodged. He used to make great friends with the lift boys. One evening I went to his room before the concert, and found him playing with lead soldiers on a corner of the table.

The lust for sensation had invaded also the music-hall and the circus. The former tried to snatch the stars from the legitimate theatre and from the concert stage by paying huge prices, sometimes 25,000 marks a month. The latter, fearing that its sun had set with the rise of Reinhardt and his Greek tragedy, tried to raise the tone of its performances by producing stuff with pretensions to literature and musical value, in which clowns, horses and strange beasts were accessories to a wild and fantastic plot.

Bonn, one of William II's favourite actors and notorious on account of a sensational love affair[1] determined to outdo Reinhardt. He carried Shakespeare to the circus and selected a play in which he could caracole in the middle of the stage, clothed from head to foot in golden armour and mounted on a magnificent charger. Any actor engaged by him must be familiar with horsemanship. The rest was of little importance. Strange advertisements appeared in the Berlin Press :

" Young actors wanted, familiar with stable work." The climax of the performance was a battle, in which twenty-five horses galloped into the circus down a sloping road between enormous trees. Bonn managed to break his leg, and the whole Empire marvelled at this misfortune which, if it contributed little to art, at least made the comedian famous.

[1] When he was actor at the Court Theatre, Munich, Bonn ran away with a Bavarian princess, a niece of the Prince Regent. At Berlin, the Emperor put him in charge of the *Berliner Theater*, where he played pieces founded on Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories, and written in collaboration with his imperial Maecenas.

It was about this time that I wrote, in collaboration with H. H. Evers, a play, the action of which took place in the Indies. *Herr Commissionsrat* Schumann, owner of the Circus Schumann, was anxious to follow the fashion in the fare he provided for his clients. Unfortunately his horse-coper's mind could not grasp our dramatic intentions. He accepted our play, because of its luxurious setting and because the idea of bringing on elephants in the first act and planting red ibis in a marble vase in the third act, caught his fancy. He insisted, however, on introducing a patriotic scene with a Zeppelin in the final tableau. I transcribe literally our conversation, which took place in the director's little room, well within reach of the smell of the stables.

"But, gentlemen, I assure you that a Zeppelin is exactly the ending required. It is very popular and very up-to-date."

"No doubt, no doubt, but surely it is difficult to introduce a dirigible into an Arabian Night!"

"Well, of course, I am not a man of ideas like you. Horses are what I know about, but I can judge the taste of my public. I express myself badly, but this is how I see the matter, if I may venture to make a suggestion . . .?"

"My dear sir, please tell us exactly your idea."

"Very well, then. Why shouldn't we arrange that at the end of the play the English in India are to send a regiment to fight the Maharajah. You can easily find some excuse for bringing that in. During the

battle, Count Zeppelin arrives in an airship. I have a splendid device for making the thing move——"

"Yes, of course, but . . ."

"Allow me to explain. One might perhaps underline the effect by a touch of allegory; for instance, have the dirigible with a face of Germania. She will wink at old Zeppelin and try to carry on with him—sort of pantomime you know—and from down below in the car of the Zeppelin the old man will reply with gestures and point to his white beard:

"'You see I am an old man. I am too old for that sort of thing.'

The public will be delighted. Then Germania, deeply moved, will kiss the old gentleman on the forehead. The orchestra will break into "*Deutschland über alles*," and the Count will throw bombs on top of the English, who will all be conquered . . . !"

I can absolutely swear that this is the literal truth. This conversation, between a Berlin circus director and two authors, of whom one was a Frenchman, is gospel fact. We had all the trouble in the world to get old Schumann to give up his idea. Incidentally, the conversation is not uninteresting as proving that two years before the war Berlin looked forward with some pleasure to scattering Zeppelin bombs on the English.

I had nearly forgotten the cinematograph. This in its turn had distended itself to the utmost possible extent, like the frog who wanted to be as large as the ox. The Germans, when they exaggerate or, by sudden intensification, spoil the whole proportion of any in-

stitution, use a truly delicious word : *veredeln*, literally, " to ennoble," which expression in itself sums up their complete lack of sensibility. Any attempt to introduce into the music-hall serious dramatic or musical interest is *veredeln den Tingel-Tangel.* Shakespeare, Sophocles or Goethe are to be transplanted to the circus ? *Man veredelt den Circus.* They never seem to realise that such ill-judged promiscuity is mere vulgarity, for they are like a parvenu family, confusing ostentation with distinction.

The Germans, therefore, determined *veredeln* the cinema, which they call in popular language the *Kientopp.* Big film factories hired the managers of fashionable theatres, collected the prominent authors of the moment and placarded each picture palace façade with huge red-lettered names : Hoffmansthal, Vollmöller, Paul Lindau, Gerhardt Hauptmann. The last-named was paid 40,000 marks for the filming of his novel *Atlantis.* Reinhardt departed to Italy and Spain with a troupe of painters, writers and actors to film, among other things, the *Isle of the Blessed* at the cost of about two million marks. The programme of a smart picture palace gave summarized biographies of the various collaborators. Their home life was shown on the screen, so as to put the public at ease with their idols. The next step was to engage, at immense salaries, popular actors and actresses. Tilly Durieux, Moïssi, Wegener, Basserman, Gertrud Eysoldt, Bonn, and others, won new triumphs and wide advertisement by playing extravagant dramas written

specially for their performance. The cinema sought to outstrip the theatre, to absorb and finally to stifle it. New buildings were required, in proportion to these ambitions. Picture theatres fitted with every imaginable luxury sprang up in wealthy quarters of the capital. Built of marble, heavily gilded, furnished with valuable carpets, rare pictures, the very latest furniture, each one with a brilliantly upholstered vestibule, these theatres threw open every evening their great bronze doors, while, in the glitter of the illuminated porch, attendants in eccentric livery hurried to and fro. Lithographed posters by the most famous artists covered the walls of Berlin and the stations of the underground. The first night of a special film at a really smart picture palace had all the pomp of an opera first night, with an invisible orchestra, a well-known conductor and specially written overture. Writers, composers, painters and actors, were alike drawn into this whirlpool of ambition, dazed by advertisement and, more than anything, by the pecuniary rewards.

The *Bioscop Gesellschaft* had six palaces at Berlin ; the *Union Gesellschaft* had eight, and *Cines*, an Italo-German Co., with already three of the largest picture palaces in Berlin, had, just before the war, built on the Nollendorfplatz a palace of unheard-of luxury, the inauguration of which made a genuine sensation. The manager confided to me that the company was backed by an important bank at Rome and added, as he showed off to me the marvels of his establishment :

"All this kind of thing is paid for by the Pope's money."[1]

All the great cities of Germany followed the example of Berlin. The Cinema Companies mentioned bought sites and opened branch establishments. More and more the movement was showing the characteristics of a Trust.

Then, only a few months before the war, the whole thing crashed. The exorbitant payment of the writers, musicians, painters, actors, managers, the foolish waste of money caused by the production of certain films, which involved the trailing of whole companies of performers to the most distant corners of the world, hurled the enterprise to inevitable disaster. One bankruptcy followed another, while the ordinary comic and patriotic film and the unpretentious playlet quietly reappeared. The sumptuous palaces were ungilded, became skating rinks, halls for Tango teas, or cabarets. Often, in pine woods, there is met with in some damp hollow a vast and brilliant toadstool; a touch of the foot and it crumbles into powder. The hectic life of pre-war Germany was full of sudden showy growths, which at a touch dissolved into nothing.

. . . . . .

In all this posturing and feverish activity there was no sincerity. No definite end or ideal actuated their fitful course; deception of others went hand in hand with self-deception, for a lie is the foundation of German society. A forged telegram provoked the war

[1] The bank in question was, as a matter of fact, speculating with Papal funds.

of 1870 and false news of an air raid on Nürnberg was made the excuse, in 1914, for the opening of hostilities. Forty-five years ago as much as to-day insincerity swayed the critical moment of German policy. Hypocrisy has flourished during this period of apparently irresistible development, but, grown in lies, such artificial culture can but fade and wither away.

Even German science is not always sincere, becoming for many ambitious people a means of advertisement, or, as it were, a gaudy covering in which to trick out fashionable trifles. Many learned men strut like comedians, and, like comedians, have their stage and their public.

Doctor Schrenk-Nortzing, Professor of Medicine at Munich and a famous specialist in nervous diseases, launched on the German theatres a dream dancer who earned a large salary for herself and considerable scientific advertisement for her patron. Schrenk-Nortzing also wrote an illustrated book of six hundred pages about the experiences of Madame Alexandre Bisson. He lent his name to Spiritualism, and under his authority, imposture of the most flagrant kind was practised. Constantly people wondered whether the famous doctor was really taken in by all this. However that may be, it was all advertisement.[1]

Doctor Magnus Hirschfeld specialised in sexual anomalies. He appeared as expert in every scandalous

[1] Haeckel, Lambrecht, Ostwald and Mommsen, with their exaltation of brutal force and of pan-Germanism, are suffering from this same obsession. All their extremism is calculated. Not even Ehrlich, with his 606, was free from that element in German intellectualism which is really self-advertisement.

lawsuit. He was full of indulgence for unnatural vice. Every year he wrote books, which had all the lure of suppressed novels. He affected a particular appearance of his own, with a pale face and long brown curls, tapering fingers and a costume at once expensive and effeminate.

Another old gentleman set out to prove, in a work of incredible dullness, that the new-born babe in feeding at the breast is only obeying an obscure erotic instinct. This book was entitled *Das Erotismus in Kinderleben.* Teuton pedantry delighted in this kind of sensational paradox. Cynism, Satanism, Eroticism, Sadism, Masochism became fashionable catch-words. To attract attention every intellectual juggled dexterously with theories of the kind. Any psychical monstrosity became something to be boasted of in public. Moral depravity was one of the best proofs of Kultur.

H. H. Evers, who was much influenced by Edgar Poe, gave lectures on the Marquis de Sade, as well as on Satan himself. His female hearers were delighted, and he has become the object of the most extravagant adoration. All over Germany he paraded his "blue-eyed Sadism," in the charmingly ironical words of Ch. Muller.

Some dramatists, even those of genuine talent, made a point of endowing the characters in their plays with extravagant bestiality. Exaggeration was essential in order to attract attention.[1]

[1] I am sorry to say that this applies to Frank Wedekind more than to anyone else. His first appearances at the *Elf Scharfrichter* at Munich, were rejected by the crowd, and the author barely succeeded in imposing his personality on his hearers. *Frühlingser-*

As for the public, they had really lost all sense of comprehension. The normal no longer meant anything to them, accustomed as they were to see nothing but the abnormal and the extreme. They had their ears deafened by the big drum of fashionable quackery.[1]

Reputations were made by scandal alone, with the result that the German intellectual had no thought beyond the preservation of the pose which won him public notice. He never took off his mask.

Wedekind was one evening with a friend in a Munich

wachen, Erdgeist, Die Büchse der Pandora, So ist das Leben, Hidalla, have undeniable originality, despite their occasional lack of proportion. Once successful and idolised by the public, Wedekind made a point of preserving the pose of a hunted animal. He liked to set himself up as a misunderstood genius, forced to play the clown in order to earn a miserable livelihood. This pose grew on him and came to dominate his life and his work. He had the idea of playing himself the chief parts in his dramas, although he was entirely without dramatic talent. He was thus personally on the stage during the tempestuous first performances of his various works. His knees trembled, his face was livid with nervous excitement, but he persisted in subjecting himself to this cruel experience until one would have said that he found a kind of inverted pleasure in exposing himself, alike as author and actor, to public contempt. Of course, in the end, these sensational fiascoes proved the best possible advertisement. In his latest play, *Samson,* a Biblical drama, played at the Lessing Theater a year before the war, he appeared himself in the part of the hero. Samson is shown as the poet whom no one understands, deceived by women, exploited by everybody and left with the fall of the curtain, blind and mocked by every Philistine, painfully grinding a mill at Gaza.

[1] The German language itself, which should be the traditional interpreter of a nation's thought, has been turned upside down by the modern writers' lust for innovation. What is written now is not really German. All nobility, restraint and purity of style have disappeared. A strange, contorted syntax ; a wrong use of foreign words ; a passion for repetition have transformed a fine old language into a pretentious jargon which, if old Buffon's words are true, " Style is the man," is a sure sign of the irremediable decadence of the German mind.

restuarant, in which a number of Prussian students were holding revel. One of them was laying down the law in a loud voice about German literature and remarked, with the unmistakable, nasal twang of a Berliner :

" There is only one German poet and that is Spielhagen."[1]

Wedekind got up, walked to the student's table, and said quietly :

" You are a sad example of heredity."

" What the devil do you mean ? " replied the student rudely.

" Merely that it is quite evident that your grandfather was a *crétin* and your father an imbecile."

The student's only reply was to smash his beer mug over Wedekind's head. Blood poured forth. A doctor was fetched and bandaged the unfortunate author as best he could. While he was being patched up, Wedekind made this wholly admirable remark :

" It is really extraordinary. It seems that nowadays it is impossible to express freely a genuine literary opinion."

The admiration simulated by many wholly Philistine Germans for Talent with a capital T, is often so blind as to have amusing results.

Grünfeld, a well-known violoncellist, was a popular figure in Berlin drawing-rooms, where his wit made him always welcome. His genius for telling amusing stories won him unlimited hospitality. One evening,

[1] A prolific writer, who has published a number of psychological novels written in a sham poetic and wholly indigestible style. Perhaps the best known is *Problematische Seelen*.

when he had been more scintillating even than usual, a certain *Kommerzienrat* enquired the name of this remarkable guest.

"What, do you not know? That is the famous Grünfeld."

The *Kommerzienrat*, being entirely ignorant of musical matters, had never even heard of Grünfeld and jumped to the conclusion that the master was a drawing-room entertainer. He assumed that the host of the evening had hired Grünfeld to amuse the guests, and he decided to give his own guests a similar treat at the first opportunity.

He enquired therefore:

"Is there any chance of one being able to engage him for an evening?"

The other, thinking that the *Kommerzienrat* was planning a musical evening and knowing that his friend Grünfeld sometimes performed at very select private parties, replied:

"Oh, no doubt. Offer him a thousand marks. He will come."

The *Kommerzienrat* immediately got himself introduced to Grünfeld, and the following conversation took place:

"My wife and I are shortly giving an evening party. We shall be much honoured if you would be good enough to appear. You will forgive me if I touch on a somewhat delicate question with apparent abruptness, but I gather from our host to-night that—er—your terms are—a thousand marks . . . ?"

The musician bowed.

"Thank you very much," he said, "I have only one request to make. Would you be good enough, on the day in question, to send to my house for my violoncello. It is such a clumsy thing for me to carry about."

"Good heavens," shouted the *Kommerzienrat* in astonishment, "do you play the 'cello as well . . . ?"

. . . . . .

Munich is, perhaps, the only German city in which it is still possible to find a little simplicity and kindness. Expressing, as it does, the character of Southern Germany, so different from that of Prussia, the town has always been liked by foreigners, who find there an easy hospitality and a welcome at once kindly and discreet. There is a sense of old tradition, alike about the broad avenues and the narrow and picturesque streets. Both people and things speak of a rich past, and the ancient buildings impart to the city an air of geniality, born of many memories. In Munich has taken refuge that Germany of simplicity and dreams, which Europe could have loved, if she had been strong enough to resist the influence of her northern oppressors. I do not think that her inhabitants, the crowds that fill the taverns and the restaurants, are more intelligent than in other parts; doubtless they are most of them Philistines; but at least they do not pretend to be anything else. Also they have an innate respect for artists and understand that the reputation of their city is based upon their poets and painters of the past and the Princes who protected them. Ludwig II, that romantic monarch, is still held in affectionate

veneration in the country districts. Many of the old mountain peasants do not believe that he is dead, and look forward to his reappearance to give back to his country its vanished splendour and independence. They can remember the time when postilions carrying torches galloped in front of the royal carriage along the snow-covered roads, as the Prince, melancholy and silent under his heavy furs, travelled to his fantastic castles of Neuschwanstein or Hohenschwangau. . . .

The power of living in the past is characteristic of the Bavarian race, tenacious alike in its admiration, its respect and its hatred. I will tell one little story, which illustrates well enough the touching regard felt by the humble Bavarian for the artist.

There was once an old man called Aschbé, who had, near the Beaux-Arts at Munich, an academy of painting, which was largely attended. He was credited with considerable talent, although he no longer produced any work of his own. In his studio the same unfinished landscape had stood for many years on the easel ; now and again he would work at it idly for a few minutes. He must anyhow have been a good teacher, for his pupils thought great things of him and some of them achieved fame. He lived a simple, bachelor life ; every evening, when his pupils had gone, he shut up the studio, put on a large felt hat, lit his porcelain pipe and trotted out to some little restaurant in the neighbourhood for his frugal dinner. There he would sit the whole evening, drinking a considerable quantity of red wine in the company of his old friends.

Everyone who has lived in Munich knows these charming little taverns where one sits at a bare table drinking sour Tyrolese wine in the dim light of the hanging lamp. The waitress will stop here and there, to talk in her musical and slow dialect with the habitués of the place. Old prints hang on the wall showing the ancient quarters of Munich and the strange costume of her dead citizens. On the ledge of the wooden dado which runs round the room, stand old pewter pots, horn lanterns, chased goblets, carved wooden figures. Through a little buttery-hatch, curtained with muslin, a glimpse is caught of the kitchen with its gleaming pans and glowing fire. An appetising smell of sausage, sauerkraut and brown bread permeates the restaurant.

Old Aschbé loved these little restaurants and was a faithful customer, reserving a special day for each one. His place was kept for him and, as soon as he entered, the waitress would greet him, take his overcoat, bring the evening paper, fetch his wine and look after his various needs. Then the patron or his wife would come and bid him welcome :

" *Gruass Good, Herr Kunstmaler.*"

They knew that he was an artist and also that he was a regular customer. They regarded his faithful coming as an honour to the house.

But there came a week when Aschbé was seen at none of his favourite restaurants. The waitresses and landlords were alike anxious. The painter was ill and the doctor forbade him both tobacco and wine. Finally the poor old man died, alone in his corner and refusing to see anyone. In his studio was found quite a little

fortune, hidden away in various places. There was gold in every jar, in every box, between the boards of the floor ; banknotes were found hidden in books or behind pictures.

His funeral was as picturesque as had been his life and his death, for it was attended by painters, writers, and actors, as well as by all the waitresses who had served him, and the proprietors of the taverns which he had frequented.

In each of the seven favourite restaurants (one for each day of the week) pious hands hung on the wall above the place where he used to sit, a photograph of the old man, crowned with laurel and draped with black. Strangers would ask the meaning of this, and the patronne would reply :

" That is where Aschbé the painter used to sit every Tuesday and drink seven glasses of wine."

. . . . . .

Of recent years cosmopolitanism has changed the character of Munich. Too many foreigners came with their Baedeker to visit this interesting city, and in their wake they brought speculators ready to exploit the visitors. Great hotels sprang up. Ernst von Possart, director of the Court theatres, assured the Wittelsbach that Munich could compete with Bayreuth and tempt away from Wahnfried the crowd of snobs, dilettantes and music lovers by offering them the same fare in larger quantities. *The Prinzregententheater* was opened, and performances of Wagner and Mozart[1]

[1] Mozart's operas were played in the charming eighteenth-century *Residenz Theater*.

enabled the promoters to speculate advantageously in the property surrounding the new theatre.

Then Berlin took the matter in hand. Finding the natives of Munich too unenterprising, the Prussian capital decided to undertake the modernising of the "Athens on the Isar." Exhibition grounds were opened, offering every kind of attraction. Reinhardt, with his troupe and his noisy advertisement, invaded the place. Munich was flooded with north Germans, at once arrogant and absurd. Fortunately for the city, the invasion only lasted during the few weeks which are called the Visitors' Season. Quite early in autumn the old simple life set in once more. The people of Berlin went back to their revolting capital, saying contemptuously :

"The Bavarian hills are charming enough, but they would be much more delightful if they were near Berlin."

. . . . . .

Every ten years the Passion Play at Oberammergau throws into a fever that Bavarian mountain village near the lake of Murnau. The natives of Oberammergau live almost entirely on the influx of visitors from every corner of the world. In the interval they study and rehearse their play, carving in their leisure moments little wooden statues, which they sell to the visitors. The parts, allotted with the utmost care, leave an indelible mark on those to whom they are entrusted. As they work in the fields, leading their oxen or gathering in their hay, it is easy to recognise Judas, Joseph, the Christ, Mary Magdalene, Martha, the Roman Centurion, Herod, Caiaphas or Barabbas.

The Virgin Mary is chosen from among the first Communion candidates. She is strictly guarded, for the rustic life is full of surprises. The Christ is less severely controlled, but the wonder of his part certainly ennobles his person.

There are few things more strange than this little village of rustic players, waiting for ten years to give their performance under the management, as it were, of the local priest. The Passion Play lasts for three days and is repeated several times. The theatre is a great barn with an open end, so that the view of mountains and pasture land forms a natural scene. The powerful handling of the crowds, the solemn elocution of the speaking characters have a simple majesty and a dramatic intensity, which is quite extraordinary.

But even here advertisement has come to spoil. The greater the crowd of visitors with their wealth, the greater the corruption of the villagers. The Virgin cuts off her curls and sells them. Barabbas and the Christ have been tempted to go to America and display themselves. No doubt Berlin chuckles in its sleeve. . . .

. . . . . .

When the war broke out the German Vanity Fair was at its height. The clash has dispersed the clownish performers, but their spirit is not dead. It appears to-day in their propaganda and their methods of warfare. They show the same bluff, the same insincerity, the same hope of intimidating their opponents, the same theatricality.

A few days ago I was visited by a little French

teacher, who had just come back from Germany. Without family, friends or money, she had been surprised there by mobilisation, and had stayed twelve months at Düsseldorf with an old lady who had taken pity on her and obtained from the authorities leave for the girl to stay in her house. Strangely enough, the old lady was the mother of Hans Heinz Evers, the writer of whom I have spoken before. The girl was allowed to go about freely enough and, every day, would buy at the kiosk in the square a French paper, for in those days the Germans sold openly all Allied newspapers. She watched the daily round of life, the pride of the early days of the struggle, the gradual fading of cherished hopes, the coming of doubt and fear ; but her French soul suffered so cruelly from what she saw and what she heard, that she returned to her own country at the first possible opportunity.

From her I have been able to picture the lot of a large number of German intellectuals. They have been largely used by the Government to trumpet to the four quarters of the universe the glory of Germany, her victories and her generosity. They are not reporters or journalists who accompany the armies at the Front, but writers of reputation, novelists, poets, playwrights. They have become the lackeys of the general staff, for their opinion is thought to have weight with the public. The Emperor rains honours upon them, to keep them faithful. He gives them their life, freeing them from all military duty, on condition that they put at his disposal their influence and their reputation ; and so they trick out massacre in ribbons, explain away

murder and arson, affect a lyrical humanitarianism, which is sheer hypocrisy. They stress the fact that they are purely objective in their comment and that their souls can rise above the battle.

Herbert Eulenberg, a love poet, writes to his newspaper pathetically :

" Our love for the French has always been unhappy."

He forgets that German love is not unlike that of the bear, and that his fellow-countrymen, when they embrace, are apt to smother the object of their affection.

H. H. Evers, as ever a globe trotter, has been busy in America or Spain, prophesying German triumph, depreciating the allied effort, trying to sow doubt in the mind of the timid. And all the time he drenches the Fatherland with patriotic novels and poems.

Before the war, he used to talk in his books so much about himself, that both his friends and enemies knew all the details of his private life, were familiar with his mother at Düsseldorf, with the little house in which she lived and in which her son would visit her from time to time. Evers loved to make play with his filial piety, because it formed a striking contrast to the Sadism and cynicism which was his usual pose.

This is the description of his mother's house which he gives in one of his novels :

" In these rooms there was no unity of style ; merely a collection of things brought together by the chance of years. But the result was peaceful and harmonious for one felt that these were the belongings of a single and united household.

" He climbed to the rooms set apart for him by his mother. Everything was just as he had left it two years before—not a paper weight out of place, not a chair disarranged. Here, more than anywhere else, was confusion on the floor and on the walls. Every quarter of the globe had contributed to the fantastic crowd of furnishings; great masks, barbarous monsters from the Bismarck Archipelago, flags from China and Annam, weapons from every country, trophies of the chase, stuffed animals, jaguar and tiger skins, great turtle shells, snakes, crocodiles, drums from Luçon, stringed instruments from Rajpootana, guzlas from Albania.

" From ceiling to floor hung an immense red net full of giant sea-anemones and shell fish. The furniture was draped with brocades, Indian silk robes, Spanish lace mantillas, Chinese cloaks embroidered with golden dragons. There was a collection of idols, of gilded Buddhas of every size, of Sivas, Krishnas, Ganesas, and a few stone figures, grotesque and obscene. The walls were completely covered with etchings and drawings; an indecent Rops, a few savage Goyas, a little Callot; and then Cruikshank, Hogarth and a few brilliantly coloured prints from Gamboge or Mysore.

" Everything bore the unmistakable mark of Frank Braun.[1]

" It was his bullet that had killed this white bear; he himself had caught this shark, which seemed to be

[1] This is the name given by Evers to the hero of the novel, who is, of course, himself,

tearing the mesh of the net with its powerful teeth ; he had himself collected these poisoned darts and spears from the savages of Brukha ; a Manchu priest had given him these extraordinary idols and this great silver cross ; this black stone he had, with his own hand, stolen from a temple. From this calabash his lips had drunk the blood of brotherhood with the chief of the Toba Indians on the marshy banks of Pilcomayo. He had bartered his best gun with a Malay Sultan at Borneo for these curved swords, while his pocket chess board had won him these rapiers from the Viceroy of Shantung. These marvellous Indian carpets had been offered him by the Maharajah of Vigatpuri, while this eight-armed Durga, stained with the blood of kids and of men, he had received from the High Priest of the awful Kâli. . . ."

This same Evers has just published in Berlin a highly successful book.

It begins :

" My mother is an old woman living on the banks of the Rhine. . . ."

and this sing-song refrain appears like a *leitmotiv* at fixed intervals.[1]

Evers describes the old lady's house, thrown into confusion by the awful war. The silence of his own sanctuary has been violated, for everywhere there are beds and in these beds lie wounded men—here a Pomeranian, there a Bavarian, there a Saxon—twenty in all in the house. His mother runs from bed to

[1] The phrase is not original. It is taken from one of Heine's poems, *Deutschland kann verderben*.

bed, from room to room, bending her white head over the humble sufferers, tireless in her care and in her sympathy. . . .

Evers himself is far from his treasured belongings, living in exile. Hateful England has deprived him even of the possibility of corresponding regularly with his mother. Grief has invaded that quiet house and the tortured peasant soldiers let their fevered eyes wander over the fantastic objects hanging on the walls.

Reading these poignant pages, Germany was almost suffocated with emotion. For who had not heard (many times) of that old mother of Evers at Düsseldorf and the writer's strange and exotic possessions ?

Indeed Vanity Fair is not yet dead.

However, at Düsseldorf itself there were a few who were curious enough to investigate for themselves ; and they found that the old house was quite silent and quiet, for there were no wounded, and no beds, and no care, and no sympathy.

Only in one room was there a young French girl, deserted and miserable, made to pay dearly by German pride for her precarious refuge. At every new victory, the door opened and the mother of Hans Heinz Evers, " the old woman living on the banks of the Rhine," would put her head in and remark, with insolent solemnity :

" Maubeuge has fallen, my dear."

" We have taken Lille, little one."

" Rheims is burned to the ground, my child."

And the girl saw, shining in the eyes of the German, lust for the blood of France,

EPILOGUE. A LETTER FROM A GERMAN INTELLECTUAL

What of the German intellectuals?—Three voices: Liebknecht, *J'accuse*, Carl von Levetzow—Levetzow's letter: Luther, the evil genius of Germany.

DESPITE the horrors of a war which has transformed into enemies of humanity, justice and right, more than seventy million human beings, it must be admitted that if the German Emperor, before letting loose the plague which is now decimating Europe, had sought the consent by plebiscite of his subjects, that consent, by an immense majority, would have been refused.

It is a mistake to think that notorious pan-Germans, such as Clausewitz, Treitschke, Bernhardi or Moltke, ever represented, before July, 1914, the general mind of Germany. They were the spokesmen of a clique, noisy enough but generally condemned. Their newspapers, financed by the famous camarilla, had but a small circulation, and the Germans themselves were amazed at the importance attributed abroad to the views therein expressed. Not one of those who lost no opportunity of pouring ridicule on this unpopular group ever seriously considered the possibility of being thrown into a war, contrary to their interests, by this very handful of screaming nobodies.

The chief among the opponents of this noisy minority were, besides the ever growing power of social democracy, the great body of liberal-minded intellectuals whose ideals and occupations could not but make them hostile to any repression of the individual conscience.

Nevertheless, the antiquated political methods of the German Confederation, which are ruled by a noisy minority, allowed the Government to plunge the whole Empire into the most bloody and unforeseen gamble which has ever been risked in history. Things were so contrived that, at the outbreak of war, barely a voice was raised in protest.

To-day Germany stands hopelessly condemned before the tribunal of the nations as slave and accomplice of the Hohenzollern. Especially so because those very people, who might with effect have opposed the crime, showed themselves the most servile of its abettors.

The German intellectuals bear therefore a heavy burden of responsibility, for, although they were armed to fight against injustice and violence, although they had on their side the power of written and spoken word, although the nation, docile as ever, was behind them, they had not the energy to gather themselves together in time and stand out against the minority. Their tragic failure is one of the darkest spots in Germany's national shame.

Often during the first months of the war, I used to think of the arguments I had had in Germany, of the writers I had known, of our talk against reactionary

and autocratic rule, against Prussian militarism and brutality. Many times I have witnessed outbursts of enthusiasm for liberty and humanity. I could see again the excited groups in the Munich and Berlin streets, and I remembered how my companions were often enough so hoarse in the evening from making speeches and singing revolutionary songs that they could hardly speak at all. Verses floated through my memory :

For three and thirty years
We were slaves.
Blood shall flow and tears.
Slay the knaves !
Cast out the harlots
From the princes' beds.
Feed the guillotine
With the princes' heads.

Or again, this allusion to Ferdinand Lassalle, the great national visionary :

He hangs from no rope,
He hangs from no tree,
He hangs from the dream
Of Germany free.

The majority of the intellectuals I had known had paid with their liberty for their boldness. Wedekind, Scharf, Hans von Gumppenberg, Oscar Panizza and others had all spent months in prison for their writings, their words or their drawings.

In 1914, during the Jubilee celebrations, Hauptmann, who a few months later was to sign the hateful

manifesto of the ninety-three German learned men, brought on himself the rage of the pan-German Press by writing a puppet play, in which he ridiculed Blücher and praised Napoleon to the skies.[1] Was it possible, I wondered, that all this intelligence I had known was so dazed that it could not instantly recognise the cause of justice ? I was amazed that no violent and collective protest had crossed the frontiers. This nation, which in peace time had a genius for co-ordinating its efforts, for founding clubs and societies in order to give weight to its theories, bowed without a murmur to the evil whim of a caste which it had, in the past, so constantly reviled. Those writers and men of learning who, a few months before the war, boasted that they were citizens of the world, now joined in the chorus of warlike trumpeting, taking upon themselves part responsibility for the crimes committed. The rest, who did not join in the orgy, kept a cowardly silence.

Months passed ; then *J'accuse* appeared. I thought to myself : At least there is one man who dares to say what he thinks, although he remains anonymous. That at any rate is something. There followed the lonely protest of Liebknecht and of those few who rallied round him ; but what a miserable minority in the face of the other side ! Poor truth, naked and trembling at the bottom of your well, when once again will you show yourself to the German people in the pitiless light of reality ?

At last there came a day when I received a letter

[1] A performance of this play at Breslau created a great scandal.

from Italy. It was from Carl von Levetzow, sprung from the old Bohemian aristocracy, educated in Germany and a writer of considerable reputation. I had known him in Munich and in Berlin. His uncle had been President of the *Reichsrat* at Vienna. Despite his fame in literary circles in Germany, Carl had always been the enemy of the German mind and of the Empire's political régime. When he was thirty years old he went to live in Provence. With the outbreak of war he refused to return to Germany and tried to enlist in the Foreign Legion. He was, however, refused because of his age and his physical condition. He accordingly retired to Genoa. His letter was so full of love for France and of a sincere desire to help in the cause of justice and of right, that I did what I could to recommend his case to the French authorities. But events followed too fast. Italy came into the war; and Carl von Levetzow was sent to Sardinia, where he was kept under surveillance. We corresponded regularly, exchanging our impressions about the war, its causes and its consequences. In one of my letters I discussed the question of the German intellectuals, and asked his opinion of the famous *Kultur*, as well as of Luther, Goethe, Schiller, Kant, Lessing, Nietzsche and of those who throughout the centuries had stood for German thought. The opinion of a German author, able to disentangle himself from his surroundings, is always interesting, and therefore I conclude this volume by publishing his reply verbatim.

BUSACHI, SARDINIA,
March, 1916.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You speak of Martin Luther and the German intellectuals. Perhaps you will allow me to give at some length my own ideas on the subject. My life in this little village gives me plenty of leisure, and I can only hope that you will find time to read what I have written and not curse me for long-windedness.

For long enough I used to consider Luther as one of the great champions of liberty. I am now beginning to regard the reformer's great reputation as unduly exaggerated. To begin with, he scotched the splendid tendency to paganism, which the Catholic Church was showing so strongly at the moment of his appearance, and this seems to me rather the act of a reactionary than of an innovator. He himself, at any rate, never denied it. Next, he was responsible for the clerical family. The social influence of the priest is necessarily limited while he lives alone and dies without children, but the priest as father of a family, with eight or nine sons to push into places of influence, is little short of a leprosy, and of this leprosy the German intellectuals are dying. Finally, Martin Luther put his religion under the protection of the armed forces of the nation, with the result that he has made a national institution out of an international power, which, despite all its faults, despite even its crimes, had the recommendation that it tended to check autocracy on the part of Kings

and Emperors. Any spiritual power was a safeguard which was able to release a people from their oath of fealty to the monarch.

If Luther had not been there to divert the current which was just then beginning to flow, Germany, like England, would have had, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, revolution in the place of the Thirty Years' War. One has only to think of Götz von Berlichingen, of Sickingen, especially of the Peasant War, and one has only to read again Luther's furious attacks on these real supporters of liberty. To sum up, the Catholic Church became more cruel and more reactionary because of Luther having lived.

It is not true that the Thirty Years' War, that first tomb of German civilisation, had the effect of guaranteeing the liberty of individual conscience. Indeed, the contrary is the truth. The principle of the Peace of Westphalia—*cujus regio illius religio*—completely abolished individual liberty to the profit of princelets and kinglets, among them the Hohenzollern, who, with Luther's sanction, perjured themselves and stole. This principle is the basis of German absolutism, and there you have the political effect of the movement.

The intellectual effect was equally disastrous for Luther's contemporaries. There were no great writers in Germany until Herder and Lessing. The nation became illiterate once again. The signature of my ancestor Gontrand von Levetzow, who lived at the time of the war, is that of an intellectual, but his son can only make three crosses as a signature, and yet this

man was, judging from his possessions, one of the most powerful noblemen of the North. His history is that of every noble of those parts. After a youth spent among the finest and oldest Universities in the world —for example, Padua—he fell back into ignorance after 1648, and from him and others of his kind spring the greedy and sordid nobodies of to-day, provincial lordlings become officers, flat-footed degenerates, cruel because they are ignorant and because they are stupid, the inevitable lackeys of Prussian autocracy.

From the purely religious point of view the evangelical liberty of Luther has divorced Germany from the Gospels. Christ, as a pacifist and communist, exists no longer. A return has been made to the Old Testament, to that bloodthirsty God which said: "Go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have," that God who caused all male prisoners, men and infants, to be massacred. These quotations do not date from the invasion of Belgium, but from Luther's tirades against German peasants.

Lutheran pastors pretend that scientific liberty dates from the great reformer. Another lie. The Protestants have lighted as many pyres as the Papists. It was not in Calvin's Geneva that Giordamo Bruno was allowed to express his ideas freely, but in France, the country of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In France alone he was able to preach his philosophy. In Germany, Luther continued the barbarous custom of burning sorcerers.

No, my friend, Luther was no genius. The ease with which he won success is proof enough of this. The geniuses of the time were Ulrich von Hutten, Hans Sachs, etc., who acclaimed Luther because they saw in him what they wished to see—a liberator. The intellectuals of those days were, like those of to-day, at the mercy of cleverness. Genius was exploited by talent.

And if the princes took such pleasure in reading the Bible and shouted: "Long live Luther!" it is because the reformer interleaved the Scriptures with morsels tempting to the royal taste. He would say to them, for instance:

"Read the Gospel and you will see that you have the right to secularise the property of the Church." A marvellous book indeed in which such advice could be found, and the kings and the nobility secularised to their heart's content. But when the peasants wished to translate the Bible in this new German manner, Luther cried:

"Stop! These bonbons are not for the rabble. They are for the lords who defend me and whom I defend. Kill these dogs of peasants, my lords! Kill them and the Kingdom of Heaven will be yours."

A fine translation of the Bible! The German mind has never recovered from its effects.

Does Luther even approach genius? Genius is single-minded and truthful, for which characteristics it is often martyred. Sometimes it has less personal courage than ordinary mortals, but it cannot lie or retract. Luther did what no single Socialist candidate

for a place in the Ministry could do. He abandoned revolution for a portfolio. He sold himself in order to become a great man. Doubtless one is more comfortable under the throne than on the bonfire, but under the throne there is only just room for talent to crouch, while over the bonfire is the whole dome of Heaven.

From Luther dates the moral decadence of Germany. No nation can live on a lie. All the great ideas of freedom have come from France and no longer from Germany. *Tartuffe* was written by a Frenchman, though grovelling before Louis XIV. Voltaire, Rousseau, Beaumarchais were all French. However abominable may have been the Revocation of the Edit of Nantes, what of tyranny did it introduce permanently into France? On the other hand, what beauty, what real freedom has Luther's "liberty of creed," established under the menace of Prussian cannon, given to Germany?

The few men of real genius who appeared in Germany after Luther owed everything to France, and this they admitted. Goethe, when at Strasburg, was on the point of abandoning the German for the French language. His only reason for refraining was that he understood that he was too old to change his native tongue. And yet, in his old age at Weimar, he admitted that he could no longer read his Werther and his first part of Faust in any form but a French translation. In Germany they ignore, on purpose, these significant confessions.

From the day when reform triumphed on the French

bank of the Rhine, there began in Germany the reign of substitutes. In every German there is an element of that maker of chicory who preferred his miserable juice to real coffee, firstly because it was cheaper and secondly because he wished to be thought unusually shrewd. A German loves the police, being by instinct a coward. He is terrified of the Apache. He prefers to abandon all liberty in order that he may pass from one tavern to another without unpleasant encounters. Is not this essentially the mentality of the spawn of a priesthood ? The Prussian will tell you :

" Certainly we are free. At any hour of the night we can go into the Tiergarten without danger, while you dare not enter the Bois de Boulogne, in that babel of Paris, without risking getting your throat cut."

The point of view is different. The French prefer to risk an awkward encounter and not be bothered day in and day out with a crowd of policemen, who order them brusquely to keep to the right. Personal safety is the German " substitute " for personal liberty. Liberty of creed, the German " substitute " for freedom of thought. Religious revolution, the German " substitute " for social revolution. The German fears and hates genius even more than the Apache, for genius, especially in Germany, is, like the Apache, outside the law. It is dangerous and horrible, because it troubles the slumber of the ordinary man and demands attention. Talent, on the other hand, is as trustworthy as is a policeman, for talent slips the handcuffs on genius after having deprived it of its weapon. That is why

in Germany there are nearly as many men of talent as there are policemen. And every one of these talents are "substitutes" for genius. Take Haeckel, for example, who showed remarkable talent as he worked on the genealogy of man, according to the formulae of Lamarck and Darwin. He becomes a capering clown when he plays at his own philosophy (read his *Welträtsel*) and discourses pompously with his colleagues Ostwald and Bruno Wille.

Such, my dear friend, is the wonderful culture inaugurated by a defrocked Augustin monk married to a defrocked Augustin nun. Note in passing the difference between Luther and Cromwell and consequently the differences between the historical results of their two revolutions, differences which would have been all the greater if Cromwell had not died prematurely.

If we skip the century which followed Luther, a blank century for Germany while France remained the torch of the world, we come to the great German intellectual Renaissance—to Herder, Wieland, Klopstock and Lessing. All were sons of pastors. Let us be just, even to our enemies. Herder showed a fine tendency towards internationalism, and was himself a person of culture and education. Result: no one in Germany reads him to-day; his work has been smothered. Wieland is a Frenchman, writing in Germany. He is full of charm, wit and learning, but his fancy is wholly Latin. He is the great German novelist, the first to be read and enjoyed by people of

taste. Result : nobody reads him to-day. He is suppressed as "*Franzoz, corrupt, schlüpfrig.*" There are nothing but women in his novels—never a single Prussian soldier ! On the other hand, Klopstock remains the great German, with his "Bardes," indigestible odes which endeavour to surpass Pindar. He hymns the virgin forests of Germany (how little virgin really !) in a ponderous metre with an accompaniment of fifes. He writes that sickening Messiad, which is to take the place of the Divine Comedy as chicory takes the place of coffee, and which is to this day the intellectual food of school boys. Poor little Boches !

But above all Lessing is founder of the new spirit, of the new German literature. The young are gorged with him—Minna von Barnhelm, that revolting catechism ; Ricault de la Marlinère, a nameless infamy. There is nothing to touch the baseness of the famous Prussian major. The money question comes in again and again with a brutality that wishes to be chic. The so-called humour of Just has the grace of a hippopotamus. The heroine, posing as an aristocrat, does not know French, a fact which produced this remark from one of the author's contemporaries :

"It is obvious that Lessing is a parson's son. He has never known really good society."

All the same, Lessing, after Luther, is the creator of German national culture. Owing everything to France, he spends his life hunting French influence out of literature, manners, fashion and behaviour. He

cries : " Down with Racine, Corneille, Molière ! " and then runs away and hastily makes a dose of his own chicory ; in other words, writes one of his plays, excellently constructed no doubt, but slavishly conceived in the French classical tradition. And on top of all this he is crowned " original genius."

Perhaps before him people were more civilised, more polite, better educated. Perhaps one still turned away when one met a spy ?

Nevertheless, Lessing was a free-thinker. His pamphlet *Anti-Goetze* and his play *Nathan der Weise* are proof of this. He was hostile to autocracy (compare *Emilia Galotti*), and after all that is something. But unfortunately this aspect of him is not taught to the rising generation.

They love to say in Germany that the Prussian schoolmasters won the battles of Leipzig and Sedan. This is probably true, but it is necessary to add that 1813 and 1871 buried German liberty and German civilisation.

The *Freiheitskriege* were merely derived from revolutionary instincts which the French Revolution had roused in Germany, and the queen, once she grasped the irritating fact that Napoleon was insensible to her allurements, cleverly caused the movement to miscarry to the profit of her husband.

If Germany, despite her schoolmasters, had remained faithful to Napoleon, or if the Emperor had won the battle of Leipzig, Europe's game would have been won. For Napoleon was only a tyrant to crowned

heads. He had at least the look of genius, and he was at least crammed with Republican ideas. Probably that is why he took so gladly to the rôle of Emperor. He would have swept away every dynasty; but the Prussian schoolmasters and the Prussian pastors prevented him.

They have thriven on their victory. The Revolutions of 1830 and 1848 were stamped out in blood, and since then the Germans have been afraid, afraid of liberty and afraid of voluntary uprising. They no longer know how to begin, and so they drink themselves stupid with beer and with theories of liberty, grouped in their *Studentenkorps*, which are an invention of the devil planned to blunt their intelligence, and, although dating technically from 1812, really originating in Wittenberg. They intoxicate themselves with false courage (*Mensuren*) and with sham theatrical magnificence (Wagner's operas, their industry, their fleet, their army).

When revolution made one last attempt to raise its head, between 1860 and 1870, the Hohenzollern found the necessary remedy—wars, and then *the war*, that of 1870; but the greatest of all defeats is called Sedan, and this last act is the apotheosis of Versailles. . . .

And from that moment onwards is decadence. From the clearness of Kant's categorical imperative; from the beauty and moral nobility of the pagan Goethe; from the generosity of much of Schiller's work (that revolutionary so shamefully emasculated by his countrymen), Germany has slipped slowly down the hill,

past the tortuous pomposity of Hebbel and the futile blatancy of Kleist, to Wagner and Nietzsche, idols who are themselves now overthrown. I do not speak of the German realism nor of the pitiful neo-romantic reaction which has produced the literature of to-day. What has resulted ? Ninety-three traitors to humanity and that is all.

I do not mean that the Germany of Goethe and Kant is dead. If that was the case, should I have been able to do what I have done and write what I am writing to you to-day ? The loneliest man in the world is never quite alone, even if he writes in German. But, though still living, this noble Germany is languishing in some distant cell, tied hand and foot, despised and buffeted by those who exploit her. She cannot and dare not arise *without help*, and that help will be national defeat.

Forgive me for writing at this tedious length. When one is a prisoner, as I am, one is apt to drivel. But if, in this rigmarole, you find a few lines likely to interest the French public, make such use of them as you think good, and my chattering will not have been altogether in vain.

Your affectionate friend,

CARL VON LEVETZOW.

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