

THE GERMANY I REMEMBER

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I

I WENT to Germany for the first time in the autumn of 1906. I had taken my degree at Edinburgh University a few months before, and it was a toss up whether I was to go to Oxford for a time, or abroad. It was my old friend Professor Saintsbury who finally made my decision for me by asking me whether I would care to go to Giessen University as Reader in English. I decided to accept the offer, and took up my duties in Giessen in September.

I found rooms in the *Grünberger Strasse*. My landlord, Herr Hassler, was tall, crop-headed, with iron grey hair. Although well past middle life, he was as erect as a Prussian Guardsman. His daughter told me one day, confidentially, that Papa had become somewhat strange in his manner owing to heavy business losses. But when I came to know him better, I wondered if it was not the other way about, and whether his alleged business losses had not been caused by his being peculiar. This droll person used to come into my sitting-room, on some pretext or other, between spells of engraving crests and coats of arms of various student corporations on the porcelain bowls of tobacco pipes, and ask me if I was busy for the moment. I always said that I was, but that made no difference. There was something he had to tell me that I ought to know. Then, in his Hessian dialect, he would din into my ears that Germany had the greatest army in the world, the biggest navy, and the finest airships. She had, too, the best merchant navy. Not that that was to be wondered at, for the All-Highest himself had told the people that Germany's future lay on the water. The French were *ein schlappes Volk* (a spineless people). In one week Germany could settle her account with the *Herr Franzos* if England would only keep out of it. Not that England could do much against German soldiers. The English had no aptitude for war. They had been spoiled by luxury and soft-living. And as for the British Army! It was a small body of professional soldiers officered by a mob of "gentlemen", who looked on war as a sport. Such an army was good enough for killing Kaffirs and bushmen. But the Boers had something to say to them. Another matter—that book, *Peter Moor's*

Fahrt nach Südwest had opened the eyes of those Germans who had not understood before the importance to Germany of her colonies. She needed them in order to obtain raw materials, and raw materials were necessary for trade. England was jealous of Germany's trade expansion, and afraid of Germany's navy, which was necessary to protect her shipping. Germany must have colonies for her surplus population. She had the largest birth rate in Europe. England had too many colonies; France had no right to have colonies at all. Germany, the land of *Kultur*, must have her place in the sun! Yes, Herr Roy was laughing at him, but . . .

Usually at this point, Fräulein Hassler put in an appearance, and pushed the apostle of *Kultur* from the room. She wished to make an explanation. If Papa had been annoying me, he really meant no harm. He really bore no malice against Englishmen—or Scotsmen. Herr Roy was a Scotsman, was he not? She had read one of Sir Walter Scott's novels at school, and her friend Fräulein Battenberg, who had once been to Edinburgh, had assured her that it was a lovely city, and that *Schottland* was such a beautiful country. But when Papa spoke like that, he had been with the students who employed him a great deal, and they had given him beer to drink. It was a cruel thing to do, as they knew what beer did to him. And when they saw him like that, they just laughed at him. The students were continually duelling and talking about war, and they had filled Papa's mind with the idea that Germany and England must go to war some day. It was a great pity that Papa talked like that. It did no one any good, and it did himself a lot of harm. It was so humiliating for the family. They had been accustomed to a much better position in society before Papa lost his money. No doubt Herr Roy would understand, and make allowances. Mamma said he was so friendly. Then she would suddenly burst into tears, and make me feel embarrassed. And the matter was ended only by Herr Hassler, and Frau Hassler, and the younger daughter, Trude, leading the weeping Fräulein away to dry her tears in the kitchen. Such scenes were very upsetting, and invariably meant a visit to the Café Skalitzy and several glasses of *Münchener* beer and a Virginia cheroot, to soothe my jangled nerves.

One of the first things I had to do was to take the oath. I appeared one morning in full evening dress before the *Rektor*. The *Rektor*, an old man with a goatee, wearing a massive chain

around his neck, after reading the terms of the oath, pulled off his white kid glove, raised his hand, and asked me to repeat after him: "*Ich schwöre bevor Gott dass ich mein Pflicht thun will, so hilf mir Gott!*" (I swear before God that I will do my duty, so help me God!). Then he bowed, shook hands with me, and I was ushered out of the Presence.

After that, the Professors of the University paid their formal calls on me. In most cases this simply meant leaving their card with Frau Hassler. Most of the calls were made on Sunday morning; I returned them the same day. The prescribed dress for calling was frock coat, silk hat, gloves, patent shoes and umbrella. To most of my formal enquiries whether the Herr Professor was at home, I received the polite answer that he was not, and the matter ended. Once, however, a servant girl, obviously fresh from the country, asked me to wait for a moment at the door while she went and enquired. A few moments later she came back and said, like a pupil repeating a lesson: "*Der Herr Professor bedauert dass er nicht zu Hause ist!*" (The Professor regrets that he is not at home!)

"You will find us all one big family here," one of my colleagues told me. They were certainly not a harmonious "big family". They were more particular about academic rank and standing than I could have believed possible. The wives were full of petty jealousies, susceptible to slights, and much given to gossip, with a limited provincial outlook on life. Still, many of them were very kind to me, and I passed many a pleasant evening in their homes.

My colleagues were able men, scholarly and learned. The position of University professors was one of unchallenged authority, but they seemed to me to lack individuality, and to be incapable of independent thinking. That was because the German Universities were State institutions, and the professors civil servants. They had taken an oath not to do, say, or write anything subversive of, or contrary to, the interests of the State. If anyone, greatly daring, had done so, he would have been dismissed. That would have meant ruin, for no other institution of learning in the *Reich* would have dared to employ a discredited teacher. It was the duty of the professors to think along lines that conformed to the policy of the State; to support the State to which they owed their livelihood. When I found that they were saturated with the teaching of Nietzsche and Treitschke, I understood why they were for the most part Anglophobes, and why there was such a deep hatred and distrust of England

among many of the younger men who had learned politics at their feet. Nietzsche taught the will to power by the methods of the jungle. He was a bitter enemy of Christianity. "Thy will be done" was changed by him into "My will at all costs." Christ taught humility; Nietzsche, self-assertion. Christ taught us to care for the poor and needy; Nietzsche preached contempt for them, declaring that the sole justification for their existence was that they were necessary for the strong. In Nietzsche's eyes weakness was a vice. It was he who wrote:

It is idle to expect much, or anything at all, from mankind, when they have forgotten how to make war. For the present we know no other means by which drowsy, decaying nations can be effectively aroused, except by those found in the rude energy of the battlefield; that deep impersonal hate; that cold-blooded murdering with a clear conscience; that common, organized, passionate joy in the annihilation of the enemy; that proud indifference to great losses, to one's own existence and that of one's friends; that deep earthquake-like shock to the soul which every great war produces. Just such a highly cultured, and therefore of necessity languid, people, as that of modern Europe requires not only wars, but the greatest and most awful of wars—that is to say, occasional lapses into barbarism.

Treitschke put Nietzsche's doctrine of individual aggression and the superman on a broader basis. Power, he asserted, was the supreme virtue; the first duty of the State was to possess power. Weakness in the State was a sin. War was the great glorifier of mankind. If there is no war, declared the "Apostle of Germanism," a nation inevitably decays. "War is one of God's ordinances." Peace was incompatible with human nature. A nation must develop brute force to aggrandize itself by war. The German State had to be united in order to obtain world domination, and world domination must be obtained at all costs. Might was right. Treitschke hated Jews and Social Democrats—the Jews because he held them responsible for the growth of Social Democracy, and Social Democracy because it threatened the unity of the German State.

Social Democracy, the religion of materialism, accepted by the masses, was not only anti-moral and anti-marriage, but aggressively anti-Christian. "Social Democracy fights against every religion and every faith", declared Herr Liebknecht, one of the leaders of the party. Herr Bebel went further. "Social Democracy is not only the opponent of dogmatic faith", he laid down, "but we aim on principle to destroy the need for religion in mankind." "Modern consciousness and modern life make

free love absolutely necessary", said another of the party leaders. And not only was the party's greatest thinker, Karl Marx, a Jew; the great majority of its leaders and writers were either Jews or in the pay of Jews. Daniel Freymann, in his book *Wenn ich der Kaiser wäre* (If I were Kaiser) put his case thus:

Those who desire to get a true insight into the danger which Social Democracy means for the Empire must be quite clear on this point, that the wholesale poisoning of German voters would have been utterly impossible without the help of the Jews. They are the real leaders of the movement, and those upon whom the hopes for social destruction rest belong also to this people.

Political feeling ran high in Germany in those days. I remember coming home one evening from the *Kegelbahn*, or Skittle Alley, and stopping to look at a fire in a bakery. The fireman had almost mastered the blaze, and as it died slowly away, one of my friends, Hans Geil, said thoughtlessly, with a laugh: "See! the flame is dying away like the dream of the Reds." Quick as a flash, a fellow standing beside us whipped out a knife and lunged at Geil. But Geil was not one of the best fencers in Germany for nothing, and with an even quicker movement he brought his heavy stick crash on the would-be assassin's wrist. I can still hear the crack, and the howl of agony as the knife dropped on the snowy cobbles. Geil shouted to me to run, and we were well down the dark street before the mob started after us. Round a corner we ran into four policemen huddling in a doorway, taking shelter from the whirling snow.

II

One name that was very familiar during my first years in Germany was Houston Stewart Chamberlain. Two of Chamberlain's uncles were British Generals; a third was a British Field Marshal. Chamberlain himself had been destined for the British army, but, his health breaking down, he went to Dresden instead, to study. There he came under the spell of Wagner, wrote a biography of the Master, and married his daughter. In 1899 he published in German his book, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. This was followed in 1911 by *The Aryan Outlook*. During the World War, Chamberlain became a naturalized German. It was from him that Adolf Hitler derived his semi-mystical Nordic evangel. Was it from Wagner's son-in-law also that he gained the enthusiasm which transformed

his political ideas into a mystic faith? Does he see himself Siegfried, the strong young hero, triumphantly forging the sword, *Nothung* (Needful), the symbol of glory and power regained for his race? The two men first met at Bayreuth in 1923, shortly before the Munich *Putsch*, and on October 12th Chamberlain wrote his friend, Baron von Uexkull, about Hitler as follows:

An incredible magnetism radiates from this deeply earnest, courageous, heart-winning man, at the sight of whom and in whose presence one is overcome by real hope that Germany may have a future. Accustomed nowadays to see no statesman younger than 60 years, the youthful freshness of Hitler's figure was a most beneficial surprise. In him circumspection is paired with untamable energy. For the great attention he paid to me, he who has so much to do, I was grateful and moved.

To Hitler himself Chamberlain had written on October 7:

You are not at all what you were described to me as being, a fanatic. Rather should I call you the direct contrary of a fanatic. A fanatic heats heads, you warm hearts. Fanatics want to overwhelm; you wish only to convince, and therefore you succeed . . . You have mighty things to do . . . (but) nothing can be done as long as the parliamentary system rules; God knows that the Germans have no spark of talent for this system. Its prevalence I regard as the greatest misfortune, for it can only lead again and again into a morass, and bring to naught all plans for restoring the Fatherland to health and lifting it up . . . That in the hour of her highest need Germany gives birth to a Hitler is what proves her vitality; as do the things that emanate from him; for these two things—personality and its influence—belong together. And what a glorious confirmation it is that the splendid Ludendorff should join you openly and adhere to your movement!

Chamberlain did in 1927. The gist of his teaching was that pride of place in the world belonged to the Teutonic branch of the Aryan family, and that the story of the nineteenth century was the story of the triumph of the Teuton. In the fifties of last century, the Frenchman, Comte Alexandre de Gobineau, had published a book, *The Inequality of the Human Races*, in which he expounded a somewhat similar doctrine. The Northern Teutonic races possessed an innate superiority, Gobineau said. The Teutons were the soul of our culture, Chamberlain insisted. By October 9, 1933, the latter's theory of racial purity had become the official doctrine of the Nazi party. On that date,

1. Wickham Stead: "Germany's Sacred Mission" from *Hitler: Whence and Whither?* (1934). I am indebted to Mr. Stead's book for the English translations of the quotations from Chamberlain's letters. The original correspondence is to be found in Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Briefe Zettel Band*. F. Brockmann, München, 1928.

Dr. Frank, the Nazi Minister of Justice, told a national gathering of jurists at Nuremberg:

Antisemites we are, and have been from the beginning. We are so, however, and this we must emphasise, not out of hatred for the Jew, but out of love for the German people. We are of opinion that the blood substance of the Germanic race constitutes so pre-eminent and unique an asset of the world as a whole that we should be justified in counting it the duty of the entire human race, in gratitude, to safeguard this basic Germanic element, for we know that from this racial substance have issued the highest achievements of man.

Hitler's version of the Gobineau-Chamberlain doctrine is that Germany can reach and retain her rightful position of preeminence in the world only by returning to the Nordic purity of its "Aryan" origin. The *Volkstum*, the community of Germanic blood and ancestral heritage, must be made and kept pure. What with Nietzsche and Treitschke, Gobineau and Chamberlain, the operas of Wagner, the unexampled national progress and prosperity of the nation, the rationalization by its philosophers of the nation's long experience of absolute and tyrannical government into an idolatry of the State, it was not surprising, in the first decade of the present century, to find so many Germans suffering from that form of diseased egotism known in their language as *Grössenwahn* (swelled head).

I found this particularly obnoxious in a professor whose lectures in Ancient History I attended during one term. Gunkel's Anglophobe sentiments showed themselves in every lecture he delivered. No matter what period he was dealing with—Babylon, Nineveh, or Rome—he never failed to drag in England. Why were these ancient powers destroyed? Because they had become decadent, and were no longer worthy to be rulers and masters. The great lesson that history taught was that whenever a nation became decadent, another nation was given the task of destroying it. What was the colossus that was crumbling to-day? England! What nation had been chosen to humble her? Germany! Why was Germany chosen for this task? Because of the innate superiority of the German people, and because Might was Right. And the man who gave utterance to these propagandist sentiments was a theological professor!

III

The students in Giessen had, on the whole, a good time, more especially those who belonged to the fighting corporations.

The great majority of them, however, had little money, and those who were able to sport the coloured peaked caps and breast-bands of the more expensive organizations were very far in the minority. If many of them found relaxation and consolation at the *Kneipé*, I could hardly blame them, for the amenities of Giessen were few. It was not an attractive town, although the surroundings were. It was low-lying, and said to be unhealthy. When I first went there, every street in the town was "up". Drains were being laid for a new sewage system, and new gas pipes were being put in. Very few of the houses had electric light, although there was talk of laying down lines for electric cars. Very few houses had bathrooms, and during my stay, unless I went bathing in the river Lahn during the summer, I had my daily "tub" in my bedroom. A large zinc bath was carried there every evening, and filled with cold water. On very cold mornings I broke the ice before stepping into the water.

On market days the town was packed with country carts drawn by cows or oxen, quaintly dressed peasants smoking long drooping pipes, and patient-looking peasant women, carrying heavy baskets of butter and eggs. The latter wore curious little caps that looked like pin cushions, dresses that reached to their knees, innumerable petticoats, and a sort of bustle. The soldiers of the garrison when off duty also gave the town animation. They were constantly saluting their superiors, stepping off the pavement or sidewalk, when they met an officer. When several officers met, especially if they were with a lady, there was a tremendous amount of heel-clicking and saluting and kissing of the ladies' hands. Some of the younger officers were supposed sometime or other to pass a *Dolmetscher Examen* (Interpreters' Examination), and I was supposed to be their coach. They were a pleasing crowd, but it was impossible to teach them English. Their minds were never on their work. When Major von Wunsch, their commanding officer, dropped in to see how they were getting on, they were as good as gold. But the moment he left, they began to prepare to go too. They usually had an appointment at the tennis court. They invited me to come and see them at play, and it was one of the most comical sights imaginable. They played in full uniform, discarding only their swords, which they handed to their orderlies. They patted the ball back and forth in a lady-like manner, almost choking in their tight frock coats with their high red collars. Their batmen retrieved the balls, and after an hour or so they buckled on their swords again and adjourned to the Kasino, or Officers' Mess, for

refreshment. Their antics must have sorely puzzled the good burghers who happened to stroll past the tennis courts, but no one dreamed of laughing. No doubt this new form of military exercise served some admirable purpose, which they were neither able nor meant to fathom.

Giessen had a reputation for duelling and beer-drinking. The students who belonged to the fighting corporations trained hard. Some of them spent hours practising with the rapier and sabre until the sword arm was so strongly developed that the other arm seemed shrunken in comparison. Technically, duelling was forbidden, but the police knew all about it. They used to visit a *Lokal* (tavern) where duelling was taking place, but the duellists simply paused for a moment while the policemen peered in through the window. The police were able to report truthfully that they had visited the inn and had seen no fighting. The moment they left, the duel was resumed. In Giessen, fighting lasted on Saturdays from eight in the morning until six or seven at night, duel after duel. Sometimes they fought with sabres—a serious affair, when dangerous wounds might be inflicted. Usually, however, it was an affair of rapiers, when cheek and scalp wounds were the order of the day. But even if there were no sabre fights, it was a bloody enough business, and in the late afternoon the smell of blood and trampled sawdust, of iodoform, perspiration, beer and tobacco smoke, was overpowering and nauseating. The *Füchse* (literally "foxes"), or Freshmen, who had joined the corporation, had to attend in order to become accustomed to the sight of blood. When their turn to fight came, any sign of nervousness or flinching was unmercifully dealt with. "Why do the German students fight so many and such bloody duels?" I asked one of them. "Because we are like the ancient Romans, and want to see blood and more blood", was the answer given in all seriousness. "And because", he continued, "there will be a war soon between ourselves and England. We students will be—many of us—officers of the reserve, and we must harden ourselves and learn to bear wounds and suffering."

I saw one fight which lasted exactly two seconds. At the second blow, one of the duellists had his face slashed from beneath the left ear to the lower right corner of his chin. He was a theological student. A doctor, his white coat covered with blood, examined the wounded man, shouted "*Schluss!*" (All over!), and backed his victim to a chair. Two doctors attended to him. One of them held the two parts of the face together,

while the other put in thirty-four stitches. No anaesthetic was allowed, and although the wounded man was grey with pain, the two surgeons went about their work remorselessly, sweating, smoking, and swearing. When they had bandaged him up, the warrior staggered from his chair to see the next fight. The next victim had his nose slashed in two. The lower part fell over his moustache. The doctors shouted "*Schluss*" again, backed the victim to the chair, and clumsily stitched the nose together again. Later that evening, at the *Kneipé*, one duellist with his head bandaged pulled an envelope from his pocket and handed round a slice of his scalp, the size of a five-shilling piece, for inspection. When everybody had examined it and congratulated the wounded warrior, he put his gory trophy back in its envelope and returned it to his pocket. Brutalising? Not at all. The authorities approved of duelling. The country approved of it. The army approved of it. The students approved of it. There was war in the air, and these would be the reserve officers when the time came.

A hard day's duelling was followed by a hard night's drinking at the *Kneipé*. The *Kneipé* was a formal affair. When invited guests arrived, everyone rose and bowed to them. After being shown the *Vomitorium*—in case of necessity—the guests were invited to sit at the head table beside, or near, the President. The latter wore a little round cap, like the old-fashioned British army "pill-box", which was held in place by an elastic band behind the ears; a brightly coloured jacket with lace facings, over which was a broad sash with the insignia of the Corporation in gold lettering; a pair of white buckskin breeches, and huge Blücher boots. In front of him lay a sword. When he wanted the attention of the company, he rapped loudly on the table with it and shouted "*Silentium*". Then he gave the page in the *Kommersbuch* (students' song book) on which the song we were to sing was to be found. "*Füchse!*" he thundered, and all the freshmen shouted the number after him. "*Erste Vers!*" (first verse). When that was finished, he thundered again: "*Zweite Vers!*" (second verse). And so on to the end. All the books, which were studded in the four corners, back and front, with brass studs to prevent them being soaked with spilt beer, had to be kept open during the singing, and closed immediately the song was ended. Then we drank to the sentiment of the song, and to the health of everyone else. A waiter was kept busy filling the empty beer mugs from a cask in the corner. When "the acoustics became gradually thick", as they used to

say, the *Füchse* were ordered home to bed. Then the real drinking began. It was at the *Kneipé* that I first learned the subtle difference between a "drunk" and a "full" man. Wishing on one occasion to ask the President to explain something or other, I turned to him and put the question. He made no answer, but stared glassily in front of him. I spoke to him a second time, but all the response I got was a feeble twitching of his fingers round the handle of his beer *Krug* (mug). Then the man on the President's left prodded him gently in the ribs. He stirred slightly, and oozed a couple of trickles of beer. Then I prodded him on the right side. He oozed two more trickles of beer. Then we both prodded him—harder—and quite a considerable amount of beer cascaded over his waistcoat. Presently he was able to speak, and his first words were intended as an explanation rather than an apology. "*Besoffen nil*", he hiccupped. "*Nur voll*". (No—not tight. Just full.)

About midnight, Major von Wunsch would appear. He was a trig monocled man in middle life. Usually he had just come from the *Kasino*, and was in high fettle. He was immediately invited to take the chair, and after drinking a few more glasses, he got to his feet and addressed the company. His theme was invariably the same—the coming war. War, he declared, was inevitable. Germany, surrounded by a ring of enemies who willed her destruction, must fight to the bitter end. Her very existence depended on her success, and her success depended on the valour of young fellows like his hosts, the *Germanen*. When he sat down, he explained to me that, in order to win the war as quickly as possible, France must be attacked through Belgium.

"Suppose the Belgians should object?" I protested.

"Ach was!" (Rubbish!) he snorted. "Belgium dare not object. She is a little country. Her army could never stand up to the German army."

"And suppose England were to come in?"

"England will never make war against the Germans. But even if she does, by that time we shall have occupied the Channel ports, and it would then be no use." Then raising his glass, "Herr Roy. *Zum Wohl*." (Good health.)

"*Zum Wohl, Herr Major*," I gave him back, raising mine.

IV

The merriest time of the year was Christmas. Men went about the snowy streets dressed as St. Nicholas, giving the

children sweets and gingerbread. Everyone seemed to be dragging home a small Christmas tree. The spirit of the season was communicated to the *Kneipe*, where there was a big turnout of active and past members (*alte Herren*). At a given signal the lights in the hall were turned off, and the candles were lit on the huge Christmas tree. After the first verse of the sentimental "Tannenbaum" (Fir-tree), there was a loud knock at the door and St. Nicholas appeared, complete with furs and beard and bagful of presents. "*Guten Abend, meine Kinder*," he called out, moving towards the President. "I have brought a present for each of you, and if the joke turns against you, please don't get angry." He handed M. Thomas, the French Reader, because his stomach was weak and he did not drink much beer, a sucking bottle. He gave one *alter Herr*, who was a teacher, a little bundle of sticks. As I boxed in those days, I was handed a pair of coarse jute mittens, and a few amusing verses at my expense were read aloud.

On the whole, those days were happy and carefree, although all the time the ravening beast of War was prowling without our doors. At one dinner party at the *Rektor's*, Fräulein Behagel, the daughter of the house, called out to shy Herr Linck, the pianist, who had just come back: "Now, Herr Linck, tell us all about your *Geschpusi* (temporary lady friend) in Munich." When Herr Linck blushed, and looked embarrassed, and stammered out that he had had none, the Fräulein left her place and stroked his hair and called him her "golden little miscarriage". It could not have happened in the same circle in England—or in the United States—but the company roared with laughter at the joke, and drank and drank again to Herr Linck's better success in the future. It was a Germany which, although it no doubt heard the tramp of marching battalions and had uneasy visions in the night, could give itself over to merriment with Rabelaisian abandon, when the company was fitting and the time was right. There were pleasant visits in Worms, fancy dress balls and minuets; the jollity of Carnival time on the Rhine when the Grand Duke mixed with his people and shared the merriment with the humblest—the Grand Duke whom the Kaiser had called his worst General but his best knitter. One evening my friend Sardemann and I sat in the *Bier Garten* listening to a new *Kapelle* from Munich. As the strains of the *Merry Widow* floated across the tables and through the trees, Sardemann grew silent and melancholy. When I asked him what had gone wrong, he told me about a girl he had

met during the previous summer. He had wanted to marry her, but at that time marriage was out of the question, and she had refused to see him again. He told me that she played the first violin in an orchestra, and that it was after hearing her play that new tune that he had fallen in love with her. I suggested jokingly that it might be the same girl playing the same tune in Giessen. He laughed a little when I said that, but presently began staring in the direction of the orchestra. Then he got up, went across to the musicians and found that it actually was the girl.

A medley of memories return . . . the three hundredth anniversary of the founding of the University. There were speeches, concerts, plays, banquets, processions; a garden party in the grounds of the old *Schloss* when the Arch-Duke and the Arch-Duchess received their guests, who turned up in frock coats with tweed trousers, evening dress with red tie, morning coats with Panamas . . . A funeral service for one of the Professors of the University on a bitter winter day, in the Chapel in the Old Cemetery, the coffin lying in front of the pulpit covered with wreaths . . . the heavy scent of flowers . . . the two rows of mourning relations, one of the daughters sobbing quietly in the silence . . . the gas stove flogging and plopping in the centre of the building . . . the grey statues of saints staring coldly down at us with sightless eyes . . . the image of the Christ above the preacher's head . . . the preacher saying in a low voice " *Wir wollen beten*" (Let us pray) . . . the sombre intoning of " *Unser Vater*" (Our Father) . . . the long eulogy of the dead man . . . the Rektor, the Senior Professor of the Faculty of Law, the representatives of student corporations each taking a wreath from the University servitor and placing it on the coffin . . . the mourners grouped about the Chapel door as the coffin was carried out and placed on a trolley . . . its slow progress through the snow-covered paths of the cemetery pushed by the gravediggers . . . the tolling of the bell . . . the *Pfarrer* (parson) praying again at the grave-side . . . the widow shovelling a spadeful of earth on the coffin in the grave.

Then there was that absurd adventure that Thomas and I had in the forest. We had decided to spend the week-end in the country, and told no one where we intended to go. In fact we had no idea ourselves where we might end up. We took the light railway that wound past the two mediaeval towers on the Gleiberg and the Vetzberg, and went as far as the railway

would take us. When we got out of the train, we ran into a crowd of Italians who were working on the road. They were helping themselves to masses of macaroni from a number of pots suspended from tripods. We passed a *Buon giorno* with them, and started for the hills. After walking until our legs ached, we came towards evening to an old mill in the heart of the forest. A very old man was in charge, and when we asked him if we might spend the night there, he looked dubious, shook his head, and went off without saying a word. Presently he returned with a very old woman, and they consulted together. Finally, the old woman said that if we were willing to put up with such poor accommodation, we were welcome to stay. As there was no other house within miles, we had hardly any choice. "Hand" cheese, butter, black bread and buttermilk and eider were set before us by the old couple, and we made a hearty meal. When we had finished, we left the outside table at which we had eaten and went into the house. It had fallen completely dark. Soon a somewhat forbidding-looking young man—the son—appeared. He produced a melodeon, and sang and played for us. We were finally shown to bed in separate rooms by our host who, as the evening closed in, seemed to grow sinister. After opening the door and waving the candle about for a moment to enable us to get our bearings, he suddenly withdrew and left us in the dark with only the sound of the mill weir, the sighing of the wind among the trees, and the creaking of the branches against the window panes for company. I began to have all manner of curious fancies. Supposing we had wandered into a den of thieves! No one but the inmates of the house knew where we were! An Englishman had recently been found murdered in the forest near Cassel. Perhaps it was in just such a house as this! When I heard two people creeping quietly upstairs, I was sure they were coming to rob and murder me. I sat up in bed as the footsteps halted outside my door and the light of a candle was carefully shaded. Next moment, I felt sure they would enter my room. An owl hooted, a branch of a tree scraped against my open window pane. I listened intently; someone was whispering. I recognised the old man's voice. "*Ruhig, Herr Förster*", he was saying, "*der Engländer schläft. Laszt ihn nicht stören*". (Quietly, Forester, the Englishman is sleeping. Don't disturb him.)

Next morning the old couple explained. They had hesitated about taking us in, as the accommodation was so poor. The local forester lodged there, and the old man had accompanied

him to his room afraid that he might make a noise and disturb us. The son had left at sunrise to work in the woods, and had left a message that if ever we passed that way again, we were to be sure to look them up. The forester left us a greeting and hopes that he had not disturbed us. The old couple refused to take any payment for our accommodation. I felt almost ashamed to look them in the face . . .

We had many intellectual interests in Giessen. I belonged to a little *Cercle Francais* which met once a week during the winter months in Thomas's rooms in the *Stephanstrasse*. We read and discussed Maupassant and Zola, Paul Fort, Albert Fleurry, Georges Duhamel, Jean Moréas, Emile Verhaeren, Henri Becque, Jules Romains. Maeterlinck's *La Sagesse et Destinè* made a deep impression on me. We had, too, excellent and varied dramatic fare ranging from Shakespeare, Schiller, Ibsen, Strindberg, Hauptmann, Wedekind, Sudermann, and Wilde to *Charley's Aunt*. There was also a low music-hall where enormous women gave disgusting wrestling exhibitions, and French dancers danced the Can-Can and the *Malchiche*, and English comedians cracked unintelligible Cockney jokes, and American "girls" screeched the latest ragtime across the glaring footlights.

Other, and just now more significant, aspects of the Germany I remember will be presented in the next issue of THE DALHOUSIE REVIEW.