

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

In: The Saturday Review. 17.7.1937, S. 18

Report on German Writers.

Mann, Klaus

1937-07-17

Nutzungsbedingungen

Bei zahlreichen Dokumenten auf monacensia-digital.de sind die Urheberrechte bereits abgelaufen. Sie sind gemeinfrei und dürfen ohne weitere Rücksprache mit der Monacensia weiterverwendet werden.

Bei den Dokumenten, bei denen noch Urheberrechte bestehen, müssen für eine Weiterverwendung stets die Rechteinhaber*innen angefragt werden sowie eine Publikationsgenehmigung der Monacensia eingeholt werden. Das Zitatrecht bleibt hiervon unberührt.

Zur Erteilung einer Publikationserlaubnis wenden Sie sich bitte an:

Monacensia im Hildebrandhaus

Literaturarchiv

Adresse: Maria-Theresia-Straße 23, 81675 München

E-Mail: monacensia.literaturarchiv@muenchen.de

Terms of use

The copyrights for numerous documents on monacensia-digital.de have already expired. They are in the public domain and may be reused without further consultation with Monacensia. In the case of documents for which copyrights still exist, the copyright holders must always be contacted for further use and publication permission must be obtained from the Monacensia. The right to quote under copyright law remains unaffected by this. To obtain permission for publication, please contact:

Monacensia im Hildebrandhaus:

Literaturarchiv

Address: Maria-Theresia-Straße 23, 81675 München

E-Mail: monacensia.literaturarchiv@muenchen.de

Report on German Writers

BY KLAUS MANN

IN view of the fact that all Germans who live within the borders of the Third Reich are no longer allowed to read—or, at least, can read only such literature as Dr. Goebbels doles out to them—the number of books by Germans which continue to make their appearance outside the German state is impressive. I am lost in admiration of the courage and enterprise of the German publishing houses in Amsterdam, Zurich, and Prague.

The most important of the recent German novels, it seems to me, is Bruno Frank's "Der Reisepass" (Amsterdam: Querido Verlag). Frank, of whose sensational success with London theatre-goers New Yorkers have undoubtedly heard, has in this romance written an outstandingly beautiful and mature book. It is the tale of a young German prince who, under pressure of conscientious scruples and exciting political circumstances, becomes an active anti-Nazi and an emigrant. We follow his difficult course as an exile—in Prague, in Belgium, in London; we are witnesses of his adventures, of which many are stirring and moving, and all the stages of his career are vividly conjured up before us. It is the best novel of German exile which has yet appeared, as rich in imagination as in perceptions, noble testimony to the belief it expresses in European humanism.

The Alsatian, René Schickele, offers fresh proof of his delicate talent in his "Die Flaschenpost" (Amsterdam: Verlag Allert de Lange). But Schickele is resigned, where Bruno is militant and almost confident. His hero is a man who finds himself at odds with his time and its collectivism; he is a frenzied nihilist whose most powerful obsession is a belief that his neighbor in the little hamlet on the French Riviera where he lives, actually a much feared anarchist "on leave," is the ex-king of Spain. Eventually in his frenzy he murders him. This mad act is the only incident of the book. For the rest, the charm and value of the work lie in its literary skill, in the graceful and bewitching fashion above all in which the landscape is blocked in and its atmosphere conveyed. René Schickele, who, like Herman Hesse, is far too little known in foreign countries, ranks among the finest and most exquisite writers of German prose and portrayers of scenery that we have.

A talent of entirely different caliber and of much greater force is that of Alfred Döblin whose new epic, "Die Fahrt ins Land ohne Tod" (Amsterdam: Querido Verlag) embodies ancient Indian myths and the history of the conquest of the Indians by the whites. If Schickele weaves his spell through tenderness, Döblin gets his effects by the power of his fantasy and by the strength and pregnancy of his language.

As the author of "Job" and "Radetzky March," Joseph Roth has already won an international reputation. He displays his epic spirit again in a brief romance, "Das Falsche Gewicht" (Querido), which plays in a distant eastern province of the old Danubian monarchy and makes a

moral tale of the marital tragedy of a small official. The problem of innocence and guilt acquires urgency in remarkable fashion in the story. "Good" and "bad" have again become important distinctions in more serious literature, hanging together as they do with certain political experiences which we have all known.

From the region of the former Austrian empire there comes to us, too, a new novel by the historian Karl Tschuppik, "Ein Sohn aus Gutem Hause" (Amsterdam: Verlag Allert de Lange). But Tschuppik, whose "Maria Theresa" will be recalled by readers, is more ironical and skeptical; he lacks moral absoluteness, and singlehearted devotion to ethical purpose. It is precisely this profound moral earnestness which Heinrich Mann again displays; his moral intensity is as pronounced in the many political articles which come from his pen as in his most important novels. His latest work of fiction is entitled "Die Vollendung des Königs Henri Quatre," a long book devoted to the youth of the king. It is to be published in America by Alfred A. Knopf before long.

I am picking out only a few names where there are many which might be mentioned. As I said before I admire the courage of the publishers. We still have literary magazines also. To be sure, *Die Sammlung*, which I edited in Amsterdam for Querido, and *Die Neuen Deutschen Blätter*, which Wieland Herzfelde published through Malik in London, are no more. Recently we were informed of two literary reviews which are to be edited in Moscow, one, *Internationale Literatur*, by the German lyrical poet, Johannes R. Becher; the other, *Das Wort*, by Lion Feuchtwanger, Bert Brecht, and the labor poet, Willy Bredel. Both reviews are to be free from partisan connections and are to have wide range. To these two periodicals a third new publication is to be added. It is to be published by Oprecht in Antwerp, will be entitled *Mass und Wert*, and will be edited by Thomas Mann. All that is best of German writing, outside the borders of the Reich, will contribute to making this periodical worthy of its name. The first issue will contain chapters from Thomas Mann's Goethe novel, "Lotte in Weimar," the melancholy and intellectually intricate chronicle of the reunion between the aged Goethe and the girl whom he rendered immortal in "Werther." *Mass und Wert* will contain contributions not only from noted German authors but from Swiss, Austrians, and Czechs who in spirit are akin to the former.

The vitality of German writing has been in no manner quenched by emigration. The intellectual activity of the emigré seeks constantly to bind closer the ties between itself and its foreign friends. Especially is this true in Prague. There so important a publication is to appear as the collected works of Franz Kafka, that original religious genius whose discovery we owe first and foremost to Max Brod. The six-volume "Works of Kafka" concludes with a volume entitled "Tage-

bücher und Briefe" (Prague: Verlag Heinrich Mercy Sohn).

Intellectual life marches on; no dictator can destroy it. News of Lion Feuchtwanger's trip to Soviet Russia is awaited with the keenest interest in his forthcoming "Moskau, 1937." What will Feuchtwanger have to say to his "friends," for it is only to them that he addresses himself? To what degree will his impressions differ from André Gide's, which recently made a sensation among German emigrants? The events in Russia are of the utmost importance. Feuchtwanger has seen them—for instance, the trial of Radek—at first hand. The more Russia loses moral credit with the German intellectuals, the livelier waxed debate over the democratic idea. Politics and literature can scarcely be separated. The question grows constantly more important as to which political atmosphere is most kindly to literature.

And the discussion goes on—in every country in which men are allowed to discuss.

Klaus Mann, son of Thomas Mann, is the author of several books, the latest of which is "Journey into Freedom."

Migrations West

THE WEST IN AMERICAN HISTORY.

By Dan Elbert Clark. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 1937. \$3.50.

Reviewed by JAMES B. HEDGES

THE title of this volume is misleading. It suggests primarily a discussion of the influence of the West in our national development. Instead, the book is a story of the processes of Westward migration, based in the main on secondary works and following conventional lines of treatment. The very scale of the work precluded the possibility of any substantial amount of original investigation.

In part one, entitled "The West under Spain, France and England," Professor Clark has achieved his greatest success. By giving adequate treatment to the role of England's rivals in America, he has produced a narrative of the frontier to 1783 which, in point of balance, is probably superior to any found in similar works.

Part two, dealing with the region between the Appalachians and the Missouri River, is distinctly less satisfactory. Here one looks in vain for an adequate statement of the factors which determined the limits of southern migration into the Old Northwest, of the settlement of the Gulf States, and of the economic development of the lower Mississippi Valley region. Was not the formation of the cotton kingdom on the Gulf as much a part of the Westward movement as the creation of the domain of wheat in the Northwest? Because he slights this aspect of his subject, Professor Clark's treatment of the colonization of Texas in the third part of his book fails to make clear the fact that American penetration into this Mexican Province was a normal and natural phase of the Westward advance from the lower South.

Part three, devoted to the Far West, leaves much to be desired. Little of the significant point of view of Walter P.