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German Letters in Exile.

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Miscellaneous

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This book offers a few short cuts to program making and general reading. Compiled from the Clearing House of *The Saturday Review*, it is an attempt to render assistance to those who, either through lack of time or through the inaccessibility of the reference works from which they could derive the necessary help, desire aid in drawing up lists for their own reading or that of others. It is prefaced by a chapter commenting on some of the reference works most generally useful.

Travel

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This is a sumptuous, descriptive, and copiously illustrated book for lovers of Bermuda or those contemplating visiting there. It gives the island's historical background and bears a short preface by the novelist Hervey Allen, who vouches for the author of the book and for the book itself as "par excellence the best guide and souvenir that has ever been offered to visitors to Bermuda." The splendid quality of the illustrations, indeed, speaks for itself.

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Dr. Sven Hedin is indeed the hardy perennial of Central Asiatic exploration. In 1885 at the age of twenty he first made a journey through Persia and Mesopotamia, and a few years later was in Chinese Turkestan and Tibet. Many of us can remember the thrill we had as boys in reading of his adventurous journeys and the sufferings that he and his caravan underwent in the mountains and deserts of Central Asia. In particular, the account of how he nearly died of thirst while crossing the Takla Makan Desert stands out.

Nearly fifty years after his first journey he once more set forth for Central Asia, crossing the Gobi Desert into Sinkiang on a mission from the Chinese Government in Nanking to mark out two motor roads in an endeavor to extend the means

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German Letters in Exile

BY KLAUS MANN

TO the frequent inquiry of foreigners as to whether current literature in the Third Reich is deserving of serious attention the answer must be an unequivocal no. There is no current literature of intellectual worth in Nazi Germany and there cannot be.

Intellectual life and fascism are a contradiction in terms. The one automatically excludes the other. There is no need to recite the precise means—the thousand instructions, restrictions, etc.—by which the dictatorship circumscribes the intellectuals; what corrupts, destroys, and makes impossible creative effort is the complete lack of intellectual integrity which suffocates all endeavor. Faced by fascist, or fascist-infected literature, I inevitably think of Nietzsche's dictum: "The question is not as to whether a thing is true, but as to whether it works. . . . Everything is proper,—lies, slander, unabashed deception, if it serves to raise enthusiasm to the point of faith."

It can be said without exaggeration that the most articulate and gifted of Germany's writers shun the Third Reich and that the majority of them are actively hostile to it. We must recognize, of course, that German literature in exile is not of one pattern, and, equally of course, that it is well that it should not be. It represents not one point of view, but a variety of opinions, which are brought into unison merely by the negative fact of their common abhorrence of fascism. It wins its strength from this common purpose of opposition to tyranny and from the sufferings which the exiled writers have all alike known.

These exiled writers differ from one another not merely in their affiliations, which may be liberal or socialistic, Catholic or Jewish, but also in their artistic aims, their style, and their taste. The literature, which in the Reich is so disparagingly referred to as "Asphaltliteratur" or "Kulturbolschewismus," has in reality many moods and tones. A cursory glance at the publications of recent months will make evident its range of interest.

Among the most interesting books which have come from Germany in exile during the past year are the volume of essays by Heinrich Mann entitled "Es Kommt der Tag" (Zurich: Europa-Verlag) and Leonhard Frank's "Traumgefährten" (Amsterdam: Querido-Verlag). Heinrich Mann's appeals and manifestos glow with political passion. His diction has a noble simplicity which has renounced all those petty artificialities and fripperies which could only detract from the great purpose to which the book is dedicated. That high purpose is the struggle for a better Germany, mortal combat against the present Reich, whose pitiful plight Mann unmasks and depicts with scorn and sorrow, with hatred and contempt. And yet there are faith and confidence in his book—and in the heart of the author—in equal measure with hatred and scorn. The happier future it depicts

will be scanned with longing; the book is irradiated by its light.

Leonhard Frank, author of "Karl und Anna," has turned away from the problems of politics and actuality which preoccupied him in that book. In his lyrical tale, "Die Traumgefährten," with almost pathological intensity he concentrates on the theme of eroticism. Not Wedekind, or Strindberg, or Joyce ever presented a world so completely under the dominance of this single passion. It is an enchanted, remote region into which Frank conducts us, a region of hysteria, of dream visions, of almost overwhelming awesomeness, one in which it appears logical and inevitable that the beings who people it, suffering from the duality of their existence as body and soul as they might suffer from illness, should find their way to a madhouse.

What relationship is there between the militant and simple prose of Heinrich Mann and the sick and tenderly lyrical work of Leonhard Frank? They have nothing in common except their zeal for truth, for that absolute integrity which Nietzsche lays down as the first essential of intellectual men. Heinrich Mann has the urge and the will to political truth, Leonhard Frank to psychological truth. Both have offended against the Nazis, because they are truthful (the Nazis call it "destructive" or "analytical").

This will of German exile literature to truth, even if it is a bitter truth, shows itself also in historical fiction. In this regard Lion Feuchtwanger supplies the outstanding example. It has always been his effort and his goal to present history as it really was, not as legend has developed it, and to bring it into vivid relationship with our time and with contemporary fortunes. Of the important works in this field one of the outstanding is Heinrich Mann's "Die Jugend des Königs Henri IV" (Querido), which is shortly to appear in America from the press of Alfred A. Knopf, and is to be followed by a second volume dealing with the rule of the French monarch. However, not only leading novelists, like Feuchtwanger and Mann, should be mentioned—it should be noted also that there are historical tales of interest by Hermann Kesten, whose "Ferdinand und Isabella" (Amsterdam: Lange) is to appear in this country; Vincent Brun, whose "Alcibiades" made a sensation in England, and Jacob Roth, author of "Job," who uses historical events to present a moral thesis.

The exiled writers are also producing novels bearing on the contemporary German scene. One of the foremost among them is Bruno Frank, author of "Cervantes," whose play, "Sturm im Wasserglas," is to be produced by the Theatre Guild this season. The novel he is writing, of which I have seen long extracts, is the chronicle of a young aristocrat who has left Germany to battle for the exiles and against fascism. He is an example of the best and most courageous in the German spirit, and of what German literature in exile stands for.

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