

# German Education Today

by

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## GERMAN EDUCATIONAL IDEALS

Surveying the present age a hundred years hence, the historian will probably point out that, in Germany, National Socialism effected a return to the laws of life, in all spheres, but especially in the sphere of education. By this we do not mean simply Rousseau's «Back to Nature». For, the National Socialist idea of life has nothing to do with romantic dreaming and is free of all sentimentality. We have brought life into its own again. In the past centuries the laws of natural life were broken in three ways:

1) Instead of considering the peoples of the world as representatives of different stocks we let ourselves be deceived by the ideal of a humanity which could only exist in the «mind's eye». We imagined men as beings built on a universal pattern, each one endowed with the other's capacities — the same throughout the world.

2) Instead of treating him as a natural member of a natural community, in which he is as deeply rooted as a plant in the soil, we separated man from the type of people to which he belongs and, like a chemist analysing a preparation, put him, so to speak, in a test tube.

3) Finally we did violence to this isolated human being by denying him the existence of heart, determination, emotions, and feelings and by judging only his intellect to be of importance and worth. And it was to the exclusion of everything else and only to this intellect that educationists and teachers directed their attention for nearly two centuries.

The entire civilised world was guilty of these three misconceptions. It would serve no useful purpose were we to discover which nations have sacrificed any more or less to the idols of individualism and intellectualism, during the past centuries, than has Germany. For results would show only slight differences. There can be little doubt, however, that the evils resulting from this over-emphasis of the intellect were more marked here than anywhere else in the world.

This can be attributed partly to the social structure of Germany, and partly to the important rôle played by the development of philosophical idealism in our country. In Japan and England other forces were at work which counter-acted this belief in the supreme value of the individual and the intellect. The importance attached to the Emperor in the Japanese schools and the co-operation which exists between the army officer and the school-master is sufficient evidence of this. In England, the Public Schools — however large

or small a part one may think they play in English national life — have always put the training of the character, and the fostering of fairness and team spirit before the education of the intellect. And when referring to the French one must not forget that with them the intellect has never been completely separated from its elder and maturer brother, that quality to which they have given the name «esprit». Among the Latin nations care has always been taken to prevent any detachment and exaggerated cult of the intellect.

In Germany, on the other hand, there were no such safeguards. In an extraordinary way *Hegel's* conception of the mind was robbed of all real meaning and reduced to a farcical abstraction. Mind was confused with knowledge, and education with instruction. So Germany became the classical example of a land of «*Knowledge*». Whilst the English, says Lord Haldane, are «a race peculiarly adapted to identify life with sport». Germany until recently might well have been termed «a nation peculiarly qualified to identify life with «*knowledge*». The more the intellect was considered to be the only thing that was vital, important, and valuable to man, the less important, even as objects of philosophical contemplation, did all the other potentialities of man become. A special philosophy of the intellect existed. Only through the intellect could one attain to truth, not through the heart, the resolution or the will. Only the intellect could show us things as they really were. It seemed to have been forgotten that *Goethe*, the revered master whose advice was often sought, had himself said: «I detest everything which I am merely taught and which does not bear fruit in my actions.»

It would be unjust if here we omitted to accord great praise to Germany's schools. Their splendid world-wide reputation is richly deserved, and it would be difficult to mention a single other country where the school-master is more highly esteemed, or the school more strongly supported than has always been the case in Germany. Nor must it be forgotten that it was the German school itself which was the first and most vigorous opponent of the one-sidedness of individualism and intellectualism. *Kerschensteiner's* «*Arbeitsschule*» (Work School), *Berthold Otto's* general instruction, *Gaudig's* principle of the independent activity of the pupil, *Hermann Lietz's* community school, can be no more omitted from the history of German education than, say *Eduard Spranger's* attempt at a psychology of youth, reestablishing the union between school and life. Yet, despite all these sincere attempts, the German school has failed to inspire its

scholars. Why? The reason is to be found in this false conception of the «make-up» of man and, in consequence, of the aim of education itself.

*Herbart's* theory of pedagogics is an illustration of what we mean. *Herbart*, whose ideas on instruction dominated European education for many years, was guilty of a twofold error. In the first place he believed that education could be restricted to the development of the intellect, and secondly that education could only be effected through the medium of instruction, the imparting of knowledge. Feelings, will, soul, and emotions were all disturbing elements and should be kept away from the school. «The matter taught,» said *Herbart*, «is the vital thing.» The teacher is but the instrument of this matter. Only thus, he thought, could the pupil be allowed to develop and mature freely.

It is not surprising that German youth should finally have revolted against this theory of teaching and the kind of school which resulted from it. For, such a theory makes the one mistake of imagining that youth can be satisfied with an accumulation of «*provisional*» thoughts and achievements and ask for nothing more. But the young long for «*finite*» values. They do not want merely to be instructed, they want to be led.

They long for the teacher to speak to them from his heart and to stretch out his guiding hand. This is the great truth that *Pestalozzi* placed in opposition to *Herbart's* theories: — that the spark which jumps from one person to another is the nucleus of all education. We, the youth of Germany, felt bitterly that the school which was meant to educate us, left us in the lurch just when we most needed education, that is, on leaving school. German youth, with its own unflinching instinct, has itself answered the question of whether it is worth while preserving the German people. *Fichte* had already demanded that national education should be based on this fundamental principle. And it is not surprising that German youth should regard, besides *Fichte*, men like *Herder*, *Jahn* and *Nietzsche* as their leaders in the fight against the school of the intellect. For it was *Herder* who said that every nation «has its own centre of happiness, just as every sphere has its own centre of gravity», while *Jahn* and *Nietzsche* attacked most vigorously the glorification of the intellect and the cult of book-learning.

It was in a strong desire to rectify these mistakes that German youth has repeatedly emigrated from the school. The Pre-War Youth

Movement got no further than unsuccessful attempts at reform, but the World-War marked a great turning-point. Nowadays the foreign observer in Germany is astonished to see how far youth has taken education into its own hands. In the Hitler Youth groups, in the ranks of the Storm Troops, in the columns of the Labour Service Corps young people are receiving an education such as perhaps a school can never give, and which the school of the 19th century certainly did not provide. The essential aim of all these experiments is to supply that education in comradeship and citizenship which has already been provided in other countries of the world for many centuries and with varying success.

If we would reduce the manifold ideals of present-day German education to some common factor, we could aptly choose that ancient principle of the trinity of mind, soul, and body. For, in the education of the German of the future there must be three clearly-defined aspects—the training of the mind, of the soul and of the body. The complaint has often been made that *Adolf Hitler* considered the training of the body to be more important than the training of the mental faculties. But this is not, as has been claimed, evidence of the barbarism of modern Germany. It is simply a natural truth. If we wish to serve our nation—and to the youth of this country this is a matter of course—we must first become *capable* of rendering this service. Having first acquired the *power* to serve then the second task will be to awaken in ourselves the *readiness* to do so. The capacity to serve requires a careful training of the body, which has nothing to do with the craze for record-breaking, but which seeks to give a natural vigour to every part of the body. But the *readiness* to serve one's nation requires that *iron training* of will, of courage, and of character as a whole, which *Hitler* has stated to be the ultimate aim of education. It is taken for granted by every German that, in so doing, mental training must not be neglected. No-one need point out *that* to a German. But what must be driven home to him is this—that his mind is useless unless it can bear witness to the living organism that is man, can bear witness, that is to say, not only to his intellect but also to his heart and will.

The German school-child of the future will strive to attain these virtues: Honour, loyalty, a cheerful willingness to bear responsibility, self-sacrifice, courage, determination, self-confidence, modesty, obedience, and a thorough knowledge of all that appertains to his profession. \*In our eyes the German youth of the future must be

slim and strong, as fast as a greyhound, as tough as leather and as hard as Krupp steel\* (*Hitler*).

*Horst Krieck* and *Alfred Baeumler* based their philosophy of education on the idea of the community of the people and the comradeship of groups of men, as being essential to all German education of the future. The formative forces of the community will remain an integral part of education whether it is provided mainly within or apart from the class-room. The school, must realize then, that even though its methods of teaching were fundamentally altered, as a place of instruction, it can make only a small contribution to education as a whole. Labour service, for instance, will perhaps for many years play a far more decisive part than the school in the training of the youth of this country. Nevertheless a fierce struggle will be fought in Germany as to what form the school should take. For, our aim is not to abolish the school but to win for it its rightful place in the hearts of German children. The training of teachers has therefore become a burning question of the day. For it is beyond all shadow of doubt that no essential change can take place in the German school until either school-masters become leaders of youth—or leaders of youth become school-masters.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE GERMAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

The following survey gives only a condensed account of the main elements of the German educational system. Many individual forms of school are not mentioned, nor are all the separate measures of reform enumerated.

### PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

The *Kindergarten* caters for children from the age of 2 1/2 until they are admitted to the *Grundschule*, in cases where the family cannot provide the necessary care and education. The *Kindergarten* mistresses are trained in Seminaries and must pass a State leaving examination proving their ability.

### PRIMARY EDUCATION

#### A. THE GRUNDSCHULE (Foundation School)

The *Grundschule* is the uniform first stage in the education of all

German children. It gives every child that foundation which he must possess, whether he passes on later to the *Oberstufe* (Upper Grade) of the *Volksschule* and chooses a practical profession or proceeds to a more advanced institution which prepares its pupils for the university or *Hochschule* (higher school with status of university).

On the conclusion of his 6th year the child is compelled to enter the *Grundschule*. He must remain at the *Grundschule* for 4 years. The aim of the *Grundschule* is gradually to transform the natural aptitudes of the child into a will to work. Children of this age have concrete minds hostile to abstractions, and the curriculum of the *Grundschule* is framed accordingly. An attempt is made to penetrate into the world of childhood, to define its features by cultivating more particularly in children the expression of thought by the customary speech and language of childhood, and by teaching them to use their eyes and hands methodically. To this end, the children are taught to execute easy manual work and their attention is drawn to the manifestations of nature and human activity. Physical culture in the form of games, gymnastics, walks, etc. is, moreover, included in the curriculum.

The foundation provided by the *Grundschule* is gradually made to include the history and geography of the town or district in which the children live. The aim of the *Grundschule* period is to develop the child's natural aptitudes and to foster in all pupils that ability and knowledge which form the groundwork of any education which look beyond the mere requirements of the school itself.

#### B. THE OBERSTUFE (Upper Grade) OF THE VOLKSSCHULE

The four senior classes of the *Volksschule* have the twofold task of furthering the development of individuality and of imbuing the class as a whole with a consciousness of its German nationality. The curriculum is framed in accordance with these two aims. The instruction given depends on the age and general capacity of the pupils and seeks to develop the whole personality by way of the feelings and desires peculiar to childhood. The education so provided does not attempt to develop the faculties of memory and logical reasoning, but is based on the independent activity of the children themselves. Under the guidance of the teacher, knowledge is not merely transmitted, but is discovered by means of observation and independent experiment. Physical drill is included because it steels body and character and encourages voluntary obedience, self-control and efficiency.



NOTHING DISTURBS THIS FELLOW  
Wash Day in a Camp



GOOD TO THE LAST DROP



HOLD IT TIGHT, BOYS!

The subjects taught in the upper grade of the *Volksschule* include: religion, German, history and civics, the geography and history of the child's home-town or district, geography, biology, arithmetic, geometry, drawing, singing, gymnastics and, in the case of girls, needlework. The aim of the biology, geography and history-course is to introduce the pupil to the fundamental questions of ethnology, heredity, racial hygiene and genealogical study. When circumstances permit, these subjects are supplemented by manual work for the boys and domestic economy for the girls. The actual work set in the school is largely adapted to the special requirements of the district in which it is situated.

Boys and girls are, on principle, educated separately, but there are many cases of small country places where this is not possible, and where they are of necessity taught together.

Children of exceptional ability in the *Volksschule* pass into *Begabten-* and *Aufbauklassen* (classes for specially intelligent children) making it possible for them to enter the higher schools and technical institutes.

Attendance at the *Volksschule* is compulsory unless the pupil passes into an intermediate or higher school on leaving the *Grundschule*.

Special schools exist for crippled, abnormal or weak-minded children. For backward children there are special classes, known as *Hilfsschulklassen*; these are installed in the large cities in schools known as *Hilfsschulen*. For abnormal and crippled children there are special classes and schools.

#### THE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

The *Volksschule* pupil who becomes an apprentice and then, after about three years, passes the craftsman's examination and in his 25th year presents himself for the master-craftsman's examination attends, on leaving the *Volksschule*, the vocational school (*Berufsschule*). The vocational school is the basis of a systematic professional education. Besides making the young man an efficient member of the community, it aims at preparing him to meet the demands of practical life and of the commercial professions. It continues the work of the *Volksschule* by giving additional instruction, until their 18th year, to young people of both sexes who are preparing for a profession and, therefore provides for the great mass of youthful workers. While serving their practical apprenticeship in the workshop or office, young workers are required to spend 6-8 hours per

week at the schools, and their employers are obliged to allow them the necessary time for this.

The vocational school is divided into many different branches. Especially in the town schools, the type of tuition given depends mainly on the trades to which the various pupils belong; these schools are therefore divided into trade groups for builders, wood- and metal-workers etc. Small vocational schools provide, as far as possible, trade classes corresponding to the professional interests of their pupils. For this purpose several communes together set up a combined school.

The instruction given to the pupils in a vocational school goes hand in hand with their practical training as apprentices. Besides giving technical instruction in the different trades, these schools also supplement the pupils' knowledge and abilities by introducing them to the science of economics, commerce, and general citizenship.

In accordance with Government decree the state of neglect into which the agricultural vocational schools had fallen in a number of provinces is now being repaired. It is the wish of the Minister of Education that everything should be done to further the cultural and spiritual welfare of the peasant boys and girls leaving the village school. In accordance with his orders, the country continuation school is being energetically revived in order to give to the German peasants, whose cultural welfare was seriously neglected before the National Socialist revolution, the most important advantages education can offer.

The regulations issued up-to-date for the establishment of country-vocational schools for boys and domestic-economy schools for girls, stipulate that attendance at these schools is compulsory for two years. They have the task of providing a foundation for the actual work of the young countryman. The basis therefore of instruction in the country vocational school is landwork through all the seasons of the year. In addition to this the school has been given the task of imbuing the pupil, through the medium of his profession, with the consciousness that he is a member and a servant of the national community. But the actual technical training is carried out by the agricultural school, admission to which presupposes previous attendance at the country vocational school. The teaching staff consists of elementary teachers who, after proving their proficiency in the village school, have undergone an additional course of training.

## THE INTERMEDIATE GRADE SCHOOL

The intermediate grade school system is distinct from the vocational and technical school. The intermediate grade school (*Mittelschule*) has the definite task of providing talented and worthy children with an education beyond the limits of the curriculum of the primary school, thus enabling them to take up positions of medium importance in commerce and industry, trade and administration, agriculture and forestry. As a rule it embraces 6 classes and takes children who have passed through the *Grundschule*.

Whereas the 3 lower classes of the intermediate school cater for all the pupils, the 3 higher classes specialize in courses of a more professional and commercial nature, varying with the special needs of the locality and time. For girls there is a special scheme which enables them to pass into the household and social-welfare professions. The ultimate objective of these schools is the so-called *mittlere Reife*, the intermediate qualifying certificate, which, if certain conditions are fulfilled, admits pupils to the secondary commercial school, to the secondary schools for the machine-tool and building industries and for the training of State foresters, to the police departments, to the secondary agricultural institutes, or to the secondary schools.

The curriculum varies considerably according to the very diverse local needs of the manual professions, of commerce, industry, forestry and agriculture. From the 3rd class onwards the more talented pupils can learn a second foreign language. By fixing a maximum and minimum number of hours for languages, mathematics and science all schools have thus the opportunity of adapting themselves to local needs.

Whereas no fees are charged for attendance at the *Volksschule*, the pupils of the intermediate school are required to pay a fee, subject to the decision of the school authorities.

Scholarships may be awarded to suitable and deserving children.

## THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

The aim of the secondary school is to give those German children who are particularly well-qualified from a physical, mental and moral point of view an education which will enable them later in life to occupy high positions in the State or to play a leading part in the political, cultural and economic life of the nation. It is therefore the duty of the secondary school to reject from among the children attending it those who are incapable or unworthy, and

thus to stimulate all the more those who are capable and deserving. This continual examination must take into account their physical qualities, qualities of character and general usefulness to the community.\* This decree of the Reich Minister of Education defines the importance of the secondary school (*Höhere Schule*) as a place where a continual selection is being made of those who will, in the future, become leaders of the German nation, and the standard applied is no longer merely an intellectual one, but one which takes into consideration the whole character and personality of the pupil.

As part of the National Socialist school reform now in progress, the new State Public Schools (*Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten*) are of considerable importance to the secondary school system. They are boarding schools under the direct control of the Reich Minister of Education. As experimental institutes in the school reform plan they have no uniform curriculum, but aim at developing character and team spirit by means of an intense physical training; \*extending far beyond the usual instruction devoted to gymnastics and games, but without prejudice to the general intellectual standard\*.

Besides these new boarding schools there exist at the present time the following types of boys' schools.

- 1) The *Gymnasium* which emphasizes the educative value of classical culture (9 years Latin, 6 years Greek).
- 2) The *Realgymnasium* which emphasizes the educative value of Western culture (with 3 foreign languages — Latin, English, French).
- 3) The *Oberrealschule* which lays special stress on a scientific education (mathematics, physics, chemistry), with modern languages.
- 4) The *Realschule*, a 6 class secondary school which corresponds to the upper 6 classes of the *Oberrealschule*.
- 5) The *Deutsche Oberschule* in which special attention is paid to German language, German history and art (with two foreign languages).

It is possible to pass from the Volksschule to the secondary school by way of the 6 year secondary school or *Aufbauschule*. These schools complete in 6 years of study the same syllabus as that of the *Oberrealschule* or the *Deutsche Oberschule*.

In Prussia a decree issued on 24th April 1933 ordered that more time should be devoted to German, history and geography, so as to give the pupil more opportunity than previously of occupying himself with the literature, history and geography of his native country. It has also been decreed that every pupil must be examined

at the close of his school career in the following subjects: ethnology, heredity, racial hygiene, genealogy, and population policy.

The girls' secondary schools have also undergone a change. The Prussian reform of the year 1924 had set up in principle the same objective for boys' and girls' schools. This was done in the false belief that the education of boys and girls should be governed by the same principles. Thus the secondary education of girls was encouraged to become more and more academic. The National Socialists reject the principle that no account need be taken of characteristics peculiar to woman and that she should be given tasks which only a man can fulfil. They would educate the girl to true womanliness and fit her for those special duties which await her in the community of the nation. The following types of girls' secondary schools exist at the present time:

- 1) The *Gymnasiale Studienanstalt* (6 years Latin, 4 years Greek, 9 years French).
- 2) The *Oberlyzeum*, with emphasis on modern languages or science. The *Lyzeum* corresponds more or less to the *Realschule* for boys. The former continuation of this school, the women's *Oberschule*, and the secondary technical school for women's professions have been combined to form the three-year *Frauenschule*.
- 3) The *Deutsche Oberschule* which teaches especially German, history and art and, in addition, two foreign languages.

The *Aufbauschule* for girls enables talented pupils to pass from the Volksschule to the secondary school. It conforms in general to the type of the *Deutsche Oberschule*.

Knowing the diverse tasks which men and women are called upon to fulfil in national life, co-education has been rejected on principle. But if there are no schools for girls within a reasonable distance, girls can be admitted to boys' schools on condition that the admission of boys is not thereby affected.

For attendance at a secondary school a fee is charged which is fixed by the supervising authorities. Scholarships are granted to suitable and deserving children.

\*The new school and the instruction it provides will develop organically under the inspiration of National Socialist ideals along with modern education as a whole. We shall not therefore decide, like judges at an exhibition, between the rival merits of a classical or modern, scientific or humanistic education, of this type of school or of that. We shall be inspired rather by a consciousness of the

laws and necessities of national life and decide therefore on the question of the type of school and the instruction to be given from quite a different point of view.\* (Reich Minister Rust.)

### THE TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Like the vocational school, the Technical School (*Fachschule*) provides a training in commerce, technical subjects and trade. But, in contrast to the vocational school, admission to the technical school is only granted to pupils who have already had a practical training in their profession. Unlike the vocational school, it provides regularly a full day's instruction, and so pupils must devote the whole of their time to the classes. In a few cases only, attendance at school can be combined with professional work. This type of school gives its pupils a thorough education which will enable them to advance in their profession. Those who attend these schools aim at attaining leading or supervising positions in independent professions or as officials or employees. They also have the task of training the rising generation of specialized technicians.

The technical schools are divided into preparatory schools and continuation schools.

### PREPARATORY TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

1) Commercial schools (*Handelsschule*). The commercial schools take pupils leaving the Volksschule. In general these institutions require candidates for admission to pass an entrance examination. The secondary commercial schools take boys and girls on leaving the intermediate and secondary schools, and who hold the intermediate certificate. The object of these schools is to give a suitable training to young persons intending to take up a business career. They teach their pupils commercial technique, business correspondence, accountancy and bookkeeping. In the secondary commercial schools, foreign languages are added to the above subjects. The courses given vary in length, but extend in general from 1-2 years.

2) Technical schools for the metallurgical industry. The instruction given is chiefly practical work in the school workshops and replaces the term of apprenticeship in the workshop of a master-craftman. The courses provided vary in length. These schools train technicians and technical assistants.

3) The technical schools for the machine-tool industries require that candidates for admission should have attended a Volksschule

and completed a four year period of practical work. These schools train foremen of workshops and small concerns, and technical assistants in construction offices.

4) The agricultural schools (*Bäuerliche Werkschulen*) require that their pupils should previously have attended a country vocational school. The agricultural school exists to provide the farms with young workers who have had a thorough technical training.

5) In addition there are numerous schools where girls may receive training for the various women's professions in town and country. These schools organise several courses of various lengths, from which the pupils may choose according as they are seeking instruction for their own family use or with a view to taking up a profession. The technical training of women for work in farms is undertaken by the Farm Division for Young Women in the agricultural schools.

### TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENT SCHOOLS

1) Technical schools for mechanical engineering. These schools provide a technical training which will equip the recipients to undertake, in building concerns and machine factories, independent work of a kind which does not require as much knowledge as that provided by the Higher Technical Schools. To be admitted to such a school a candidate must hold a certificate testifying that he has attained the standard of the *Obersekunda* (3rd form from top) of a secondary school and he must have completed two years in the workshop. Candidates for admission who do not possess the *Obersekunda* certificate must pass a special entrance exam, and show that they have completed three years' practical work in their subject. The tuition given at these institutions covers a period of at least 5 half-years. The instructors consist mainly of engineers who have received a university education. A certain number of schools of this sort have added to their instruction courses in instrument making, electrotechnics, the installation of machinery and metal working.

2) The technical schools for building construction. These schools train master-builders and technicians for the private building industry, and also technical officials in the building administration of the Reich, and of the various States and communes. To be allowed to take part in the 5 half-year courses a pupil must have attended a secondary school up to the *Obersekunda* or pass an entrance examination. So-called preliminary half-year courses qualify pupils who have passed through the Volksschule and been engaged in practical

work, for admission to the regular training course. Most schools have departments for architectural building and hydraulic engineering.

3) To be admitted to the technical schools for the textile industry a prospective pupil must prove that he has had a good school education and practical experience. The object of these technical schools is to provide training for manufacturers, general managers and engineers in the textile industry, as well as works-managers and factory officials. The training they provide depends on the particular type of the textile industry of the locality.

4) Arts and crafts schools. The object of these institutions is to provide art workers with a technical and business training. Their curricula and courses vary considerably, the requirements of the local industry being generally taken into account.

5) The technical continuation school of agriculture is the educational centre for the German peasant. It gives peasants and farmers the opportunity of deepening and extending by a one-year course the practical and theoretical knowledge they already possess. Their chief object is to strengthen the peasant's feeling of attachment to his native soil and to intensify his sense of national solidarity.

To be admitted to such an institution a pupil must prove that he has had a good general education, corresponding to the intermediate certificate. In addition every pupil must have reached at least his twentieth year and must show that he has 3 1/2 years practical experience of agriculture. The total number of students at such an agricultural school must not exceed 50.

Since December 1935 there has been in Goslar the higher peasant school (*Bauernhochschule*) of the *Reichsnährstand*. Its object is to continue the training of selected pupils from the agricultural schools and to train future instructors for the agricultural schools. The most important part of their task is to prepare the future *Erbhofbauer* (owner of an hereditary farm) for all those tasks which the Reich hereditary farm law has imposed upon him. Young peasants between 20 and 30 years of age are admitted to these schools. These peasant schools are boarding establishments run on the lines of the German peasant's home. The curriculum includes history (political history and history of the peasantry), the principles, aims and measures of agrarian policy, heredity and ethnology, study of peasant culture, and physical training.

The associations of students at most of the technical schools, the so-called *Fachschulen*, are affiliated to the *Reichsstudentenwerk* (welfare



#### JOURNEYS' END

Hovs from the Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalt Naumburg  
visiting their Schulpforta comrades



DIGGING IN  
Labour Service



THEY'LL GET SOMETHING DONE  
Girls of the Land Year plan

organization for all students in the Reich). In this way the health and economic needs of the pupils in these institutions is cared for in a uniform manner. One day in the school week, Saturday, is placed at the disposal of the *Fachschulschaften* for the moral, physical and political training of their members. The education of the students in the ideals of National Socialism has been substituted for the one-time instruction in civics.

Besides those already mentioned there are a number of other technical schools which serve the particular educational needs of the different professions, e. g. handicraft schools, pottery schools, seamanship schools, ship's engineers' and mechanics' schools, technical schools for the Army and Navy etc. The types of schools described represent only a summary of the many-sided and diverse system of German technical schools.

## SCHOOL AND HITLER YOUTH

Since the beginning of the 20th century, repeated efforts have been made to model the training of the young people of Germany upon the most suitable lines possible. Whilst in the schools, the relationship between teacher and pupil was usually determined by the actual process of teaching and learning, outside the school it was the comradeship of youth for youth that gave birth to a relationship such as exists between a leader and those who are led. A teacher acquires his official authority once he has completed the State-controlled training for his profession and has therein proved himself capable, but a youth leader must constantly prove and maintain his authority over his comrades by exerting an unceasing, personal influence upon them. The educational plans evolved by the *Hitler Youth* are not just the haphazard consequences of the work done in school; instead, they are founded on the passionate desire to create which is so strongly in the hearts of the young. Alive to the fact that they themselves will be the Germany of tomorrow, they are ready to carry upon their own shoulders the responsibility for its welfare. Mindful of this, these young Germans, when their romantic experiments with the Pre-war Youth Movement proved fruitless, found new expression for their ideals in one vast, comprehensive organisation of youth under a common leader.

In the National Socialist State, therefore, the school, the Hitler

Youth leaders and the parents are all three responsible for the education of youth. The Reich Minister of Education and the Reich Youth Leader have assured the fruitful collaboration of these three agents by issuing a special regulation. According to this, Sunday belongs entirely to the parents and the family, while Saturday, as the State Youth Day (*Staatsjugendtag*), and in addition one evening a week are free from school-work and are devoted to the educational activities of the Hitler Youth. The other week days are reserved unrestrictedly as school-days. In this way, the education of the young generation in Germany has been given a broad uniform basis. To counteract the intellectual training given to the pupil in the school, the State Youth Day makes provision for the physical training and the stimulation of his team-spirit.

Every boy may decide for himself whether to join the Hitler Youth, which is divided into the following sub-organisations:

- 1) The *Hitler Jugend*, which includes boys aged 14-18;
- 2) The *Jungvolk*, which includes boys from 10-14;
- 3) The *Bund Deutscher Mädchen*, composed of girls from 15-21;
- 4) The *Jungmädel*, consisting of girls from 10-15.

The Reich Youth Leader (*Reichsjugendführer*) is the head of the whole organisation. Its many responsibilities include the social and national training of the young, their hygienic well-being, and the administration and extension of the Youth Hostel Movement.

In Co-operation with the German Labour Front, it also runs the Reich Apprentices' Competition (*Reichsberufswettkampf*) open to all workers, between the ages of 14 and 21, who are still apprenticed to a trade or training for a profession. By its practical nature, and to an extent unparalleled in any other country, this competition has impressed the youth of Germany with the nobility of achievement. The competitors are divided into groups according to their professions, and the various achievement classes must complete different practical and theoretical tasks. Throughout the competition employers and employees work together and, at a certain fixed time, workshops and offices all over Germany are carefully prepared for it. The underlying motive is neither money nor material reward of any sort, but the distinction and honour accorded to what is judged to be the best personal achievement, in any particular group of professions. On the first of May, the Day of National Labour, the youthful winners of this competition, along with the workers' delegations, are received and congratulated by the Führer himself. In this way,

the achievements of the young manual worker are placed on the same level as those of the brain-worker. This recognition of the dignity and nobility of every honourable achievement proves to young Germany that it is the worker and not the capitalist who guides the destiny of the nation, that the important factor is, not money, but creative achievement.

## LAND YEAR AND COURSES

There are two measures of the National Socialist reform of education which are of especial importance: the Country Year and the Courses. These two reforms are being described in detail since they have both the same aim, that of bringing town children into contact with the country — and have also both attracted attention abroad. In Prussia, in 1934, Reich Minister Rust instituted a Country Year (*Landjahr*) for children leaving the Volksschule. The object of the Country Year was "to imbue the town children with a feeling of oneness with their native country and people and to make them realise the value to the nation of a healthy peasantry". This creation of the National Socialist régime shows clearly modern Germany's attitude towards education, with its rejection of a one-sided intellectual training. The body and soul of the child are submitted to the formative influence of those forces which come from the soil, from blood and from the community of camp life. The child is removed from the cramped schoolroom of the city and plunged straight into active peasant life. In this way education extends beyond the limited sphere of the school, and young people of the right racial strain and of healthy stock are brought, by way of agricultural work and true community life, back to the purity of an existence rooted in the land. Such an education avoids the roundabout way of theoretical and literary instruction about peasant life and labour, and instead gives the Country-Year child, by means of practical work, a direct knowledge of the peasantry and of village crafts. Besides this practical education the children learn, by examples from real life, much about history, about their native country and people, about ethnology and the laws of heredity.

The Country Year, therefore, is neither a one year extension of the school régime, nor a subtle attempt at raising the school leaving age. On the contrary, it opens the portals of a new phase of life

to those young people upon whom the school has already closed its doors. It has frequently provided a splendid outlet for many boys who, without knowing it, were being hurled headlong into some entirely unsuitable career. The Country Year turned away their interests from the stilted life of the cities and diverted their attention from those intellectual professions for which they displayed not the slightest natural inclination.

In 1935 as many as 33 500 boys and girls were transferred from the industrial towns and big cities of Germany to the 600 camps established by this scheme. The statistics for Prussia show that whereas, in 1934, 21 000 boys took part in the Country Year, in 1935 the addition of 10 500 girls brought the total membership to 31 500, a record which will be maintained throughout 1936. Each camp caters for between 60 and 100 children who stay there for 8 months. And these children, it is interesting to note, were drawn from families of very varied social standing: — for 2980 were the children of state officials, 3800 of clerks, 3140 of tradespeople, and 11 500 of skilled or unskilled manual or industrial workers.

The organisation of the camp is in the hands of the camp leader who is assisted in his work by a number of group and section leaders. The camps are under the authority of the *Regierungspräsidenten* (presidents of local government boards) and are supervised by Country Year district leaders. The regulations concerning the methods used are issued by the Minister of Education.

Country Year leaders, teachers and assistants are selected carefully from among suitable persons and receive a training lasting 8 weeks. For the further training of Country Year leaders there are special camps and courses which give additional instruction in country games and sports, handicrafts and music, and add to the educational experience already acquired.

Whilst the Country Year is for children who have passed through the *Volksschule*, the *Courses* also aim at bringing pupils from the secondary schools, in the same way, into contact with the country and the peasants. To be true the *Courses* cover a shorter period but the educational effect hoped for is similar.

The *Courses* (*Nationalpolitische Lehrgänge*) are for the 4 upper classes (age 16-19) of the secondary schools and extend over three weeks of each year. The courses were held, as parallel institutions to the Country Year, for the first time in 1935 in 65 of the finest Youth Hostels of the Rhineland, thus establishing a new contact between

school and Youth Hostel. In each course, the same classes from different schools and, as far as possible, from different districts of the Rhine province were brought together. Besides the general work to be done in the hostel, the boys worked, under strict discipline, for the peasants, while the girls helped with the housework and gardening work of peasant homes. Pupils and teachers work together for the realization of a great task, and in this way many a teacher has won a deeper influence over his pupils by showing, through his selfless work and disregard of his own personal comfort, that he could do more than merely dogmatise in the class-room.

## LABOUR SERVICE

It has already been pointed out in the introduction that it is a special characteristic of education in Germany today that it is not limited to the school alone. It extends far beyond it. And in this connection we must mention, besides the Hitler Youth and Country Year, the German Labour Service (*Arbeitsdienst*).

On the 26th June 1935 compulsory Labour Service was announced for all Germans between the ages of 18 and 25. Germany is the first country in the world to take this step, and for this reason alone it is worth while inquiring into the educational value of German Labour Service. To compulsory school education and military service Germany has added compulsory Labour Service.

This three-fold system has given rise to misunderstandings. It is a mistake for other countries to imagine that the German Labour Service is a disguised form of military service. Nobody who has actually seen a German Labour Camp and known the men who work there could make such a statement. And it is equally as mistaken to think that German Labour Service like the American *Civilian Conservation Corps*, is primarily an economic remedy for unemployment. On this point *Adolf Hitler* and *Constantin Hierl*, the creator of German Labour Service, have from the beginning made it quite clear that Labour Service is a duty of honour for German Youth, a service rendered to the German nation. Just as in wartime the young German has to serve his country unflinchingly with his weapons, so in peace time he has to serve it with his spade. It is true that Labour Service has its economic aspect. But this is not of decisive importance. What is conclusive is the educational benefit

men derive from working side-by-side with spade and shovel, from mastering the same tasks together and from devoting all their energies to a labour which is clearly for the good of the whole nation.

But first of all a few words as to the economic aspect. Labour Service has been made compulsory for the whole of German youth: its brilliantly worked-out and far-seeing goal is the recovery of waste areas for cultivation, and the improvement of German land. There are in Germany 8,5 million hectares (a third of the total area of arable land) insufficiently drained, 1,9 million of marshy land, and 1,2 million hectares of waste land. Out of a further 5 million hectares ground is still being cleared, tracks and roads for agricultural purposes are being made and scattered estates are being co-ordinated. If Germany employs 200,000 men yearly doing these jobs there will be enough work for the next 20 to 30 years. The work of recovering waste land for cultivation is directed by the Reich Labour Leader (*Reichsarbeitsführer*) assisted by a staff of trained men. Well over 1000 camps, each containing about 150 men, are working today on the moors, at the seashore, on marshes and bogs, all inspired by the same goal of winning for the German people so much arable and fertile land that it can earn its bread from its own soil. According to statistics taken in the middle of 1935, of these 200 000 60<sup>0</sup>/<sub>100</sub> were at work in cultivating the soil and carrying out improvements, 10<sup>0</sup>/<sub>100</sub> were doing forestry work, 5<sup>0</sup>/<sub>100</sub> were working on land settlements, 15<sup>0</sup>/<sub>100</sub> were building roads, and 10<sup>0</sup>/<sub>100</sub> were doing special work needed for the making of artificial lakes, water-works, harbour works and the setting up of their own camps. The deciding factor from an economic point of view is, that only that work shall be undertaken, which has a high economic and cultural value and which cannot be carried out through the normal channels of paid labour. There is therefore no competition with the ordinary labour market.

To what extent the educational rather than the economic aspect of Labour Service is emphasized can be seen from the fact that in the spring of 1934, the *Deutsche Studentenschaft* (the general organisation of German students) decided on its own account, without any pressure from the authorities, to make Labour Service compulsory for every student before coming up to the university. The German student has thus won a crown of honour in the history of Labour Service. The *Artamanen* and certain groups of the *Youth Movement* of the post-war years can also be considered as pioneers of the idea of Labour Service. In the years 1920-30 workers, pea-

ants and students were again and again brought together in work camps, not in order to overcome unemployment, but contentedly on work shoulder to shoulder with members of all professions of the German people. What unites them all is the moral value of work. The contempt for manual labour has at last disappeared in Germany. In this respect Labour Service exists for a similar purpose as the Hitler Youth and the Country Year. And it will, in time, be equally as difficult for girls to be excused from Labour Service as it is for them to be absolved from attendance at school — but it will take many years for us to find the right form of Labour Service for women.

In the summer of 1931 the Brüning government, yielding to the pressure of public opinion, gave its legal sanction to the system of voluntary Labour Service. That was followed in 1932 by a second decree dealing with this «voluntary» Labour Service. It was a courageous step forward on the part of the government, but what was lacking was that free spirit and independence of the bureaucracy which Labour Service needs if it is to remain true to its ideals. Here the National Socialist Party has the undoubted credit for having cleared the way for compulsory Labour Service. With unflagging energy the Party succeeded in forming, beneath the surface, a firm organisation which was able, after Hitler's accession to power, to shoulder straight away the entire responsibility for German Labour Service. The aim of compulsory service was resolutely pursued step by step. Even before the proclamation of the law of the 26th June 1935 the same smart uniform had been introduced in all the camps and a clear organisation of leaders and led had been set working.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that German Labour Service is one of the most important achievements of the National Socialist revolution. Perhaps no people needed a school of social comradeship more than the Germans. But one cannot educate people to social comradeship by means of instruction and teaching; it is only possible through the application of the energies of all to the accomplishment of a common task. It is a fact that the decisive factor is the spirit and personality of the camp leader — a fact which was clearly perceived from the beginning by the Reich Labour Leader Hirtl. «The Labour Service leaders must know how to obtain unquestioning obedience from their subordinates and to maintain the strictest discipline and order. But they must combine this quality with a fine sense of justice and a fatherly concern for the welfare of their men, and, in character, they must be, not instructors but true educators.»

## THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS

The training of teachers has entered upon a critical stage in all the civilized countries of the world. This expresses itself not only in the numerous international congresses which concern themselves with the question of the training of teachers, but also in the actual reforms which are operating here and there all over the world. In Germany too the training of teachers has been a subject of controversy for many years.

It is well known that in this country the training of secondary school teachers was carried out entirely at the University, whilst that of the *Volksschul*-teachers assumed many different forms. The controversy was concerned therefore almost entirely with the reform of the training of *Volksschul*-teachers. The subject under discussion was, perhaps, not so much the professional qualifications but, rather, the social position of the primary school teacher—in other words, how to bridge the social gap which existed between him and the higher grades of the Civil Service.

At the beginning of this century, the training of *Volksschul*-teachers, throughout Germany, took place in special seminaries which were, so to speak, secondary schools particularly concerned with the teaching profession. At the age of 18 or 19, therefore, the student had completed his training which had nothing at all to do with the University. Colleges of this kind were retained longest in Württemberg and Bavaria, and were not converted into Training Colleges of the higher grade until 1934.

Elsewhere in Germany an attempt had already been made to raise this low-grade system of training for Elementary teachers to a much higher level. To do this three different lines of policy were pursued. The first method, adopted in states such as Hamburg, Saxony, Brunswick and Hessen, purposely transferred the training of elementary teachers to the University. The only difference between their training and that of the Secondary-school teachers was in the length of time put in. The *Volksschul*-teacher need remain only three years while the student training for a Secondary-school had to complete from 4 to 5 years at the University. According to the second scheme, tried out mainly in Thuringia (Jena), the *Volksschul*-teacher was sent for part of his time to the University where he received his purely academic training, and for the remainder of his course, to a completely separate institute.



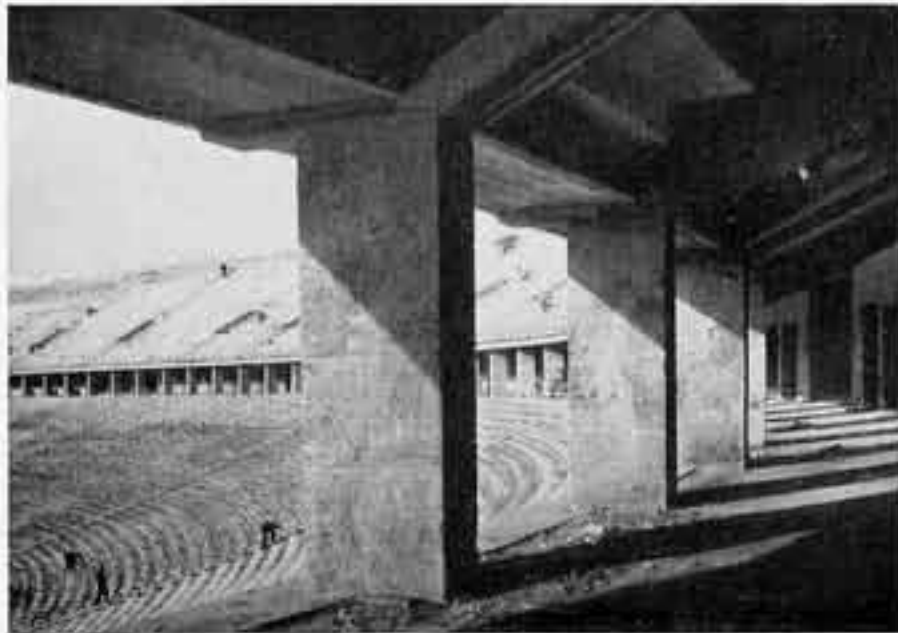
ONE OF THE MODERN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN BERLIN



SUNNY DORMITORY  
Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalt Oranienstein



THE HOME OF THE GERMAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION  
Haus der Deutschen Erziehung, Bayreuth



A PEEK INTO THE OLYMPIA STADIUM, BERLIN

The third policy, since its adoption in Prussia and other German states, has become of decisive importance. Prussia led the way by inaugurating, in 1926, 8 and, in 1930, a further 7 *«Pedagogic Academies»*. It is true that a number of them had to be closed down temporarily in 1932, but nevertheless they furnished the pattern for future training-colleges for teachers, not only in Germany but also in several foreign countries.

The *Pedagogic Academies* were from the first subjected to severe criticism. Their opponents declared that their predominantly academic training was totally inadequate for the professional requirements of the future Elementary school teacher. To a great extent, this criticism was justifiable, for the Academies did stand *«in the shadow of the University»* and, like it, nursed an ambition to pursue academic research.

It was here that National Socialism intervened. National Socialists, from the beginning, were convinced that the future educators of youth, and especially the Elementary teachers, must be trained differently from the scholar; that the atmosphere of the University or the *Pedagogic Academy* was not calculated to make the future teacher an educator of youth in the true sense of the word. On 30th April 1933, therefore, the Minister of Education founded a new *«Hochschule für Lehrerbildung»* (Training College) in Lauenburg, a small town in Pomerania. This foundation was to serve as a model for the future training of teachers. In the first place it was a practical expression of the theory that the teacher must remain in close contact with the country-side and villagers, and in the second place it was an obvious demonstration of the principle that he must receive his training not in the cities, but in the country.

The ideal of this College was to produce teachers who would not merely impart knowledge, nor appeal only to the intellects of their pupils, but who would influence the boys' and girls' characters. They were to be leaders of youth, not just schoolmasters, and as true educators their responsibility will extend far beyond the walls of the class-room. Behaviour outside working hours is, perhaps, nowhere more important than in the teaching profession. Therefore a very strict selection of those to whom, in the future, German youth is to be entrusted has become the chief principle behind the modern German plans for the training of teachers.

If we take a broad-minded view of the teaching profession, then it is obvious that the one-time barrier dividing the Elementary from

the Secondary school teacher must be pulled down. Both have to serve the nation. To both are entrusted the children of that same nation — Germany. It follows, then, as a matter of course, that this worn-out class distinction made between them has to be wiped out, and a uniform method of training suitable for both types, must be evolved. This was done by the decree of Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> 1935. In future, the Training College (*Hochschule für Lehrerbildung*) will constitute the first stage in the training of all German teachers without exception. We have not pursued the method of sending the Volksschul-teacher to the University, but have reversed the process and ordered the Secondary school teachers, in future, to spend their first year in a Training College. Only from there can they pass on to the University.

Thus for the future we have the following scheme. Every German who wishes to become a teacher must first attend a German Secondary school. After passing his school leaving examination, he will do Labour Service for half a year. Then he will spend one year in a Training College. The curriculum for this first year includes, on the one hand, theory of teaching (pedagogics, the study of character, child psychology, ethnology, study of the German people) and on the other, the beginning of his practical teaching. By observing other teachers' lessons and by himself attempting to teach a class he finds out, even in his first year, what he is to expect, and whether his *vocation* lies in this job. On completing this year, which is compulsory for all teachers, the student may choose between two alternatives. Either he may spend a further year at the Training College to enable him to sit for the Volksschul-teachers' examination; or he may leave the Training College and go to the University for a further three years' study, in the hope of passing the academic examination for Secondary school teachers.

The great advantage of this new arrangement lies in the fact that, at the commencement of his training, the Secondary school teacher will have the opportunity of seeing from personal contact with the school whether he is fitted for his profession. The most serious flaw in the old method lay in the fact that the Secondary school teacher occupied himself for four years at the University with academic studies, and only in the fifth or sixth year did he have the opportunity of discovering whether he had a natural gift for teaching. The Volksschul-teacher, on the other hand, receives an academic education in addition to the purely practical training provided in the earlier Seminaries.

But it is against this very arrangement that the strongest objections are raised. It is said that the modern Training College in Germany has betrayed scholarship. Physical training and social and political education, it is said, are so much to the fore that there is no room left for intellectual studies. This is quite erroneous. One should not confuse the new *form* of education for which the Training College stands, with the question of intellectual studies. It is true that the future German teacher as soon as he enters the College is placed in an atmosphere similar to that which he will find later with his pupils; that is to say, comradeship, social harmony, camp-like discipline, and a sense of strict selection are the natural characteristics of the Training College. But one would be doing the future educator an ill turn if one were to suppress, at the most critical stage in his personal development, his natural impulse for research and enquiry — if one did not permit him to undergo the intellectual discipline of academic work. Academic training must, therefore, in future occupy a very definite place in the reformed training of German teachers.

The most striking feature of this new method of training is its deliberate aloofness from that required for any other profession. The teacher does not fall into the same category as the carpenter or musician or University professor. For whilst these must be as highly specialised as possible in their own subjects, the teacher must be, above all, a really good fellow, possessing enough character and personality to lead wholeheartedly and unswervingly the boys and girls entrusted to him.

## GERMAN SCHOOLS AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES

It is a remarkable fact that, in 1935, the number of German school-children who went abroad by way of exchange, from school to school or from home to home, rose from about 1500 the total reached in preceding years, to about 3000. The flower of German youth streamed into more than 22 European and overseas countries — particularly into Sweden, England, France, the Balkans, and U.S.A. — in order to meet their comrades in these countries. This fact is important because, for a long time, National Socialist Germany has been reproached with pursuing a kind of inbreeding and with disregarding completely any contact with neighbouring peoples. Ger-

man youth has strikingly refuted this accusation. But the figure 3000, in itself, may give rise to a second misunderstanding and evoke the comment that the will of the political leader has forced this rise in the number of »exchanges«, that it is a shining example of systematic National Socialist propaganda. Such a reproach is utterly childish. More persistently than any one else, the youth of Germany have refused to be made the instrument of cheap political propaganda. They know that it would be a sign of extreme rationalism to hope that, by means of propaganda, a foreign nation could ever be converted to a theory of life which is not already part of their very being.

No, there is a very different reason for the increase in the exchange of German school-children. It is the natural result of the fact that the youth of Germany have learned, at last, to love their own people and to see in their nation the ultimate and truest source of their well-being. Naturally enough, then, they have a sincere respect for their foreign contemporaries who hold their native lands in like regard. What drives our young people across the frontiers is a healthy curiosity to learn the ideas and customs of other races. Is it not a most profound experience to discover what are the forces that bind the youth of England and France to their native countries with the same devotion and patriotism with which the Führer has inspired the youth of Germany?

This is the great difference between modern and former times. During the ten years after the war, it is true that, in Germany, there was much talk of the exchange of school-children and of travelling abroad, but the proposals came almost exclusively from students and teachers of modern languages. They imagined that language constitutes the real and only difference between nations. One had only to teach children to surmount this language barrier and nothing else would prevent an understanding between these nations. It was the teachers of foreign languages who thought that one could use the »exchange« of school-children simply as an easy linguistic method, and that it would be sufficient to tempt youth with this bait.

They were mistaken. For young people know very well that language is not a technical thing that one can change at will, but that it is part of a people. When they go abroad they want to do more than just learn a foreign language. They wish to live and go among these people — to get to know them, as they really are. We do not want to »convert« anyone, for we know that other men

are at little able to change their »make-up« as we ourselves are. But we believe that personal contact between different races will awaken that mutual respect without which international co-operation of any real value is utterly impossible.

In many cases, exchanges are prepared by correspondence between school-children, and a decree of the German Minister of Education contains the following statement, which is in entire agreement with what we have said above: »By means of this correspondence, school-children must awaken a love and an understanding of their own people, they should extend their own knowledge of foreign countries and peoples, and at the same time help their correspondents to do likewise. From real contact with foreign nations there should spring a deeper understanding of their own people.« The exchange of boys and girls is regarded in the same light by the German department responsible for it.\*

Thus the international exchange and correspondence, to the German school of today, is more than just a means of linguistic technique. In the first place a prolonged visit abroad will prove useful to other subjects besides modern languages: Geography, the study of national characteristics, biology, history and physical training all profit from it. In addition to acquiring knowledge, by living in a foreign country the pupil gains an experience which has a decisive effect upon the rest of his life. On these journeys abroad one sees — more even than in the Camp or Country Year — which of the boys have tact, courtesy, modesty, courage and decision. And just as in the Courses, if he does not wish to loose control over his class, the teacher must act as leader.

We can think of no more suitable conclusion to these remarks than the words of the Reich Youth Leader, Baldur von Schirach, when he outlined the lofty ambitions underlying the system of trips and exchanges beyond the frontier: »I believe, he said, that European youth can work together on the basis of an understanding which must have as its motto: »Get to know each other!« It would be Utopian to believe that the world could be made better by doing this. Probably the world would not become better, but men would become juster.«

\*For all questions concerning the exchange of students apply to the »Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst«, Berlin NW40, Kronprinzenufer 13. For international school correspondence refer to the German centre: »Deutsch-ausländischer Schülerbriefwechsel«, at the same address.

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