

After another stay of several weeks in Berlin and a leisurely tour of the industrial section of the Ruhr, Mark and I ~~came~~ ^{went} to Munich, the capital of the Province of Bavaria in the southernmost part of Germany. ~~Mark was very excited at the prospect of a rewarding visit to this section.~~ Here the Hitler movement had had its start and had been nourished by the enthusiasm and encouragement of the Bavarian people. If there was a key to the phenomenon of the success of Nazism, it had to be found here. Mark was determined to interview innumerable people, to read all the ^{available} pamphlets and books pertaining to the region, and to do ^{whenever possible} ~~everything~~ ^{what} ~~possible that~~ the Bavarians did. He had us hitchhiking with rucksacks on our backs through the countryside; spending hours in beer parlors, though neither of us liked beer; attending night clubs that flourished with abandon, and going to the opera.

One Sunday afternoon we went to the State Theater for a performance of Wagner's Tristan and Isolde. Mark ~~didn't~~ ^{did} and still doesn't like opera. He loves ^{old} hymns and old songs such as "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "You Take the High Road and I'll Take the Low Road", but he felt ~~he should~~ ^{that}

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~~go to Tristan and Isolde.~~ If he didn't attend Wagnerian opera while he was in Munich, he would be overlooking "a very important factor" in the make-up of the Bavarian people, since they are devoted to Wagner above all other ^{composers} musicians. He had already been to two Wagnerian operas, Die Valkyrie and Parsifal and, as he said, "following the example of Mark Twain," he had sent an agent (me) to a ~~third~~ ^{third}, The Flying Dutchman. With deep conviction he announced that Sunday afternoon, "After Tristan and Isolde ^{and} I will have done my duty by Mr. Wagner. And I don't mean just on this trip; I mean for a lifetime."

The State Theater was a magnificent building, perfectly suited to ponderous pieces. Besides ⁱⁿ accomodating the royal boxes of the kings of Bavaria, it had six galleries above the yawning main floor, the first of them similar to the golden horseshoe of the old Metropolitan.

^{A row} ~~Many and my~~ seats were in the first row of the second balcony, fairly close to the stage. A ^{barbed} wire fence, resembling chickenwire, was stretched in front of us and the other occupants of the first row to prevent articles from dropping on the people below.

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had the 2nd balcony really close to the stage?

A few minutes before the curtain was scheduled to go up, as ^{Mark} he leaned over the ^{rail} ~~as far as the~~ chickenwire would allow, watching the house rapidly fill, ^{he} ~~Mark~~ saw Hitler.

"There's Hitler," he whispered to me excitedly. ^(not more than twenty-five feet away) Hitler was ~~sitting~~ near the front ^(the mezzanine) the golden horseshoe ring¹ and, as it extended ^a farther out over the ^{orchestra} main floor than our balcony, we could look directly at him. ~~He wasn't more than twenty-five feet away.~~ He was with a party of three men and three women, young, attractive-looking, slim, and dark complected. He and the other men were in tuxedos and the women in evening ^{clothes}....

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Soon a few people in the pit discovered ^(The Fuehrer) him. Lorgnettes and opera glasses were lifted in his direction; people here and there stood up, turned around, and gazed ^{up} at him. ^{Then} ~~However,~~ before the ~~news could spread,~~ the curtain went up and every body settled down to listen to the music.

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But ^{however} Mark, ~~continued to stare at Hitler.~~ He was more interested in ^{Hitler} him than in Tristan and Isolde. With the ^{music} ~~music~~ pouring forth, Hitler leaned forward, his opera glasses to his eyes. Through the whole, long first act he sat on the edge of his seat, drinking in every note, or so it seemed.

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At the end of the act, ^{as} Hitler joined in the applause that brought the singers back for eight or nine bows, ~~while he elapsed,~~ a young girl with fair waist-length, ~~fair~~ pigtailed eased up to the back of his chair and stood there, fidgeting. Two or three times she ~~started~~ ^{leaned} forward, then drew back. At last, when the applause died down, she ~~leaned~~ ^{bent} over Hitler's shoulder and held out a piece of paper. Hitler shook his head and spread out both his slim-fingered hands, palms up, as if to say he had no pencil. The girl handed him one. With the merest shrug of his shoulders he took the paper and wrote a word or two ^{of} no doubt his name.

By this time everybody ^{one} in the pit and in the galleries was standing ^{up}, gazing at him intently ^{and} those in the pit with their heads tilted back; those in the balconies ~~hanging over the rails and~~ ^{suddenly} staring downward. ^{and then} There was a high, windlike buzzing ~~then suddenly~~ a male voice in one of the upper balconies shouted, "Heil Hitler!"

The ^e Fuhrer swung about in his seat, lifted his hand, doubled his fist, and brought it down emphatically in an unmistakable gesture of angry protest. Simultaneously the ^{sounds} of "s-s-s-s" escaped like a rush of steam. Instantly the house fell

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silent and in a few minutes most of the audience, including Mark, filed out into the lobby to smoke, drink, and eat.

I ~~sat~~ ^{stayed} on in my perch, ~~continuing to watching~~ Hitler, who ~~didn't~~ ^{ing} go out either, and puzzled ~~ed~~ over what those "s-s-s-s"es meant. Did the people feel that Hitler ^{he allowed to} should enjoy a quiet evening of opera if he so desired, or were they hisses of disapproval and anger?

Hitler, who had appeared shy from the very start of the evening, ~~tried to withdraw even more into himself.~~ ^{he} crouched as low in his seat as he possibly could, kept ~~his~~ ^{one} hand to his face, and looked no farther to the right or left than to the men who sat beside him. Never once did he lean over to speak to the three women on the far side of the men.

In the moments between the lowering of the lights and the raising of the curtain for the second act, Hitler and his three ^{who had returned to his seats} male companions slipped from their places and disappeared. Mark was galvanized by this development. Excitedly he whispered to me, "Do you suppose Hitler is frightened at being recognized when he has no bodyguard to

leaving the ladies (see p. 104 and above) without escorts? OK?

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protect him? Do you suppose he and his friends decided it was ^{wise} ~~safer~~ for him to escape before a further demonstration?"

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With Hitler gone, Mark lost all interest in the evening. He rested his chin on the velvet up~~per~~ holster of the rail, pillowed his face ^{against} ~~in~~ the chicken wire, and went to sleep. When the performance ended ~~and~~ I shook him awake, his nose and cheeks were deeply indented with the pattern of the wire. And they remained that way, too, for twenty-four hours, despite repeated scrubbing with cold water.

^{The next day} Mark felt he must visit ~~to~~ the Brown House, the cradle of the Nazi movement. ~~It was~~ a rather commodious and handsome cradle, ^{It} might have been taken for a palace. Nearby were a dozen great buildings set up by the lavish Bavarian kings who had ruled until the last war ^{toppled} them from their thrones.

The House ^{was} more yellow than brown, ~~it~~ was surrounded by a massive iron fence, ^{somewhat} similar to the one around ^{our} the White House. A ^{Nazi} Hitler flag was waving from the roof the day we went there, and a large crowd was milling about ^{outside} the fence and ~~peering between the pickets.~~ A band was playing in the garden and a half-dozen Nazis were striding in

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and out of the House. ~~As we drew closer and joined~~
~~the crowd, we saw~~ a burly Nazi guard ^{stood} standing at
the main doorway, a pistol in his holster. ~~Another~~ ^{Others}
~~guard stood~~ ^{were stationed} at each of the driveways to the rear
of the House and more were scattered about the
grounds. ^{The Fuehrer} Herr Hitler, a guard told Mark, was inside,
~~He was~~ having lunch in the court of the headquarters
with officers of the Party.

Hitler came to Munich almost every Friday
afternoon ^{and} this was a Saturday ^{and} stayed until
Sunday afternoon or Monday morning. He spent most of
Saturday in conferences with Nazi leaders because he
realized that ~~the continuation of~~ his power depended
upon the ^t continuation ^v of ^{of} the Nazi movement.

A band composed of Hitler youths played for him
while he was having lunch. The guard told us ~~and~~
~~others in the crowd~~ that ^{after lunch} when Herr Hitler ~~finished~~
~~lunch he~~ would come from the court of the Brown
House up the walkway and enter the side of the
house near where we stood. The crowd of several
hundred swelled around us in anticipation of his
^{appearance} coming. ~~More Nazis with rifles showed up,~~ More
important ^{looking} Nazis came and went, and the
more important ^{looking} they were, the louder was

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~~Relying upon the pictures~~ ⁹ Mark had seen in the newspapers, he thought he recognized Captain Roehm, one of the organizing geniuses of the revolution whose degeneracy was quite openly discussed later in Germany and in the United States; and Herr Strasse, whom Hitler ~~was~~ ^{by} reported to have credited with much of the success of the ~~Nazi rise~~. ^{nisc of the Nazis}

Though we waited ~~about~~ ^{for} a considerable time, Hitler didn't show, ~~however~~ ^{but}, this failure to see him ~~Hitler in action~~ ^{the Führer} at his headquarters didn't lessen Mark's obsession with the puzzling root of ~~his~~ Hitler's power and its amazing growth.)

^{no II} He began to believe he understood the real feel of the Hitler movement. It was basically un-German, he decided ^{more} Latin than ^{German} German, though Hitler had capitalized on several German characteristics ~~Characteristics~~ ^{features} and weaknesses, among them the love of uniforms of any kind and ^{an} almost ^a morbid sense of injustices at the hands of other nations. Hitler's was essentially a mass movement based more on emotionalism than upon intelligence and solid reason.

~~Munich's province, Bavaria,~~ ^{that is the province in which Munich is located,} Bavaria, is a land of strong superstitions, ^{Mark} ~~he~~ pointed out. On Walpurgis night of each year the peasants get ^{out} their great bull whips and go through the mountains cracking them to drive out witches and evil spirits. Hitler's

walking up a driveway not much action?

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hometown on the border, which was only a line as far as these people were concerned, had produced five spiritual mediums. And the peasants refused to believe that mad King Ludwig ^{had} who had been deposed and confined to his castle and ^{filled} himself ^{was} dead. They still believed he wandered abroad at night just as he had ~~done~~ in the old days.

Folk plays and legends survived in pageants at Rothenberg, at Dinkelsbuehil, and other towns of the region. From this southern section also came the stories of Parsifal and Lohengrin and ^{those} ~~others~~ of the Niebelungen.

^{at the same time} Bavaria, ~~too~~, was ^{liberal} a land of strong religious ties, ^{with} Catholicism ~~was~~ a potent force. The ^{suffering} ~~emaciated~~ figure of Christ, in plaster or wood, hanging on the cross, was a commonsight; ~~in all kinds of places;~~ the beneficent phrase, "Gross Gott" (God's greeting) was murmured to strangers as well as friends; and countless brown-robed priests, ~~with belts of beads~~ tied loosely about their retund waists, mingled in the drinking halls and quaffed mammoth mugs of beer. Also, ^{Bavaria's} cradled in ^{its} mountains, ¹⁵ ~~was~~ the village of Oberammergau, devoted to the presentation of the Passion Play.

So Mark came to the conclusion ~~that~~ it was

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from this emotional, superstitious, religious soil that the Hitler ^{had} movement sprang ^{from} a sort of mystic soil that ^{was} ~~is~~ in the hazy realm between genius and insanity, and ^{that had} ~~has~~ for its chief characteristic a terrific fervor and "spiritual" quality.

Though the origin of the Nazi movement ^{formed} ~~became~~ clear in Mark's thinking, he still clung to his belief that Hitler's days were numbered. He even gave an interview to that effect to Francis A. Jamieson of the Associated Press when we returned to the United States. Under the dateline, New York, August 19, the story began: "Six months in Germany have convinced Mark Ethridge, southern newspaper editor, that the luster of Hitlerism is rapidly wearing off.

"The German people are beginning to realize that their hopes through Hitler are pretty much of the will-o'-the-wisp variety and that he cannot, following the policy he has been ^{to} holding to, give them a prosperous economy," said Ethridge....

"The Hitler regime, ~~said the editor~~ has been in the nature of an emotional fervor and nothing is more fickle, whether it be a hell-fire damnation revival or the adoration of a political demagogue....

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The German people are beginning to feel the reaction to their emotional jag....^{n ✓ 11/}

Mark's only excuse for his woeful mistake in judgment, ⁴one of the two worst mistakes of his newspaper career, ¹was due to his biased judgment of the German people. He believed they were too sensible a ^{people}race to continue to put up with Hitler.

(It was eleven years later that he made what he con- sidered his second worst mistake in judging character. It was his erroneous estimate of Vice-President Henry Wallace.)

xxx

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what was the other?
Is it ever explained?
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Henry Wallace