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## Hitler And The Third Reich

Anthony M. Ludovici



# Hitler and the Third Reich

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## Part 1

The present temper of the German people, unlike that of their kinsmen before the Great War or under the Republic, is also unlike anything that Europe has witnessed probably since the Middle Ages.

The visitor to their country who fails to grasp this fact, like the stay-at-home Englishman whose Press does not enable him to appreciate it, misses the most fundamental feature in the whole of Nazi Germany.

For something akin to a new religious zeal has spread throughout the land, making the people wistful, but strangely light-hearted and confident in their earnestness. It is as if they had been not only raised from the dust, but also shown a star or ball of fire which will lead them to the fulfillment of their destiny.

It was to be expected that a great proud nation, broken and humiliated, would respond with turbulent gratitude to anyone who helped her to recover her self-esteem and face the world once more without shame. But those who are inclined to see only thankful exultation over rescued vanity in the present mood of the German people would sadly misunderstand and therefore underrate what has happened. For in Germany today there is none of the truculence of a greedily recovered self-confidence, none of the self-complacency of a people basking in a light which their sense of superiority claims. On the contrary, everything is reserved, serene, almost reticent, as if beneath the inexpressible joy that everyone feels there stirred the constantly sobering reflection that the defeat, the humiliation and the shame of yesterday was a judgement, a penance for the mistakes of the older generation.

The Führer never loses an opportunity of reminding them of this. But it is a thought that must form spontaneously in most of their minds, because their behaviour, even towards strangers and foreigners, bears the stamp of it. They appear to have reached a level of self-respect from which they look down with anxious dread upon any impulse, word or action which might bear an asocial or negative interpretation. Petty deeds of mutual strife, hostility or exploitation are naturally scorned as *infra dignitatem*.

Again and again the visitor is impressed by the scrupulous honesty, consideration, patience and willingness of menials, public servants and the rank and file of government employees. I could mention scores of instances of this. The tone of the country seems to be set by the general consciousness that a great common good is being served, and that those who depart too conspicuously from the example of impersonal effort set by the Führer may wreck his prodigious scheme. Thus a mood prevails which makes certain things—mean, ill-natured thoughts and actions—appear unworthy of a great nation stirred and united by a lofty purpose.

‘Not individual gain, but the common good!’ This can be read on almost every hoarding. And it is no empty phrase. It genuinely inspires the mass of the people, and makes for a

wholesome reluctance to indulge in ill-informed criticism and fault-finding while the gigantic work of reconstruction is in progress. Indeed, the Führer himself is the very last to claim infallibility in his function, and with a wisdom surely exceptional in history repeatedly takes the people into his confidence to remind them that, if he is to act with courage and a cheerful readiness to shoulder responsibilities, they must allow him occasionally to make mistakes.

The last great movement of anything like the same importance as National Socialism was the Reformation. With his teaching, the fire he put into it, and the music and song he used so skillfully to carry it into the hearts of the people, Luther swept the country. But he divided Germany and left it divided. Even the united Empire created by Bismarck, although it integrated a congeries of petty states whose rulers had often been dominated by mutual jealousies, left Germany in the grip of parties whose rivalries proved even more dangerous and disintegrating.

The Nazi movement, however, has united the country as no country has been united since the Renaissance. It has not merely destroyed the barriers between the states; it has obliterated the demarcations of factions. There are no parties today in Germany. Nor should there be in any so-called 'nation'.

If the people naturally look up to their leader more as a saviour than a statesman, more as a heaven-sent prophet than a politician; if, at the loudspeakers fixed to almost every pillar and post in the land, they hang on his words and his voice and are ready to accept and do his bidding; and if to us in strife-ridden England they appear to be standardized, 'conditioned' on a scale no free Briton would tolerate, let us in this country remember two important aspects of this state of affairs:

The first is that over here we cannot pretend to be able to fathom the depths of the humiliation they suffered after the Great War and therefore cannot appreciate the extent of their devotion to their rescuer.

The second is that we, too, in this country are standardized and 'conditioned' on a vast and alarming scale. But whereas in Germany the standardizing and conditioning powers are responsible and ready to answer for the effects they produce, over here these powers are wholly irresponsible and, as things are, could not by any conceivable means be made to answer for what their untrammelled use of publicity enables them to effect in the moulding of so-called 'public opinion'.

Herr von Ribbentrop assured me that if tomorrow the Führer were to ask the German people to do without sheets on the beds, they would cheerfully accede to his request and, to a family, give up this form of comfort.

There seems to me not the slightest doubt that this is true. But before we call such a request tyranny, and the hearty response to it slavery, let us be quite sure that we understand the amount of mutual confidence, affection and respect it implies.

When I was asked by a prominent member of the government, a man who, in his day, had ruled over one of the smaller nominally autonomous states of the Empire, to sum up in a line how the Germany of the Third Reich impressed me, I replied that I could think of nothing like it in recent history and could compare it only to what I imagined western Europe must have been when our great Gothic cathedrals were being built.

Nor is there anything factitious or perfunctory in the enthusiasm with which the people acclaim and welcome the enigmatical figure who has contrived to strike this deep religious note in their hearts. I witnessed two public appearances of the Führer. I saw him drive into a vast stadium at half-past eight in the morning to address 80,000 children of the Hitler Youth Movement and a few thousand adults; and, an hour or two later, I saw him arrive at the Lustgarten in the centre of Berlin to address a vast assembly of working men and specially invited guests of both sexes.

On both occasions something more than ordinary enthusiasm was displayed and no visitor required to understand the language in order to feel the magic of the moment.

Long before the actual appearance of the smart black touring car bearing the Leader, the ringing cheers of the populace could be heard in the distance drawing gradually nearer and nearer, until, when the car entered the arena, the whole gathering of thousands took up the cry and, standing with right arms raised, shook the May morning with their greetings.

‘Sieg!’ (Victory) he cried.

‘Heil Hitler!’ the throng roared in return.

‘Sieg!’ he cried again.

‘Heil Hitler!’ came the response once more.

‘Sieg!’ he cried for the third and last time.

‘Heil Hitler!’ was thundered back by 100,000 voices.

No sense of humour—no! But we should be thankful that there are still occasions, even in modern England, when a sense of humour would be thought out of place. We still see no humour in the death of a beloved relative or in a broken heart, or a lost love. And is it not possible for the degree of passion behind the love for a relative or a betrothed to be equaled by the love for a figure which stands for the salvation of a people’s native land, their pride and their hopes?



I certainly saw no sign of a sense of humour in the reception given to the Führer on these two occasions. But I witnessed instead something bordering on the magic, something which, although beyond reason, was anything but madness.

I saw bent old men and women who must have known Bismarck, the Kaiser William I and the glorious early seventies of last century, and I saw crowds of educated and uneducated middle-aged people, young men and women and adolescents, thousands of whom could never have seen the days of the Empire. But one and all displayed the same passionate affection of children in the presence of the Führer, and to watch them was to learn what miracles can still be wrought with the ultra-civilized and often effete populations of modern Europe if only they are given a lofty purpose.

This is surely the secret of the perpetual hold religions have on men, and it explains Adolf Hitler's magic influence. To exhort men to commercial and industrial prosperity is not enough. To stimulate them to make good in individual enterprise, in profit-making, in self-help, ultimately leaves the best elements of the nation cold—not merely cold, but fractious, restless, mutually negative and given to petty criticism and fault-finding. In fact, it creates the populace which is typical of modern democratic politics, and makes possible every kind of large-scale fraud, from a general election to the vast advertisement hoardings of a city like London.

The religious appeal, however, by giving men a higher, impersonal purpose, sets humanity at one stroke above the market-place, above considerations of merely individual gain, with all that these mean in internecine and suicidal struggle. And to have given his nation such a purpose, to have persuaded them that such a purpose can be worthwhile, is the secret of the Führer's magic. To my mind, this constitutes his chief importance to the German nation.

It is perhaps a pure coincidence that this man who, according to his own admission, moves and acts in state affairs with the somnambulistic certainty (*nachtwandlerische Sicherheit*) of a sleep-walker—that is to say, whose most important decisions spring from the mysterious strata of the unconscious—should have chosen for the badge of his party and his movement the ancient mystic sign known as the gammadion, fylfot or swastika.

But when we bear in mind that this very badge was once the symbol of a mysterious cult, and has for countless ages stood as the sign of a particularly instinctive and deep-seated form of worship, the choice of the symbol seems particularly apt. For the fact that Germany is today stirred by a purpose superpersonal and therefore religious is beyond question. Whether the conspicuous diminution in crime all over the country is to be ascribed to this religious mood, I cannot pretend to judge. If, however, I throw my mind back, as I like to do, to the days in western Europe when our great cathedrals were springing up in almost every large town, I imagine that they, too, must have been times of a low incidence of crime. For it is impossible to believe that all that anonymous, impersonal work, which must in millions of

cases have offered no hope of being completed before those engaged upon it died, could have been performed in any mood which promoted the negativism of crime.

When, therefore, we learn from Liebermann von Sonnenberg, the head of the Criminal Investigation Department of the German government, that since 1932 crime in Germany has declined 50 per cent, and in some districts actually as much as 60 per cent, and that in all Prussian towns of over 50,000 inhabitants murders have declined 32 per cent, robberies by violence 63 per cent and burglaries 52 per cent, it ought not to surprise us.

To suppose that, in such a mood and with such impersonal strivings, the German nation can now entertain purely predatory and venal aims would be wholly to misunderstand the feat Adolf Hitler has performed, and the metamorphosis his magic has effected.

He has effected this transformation on a foundation of repentance, on the constant reminder that Germany's defeat and humiliation were a judgement and a penalty. Those who have been chastened by his appeal, and they represent over 90 per cent of the German nation, cannot therefore be insincere in their desire for a relationship of peace and friendship with their neighbours and particularly with England.

This is not to say, however, that peace and friendship do not impose certain duties of mutual consideration on the parties concerned. But it struck me that it is only to that feeling of duty, and not to ideals of force and violence, that modern Germans now look with hope for the redress of their wrongs and the relief of their domestic difficulties.

Thus the greatest of the Führer's reforms and most creative of his innovations, as I hope to show, have aimed at construction and development at home. And if, in this work, Hitler and his advisers have in the last three years performed miracles, about which we in this country hear little, and appear to care less, it is to the rigorous press-censorship now prevailing over here that we must ascribe both our ignorance and indifference.

## Part 2

It is difficult to give an adequate impression of the enormous assistance afforded to the Führer's various schemes of construction by the spirit he has contrived to stimulate in the German people.

In a country uninspired by his personal leadership, many of his reforms, particularly those deriving from his biological revaluation and his wise attitude towards women, manual labour and agriculture, would undoubtedly have provoked the likeliest opposition. And if so many of his fundamental innovations have passed smoothly into the everyday life of the people to transform their sentiment and outlook, he has to thank the religious mood with which he first infected his nation.

Nowhere, however, has the change of point of view and life-habits been more conspicuously displayed than in the movement which led to the so-called 'labour' camps, of which there are now 1,300 for men alone all over Germany. Designed, on the cultural side, to reduce class cleavage, to whittle down the marked difference of esteem in which manual and mental work are held throughout Western civilization, and to promote health and manliness in all classes, these labour camps are, economically, one of the greatest assets of the new regime. For by providing the means of concentrating unpaid labour at all these points in the land where it is most needed, either in order to develop or reclaim existing wastes, or to help newly settled urbanites to make good as farmers, market gardeners, fruit-growers, etc., it has given an impetus to agricultural development which, without it, would have been quite unrealizable.

It is not generally appreciated in England that the problems in the sphere of agriculture alone which the Führer had to face, and which had actually been studied by him and his advisers before his party came into power, were manifold and complicated.

The Treaty of Versailles deprived Germany of 9.5 per cent of her people and over 13 per cent of her area. Thus the ratio of population to territory was in any case less favourable than it had been before the war. Over and above this, however, the land lost on her eastern and western frontiers was of a very high grade, and therefore made the total decrease of her agricultural area more than it seemed—i.e., nearer 30 per cent than 13 per cent in actual value.

In addition, about one million of her nationals returned to the Reich from ceded territories, and, owing to the increasing use and perfection of labour-saving machinery, ever larger numbers of industrial workers were being turned out of work every year. So that, failing a wise and drastic policy calculated to improve the state of agriculture and provide fresh employment for the workless (numbering 6,000,000 before 1933), it seemed as if disaster must soon overtake the country.

Two things were clear—thousands of recently urbanized families must at all costs be restored to the land, and the arable areas of the Reich must be increased.

A 'back to the land' movement was therefore immediately inaugurated on a grand scale, while under the slogan that Germany, if she chose, could conquer a whole new province for herself within her own borders, another movement was started to improve the quality and yield of existing agricultural areas, to reclaim millions of acres of existing marsh, heath and moorland in various parts of the country, and shoals and flats along the North Sea coast, to regulate the course of small rivers, to plant and grub, and to transform waste woodland into profitable forests.

In connection with the first movement, an administration known as the *Reichsstelle für die Auswahl deutscher Bauernsiedler* was soon set up for selecting desirable people for settlement in rural districts as farmers, farm labourers and peasants, which, working on the lines of the new biological revaluation, granted permits, land and sometimes credits only to the best people from the standpoint of descent, health and capacity. Thus favour is invariably shown to:

- (a) Men who in their family line and blood have long had some close relationship to the soil and been lately separated from it—for instance, farmers who have been recently uprooted or lost their farms through no fault of their own.
- (b) Men who have large families. (Only men over 25 and married are considered.)
- (c) Men who served in the late war, or who are known to have served in the SA (Hitler's *Sturmabteilung*) or the SS (the biological cream of the SA).
- (d) Men who have served in the Reichswehr (the post-war German army).
- (e) Finally, rural labourers whom adverse conditions have driven from the soil.

I have not the statistics for 1935 at hand, but in 1934 the Office for Selecting German Settlers on the Land received 15,948 applications of which 11,094 were accepted and provided for, and since the inauguration of the movement (not reckoning 1935) 67,000 new farmsteads have been established, covering about 1,827,800 acres. Altogether, up to the end of 1934, about 2,964,000 acres had been secured for settlement purposes.

The government reckons that it takes about five years for these newly settled farmers and peasants to make good and, during their first years of endeavour, every kind of assistance is given them provided they display the right spirit and energy.

Now, in the work of reclaiming the soil for the reception of these new agricultural workers, and in the task of helping them to make good, the Reich Labour Service finds its principal functions, and, apart from the cultural advantages the camps secure for the whole male population, as described above, it is in these principal functions that they constitute one of the greatest assets of the new regime.

Briefly stated, the conditions of the service are these:

Every young German must enter the Labour Service between the end of his seventeenth and the end of his twenty-fifth year; he is enrolled only after a thorough physical examination and has to serve for six months, after which his year's military service begins.

Life in the camps is divided between manual labour with spade and hoe, in which all must take part, strenuous drilling exercises and periods of leisure given to reading and the study of contemporary events and problems. The day starts at 5 a.m. in the summer and 6 a.m. in the winter, and ends at 10 p.m.—the time after supper (7 p.m.) and short intervals during the day being devoted to rest and leisurely pursuits.

Each camp consists of 152 men, and there are at present about 1,300 camps for men in Germany. Thus, year in, year out, the country can command the work of 200,000 young men whose labour is to all extents and purposes unpaid. Actually, they do receive about 3d a day in pocket money.

A similar organization exists for German girls. But, so far, the service has not been made compulsory. Nevertheless, such is the impersonal spirit prevailing in Germany today that, on the present voluntary basis, these Reich Labour Service girls have come forward in sufficient numbers from all classes of society to form 500 camps which, like those of the men, provide unpaid labour devoted to assisting the newly settled peasants and farmers all over the land.

As to what these men's labour camps have done, let it suffice to say that, out of an area of 15,437 square miles (about half the size of Portugal) of swamp land, half has already been reclaimed for agricultural purposes; hundreds of thousands of acres of waste land and waste woodland, of no use to the peasants, have already been transformed into profitable forests; and drainage and irrigation, now being carried out, is expected to double the value of more than 46,312 square miles of existing agricultural land of poor quality.

It is, in fact, reckoned that the net annual proceeds derived from the work done by the Labour Service organization have already exceeded 10 per cent of the cost of the organization. But the full value of what they are now creating in the form of new agricultural areas, new farmsteads and a new peasant population will, of course, not be realized for perhaps a generation or two.

I visited several of these men's camps in the HavelIndische Luch and questioned men whom I saw at work. As I had been led to expect, there were among them representatives of every class of the community, and they all appeared to be enjoying their labours and flourishing under the discipline of the camps. They were young enough to relish the hard work and the rough life as an adventure, and they all looked healthy enough to thrive under spartan conditions.

Their camp officers who, without exception, attracted attention by their unusually fine physique and manly bearing, are men specially picked from the standpoint of psychophysical standards. They do not separate from their men at meals or during the hours

of leisure, as army and navy officers do, but have to live every moment of their waking hours with them, setting them an example of good manners, correct speech and a cultured outlook.

In the women's camps the girls are subjected to much the same camp discipline, but their work is of course different. They may, if called upon, help the newly settled farmers and peasants in light work in the fields, but their principal function is to give the rural families help in the home as unpaid domestic servants, dairymaids, nursemaids, etc. In this way, the newly settled farmers who are trying to make good are substantially assisted at no cost to themselves, and are often able to have the more skilled work of their wives in the fields, while the voluntary Reich Service workers look after the home and the children and do the cooking, mending and washing.

Valuable by-products of both the girls' and the men's labour camps are, of course, the excellent discipline that all these young people have to undergo at a period in their lives when discipline is most salutary, the breaking down of class barriers by the mixing of the various social strata in the camps, and the benefit to all concerned derived from the closer acquaintance made by the children of middle- and upper-class families with manual labour, its hardships, its advantages and its immense importance in the economy of the nation.

'Work ennobles!' (*Arbeit adelt!*)—that is the device of this branch of the national service. And, thanks to the right spirit and the right values, and in spite of a world that has too long worshipped only money and the successful stockbroker and financier, it somehow comes true. It can already be seen in the faces and manners of the people, and it is evidenced in every relationship of high and humble in the life of modern Germany.

Meanwhile, promoting and consolidating the 'back to the land' and Reich Labour Service movements, laws have been passed which make it difficult, particularly for young rural women, to swell the throng of country folk who annually try to migrate to the large towns; and a very important series of laws—not based on abstract principles or theory, but rooted in peasant custom—which came into force in September 1933 and are known as the *Reicherbhofrecht* (the Law relating to the Inheritance of Landed Property) now provide for the hard-working and capable peasant a security in his holding, which no usurious or other kinds of creditors can defeat (paragraphs 37-39 of above law). The test appears to be not whether the creditor has a lien on the land, but (a) whether the present debtor has defaulted through any fault of his own, and (b) whether the peasant debtor is a capable, knowledgeable and diligent farmer and has shown that he can keep his land in a proper state. The general idea inspiring the whole measure is that land cannot and should not be treated as moveable property, to be bought and sold in the open market.

It is impossible in the space at my disposal to describe in detail what this law has done to secure the peasant landowner in this holding, to regulate the inheritance of land so as to keep it in the hands of worthy families, and generally to enhance the prestige of

conscientious and painstaking husbandry, but anyone who wishes to study the law in detail can do so in the excellent handbook on the subject by Otto Baumecker (*Handbuch des gesamten Reichserbhofrechts*), the third edition of which was published in Cologne in 1935.

### Part 3

Great as are the reforms discussed in my last article, and wonderful as is the tribute their success pays to the inspiration of the Führer, they are, however, as nothing compared with his innovations in a far more difficult and pitfall-strewn field—the field of human biology.

Three influences—urbanization, industrialism and the negative Socratic values which began to prevail with the spread of Protestantism, and happened to be favourable to the two former—have now, for almost two centuries, been inclining the people of Europe, and all countries like Europe, to set their faces ever more and more steadfastly against a biological attitude towards man. And this has resulted in the tendency of modern civilization not only to neglect and despise the body but also to exalt as praiseworthy all those practices which favour the multiplication of biologically inferior human beings.

To deal with urbanization first, it must be clear, even to those who are unfamiliar with the contempt in which boroughs and their inhabitants were held by the rural populations of the Middle Ages, that the city and town do not and cannot breed the healthiest, sturdiest and most active members of the community and cannot, therefore, cultivate a very fastidious taste in standards of human desirability. The kind of occupation open to the town-dweller—quite apart from the air he breathes and the food he tends to live on—neither selects nor is calculated to maintain the soundest of types. Moreover, by withdrawing the human being from a close touch with the realities of Nature's work and laws, from the everyday and obvious lessons to be learnt by watching cultivated plants and animals grow, and observing the conditions essential to their prosperity, town life must in time foster a fantastic or unrealistic attitude to life and its problems, which of itself constitutes mental or intellectual unsoundness.

Over and above this, however, in towns and cities, the very roots of human life tend to wither. In the country there is always some way in which the child only just past toddlerdom can help in the general impersonal work of Nature, even if it is only to scare the sparrows from the ripening corn. Thus children are always welcome and quickly become a further asset to the house in which they are born. But in towns the child tends to become more and more a luxury, an undesired by-product of the sexual adaptation of its parents. The result is that an unnatural relationship begins to grow up between married couples, and women as a whole incline to neglect and despise maternal occupations. In fact, society reaches a condition known as feminism, on the one hand, in which, as even the feminist Havelock Ellis admits, 'motherhood is without dignity'—indeed, how could it have dignity when children are unwanted?—and, on the other, a condition known as pornocracy, in which the taste of the harlot, and the outlook of the harlot, necessarily tend to prevail.

Industrialization, even under the most humane and solicitous factory laws and regulations, confirms and intensifies most of the worst influences of urbanization. It cannot help so doing, because, in addition to offering the urban crowds unhealthy occupations, it has not



reached that stage of enlightenment when it would necessarily regard it as a duty to protect the character and minds of the so-called proletariat from the besotting and degrading influence of mere machine-minding, or of performing, year in, year out, unskilled, repetitive and often merely fragmentary tasks. Besides, the factory can be adequately served by types which would not have the stamina or endurance for heavy farm work, and this again exercises with the town a preferential selection in favour of unsoundness.

On its occupational side, therefore, it undermines the garnered qualities of a national constitution and character. It lives on the spiritual and physical capital of the people, without making a single contribution of value to either from one generation to another. Thus, it creates among a mass of physically deteriorated, uprooted and traditionless individuals, already removed from the instructive realities of life by their urban habits, a standardized type of mind and character, which is steadily becoming more and more helpless, passive, colourless and servile. It means that a race is being reared which in character, body and mind is hardly civilized.

Turning now to the third influence—that of Socratic values—which has made the two former influences possible, it is difficult for the modern man of western Europe to appreciate the extent to which he has become saturated, conditioned and disciplined both in body and mind by the values which tend to underrate and neglect body standards. If we have ceased to look with horror on a man or woman who, although under thirty, has false teeth, if we have ceased to demand an apology from people with foul breath, and if we imagine that human rubbish and human foulness can give us good laws, good poetry, good science and good art, it is wholly and exclusively due to Socrates and his influence.

His exclusive claim to notoriety is that, thanks to his own wretchedly poor physical endowments in the midst of a population of beauty-venerators, he found himself forced in self-defence to discover a dialectical method of excusing every kind of physical disreputability, degeneracy and putrescence. He argued, after the manner of the fox who had lost his tail, that the beauty of the body is but a slight affair and that man's greatest achievement is to set a higher value on the beauty of the soul, and he declared to Glaucon, 'If there be any merely bodily defect in another, we will be patient of it and love the same'.

'Merely bodily defect'!—these three words epitomize the whole savour and trend of Socratic teaching.

Thus, radiant and flawless health is everywhere rare among human beings, and wherever Western civilization has spread the minority of the sound are taxed out of existence and sacrificed in order to preserve, succour and pay honour to the unsound.

Now, to set one's face against this deeply implanted bias, to invite modern men, and particularly modern women, in the teeth of their morbid sentimentality, to change their attitude and to honour and look up to the sound, to protect the sound from extermination

by the unsound, and to resist their being sacrificed for the latter—in fact, to assume towards humanity the very attitude which, to a farmer contemplating his animals and his crops, is a commonplace of good husbandry is today one of the most difficult and precarious of undertakings, particularly for the head of a state.

In the lives of the people, Socratic values, by inculcating a contempt for bodily considerations, leads to all kinds of perverted tastes and unwise matings—marriage with cripples, with the hereditarily blind, with the hereditarily deaf and dumb, the diseased and malformed. Three popular works, such as Lytton's *Pilgrims of the Rhine*, George Eliot's *Mill on the Floss* and Charlotte Yonge's *Pillars of the House*, in which diseased or crippled persons are solemnly held up as marriageable or as objects to be specially honoured (and there are hundreds of lesser English novels which do the same), could hardly have been written or read unless a culture had lost its sanity in mating.

Now, the fact that Adolf Hitler, as soon as he seized the reins of the government at the beginning of 1933, did not hesitate to grapple with Socrates and, at least in Germany, to discredit him, is surely one of his most remarkable achievements.

True, his assault on urbanization and industrialism would have been imperfect and abortive had he failed to attack the values based on Socratic teaching which enable both to flourish. But apart from the measures he has framed to restore a healthy agricultural life to Germany and arrest the flight to the cities, his daring attack on the traditional 'glory' of fifth-century Athens should alone have sufficed ultimately to sweep unhealthy tastes and prejudices from his country.

For today the sound in health and mind are the honoured of the German nation and, as the guarantors of a desirable posterity, are granted many privileges. Although to us over here this cannot help seeming slightly odd, it is, of course, the most elementary wisdom.

Among the principal measures framed to secure a healthier generation, I would refer to the Law of July 14, 1933, to Prevent the Transmission of Hereditary Diseases. By means of this law it became possible through sterilization to prevent men and women suffering from certain hereditary diseases specified in the law from having progeny. Such diseases are congenital feeble-mindedness, certain mental diseases such as schizophrenia and manic depression, hereditary epilepsy, blindness, deaf-mutism and severe malformations.

All cases are tried before a eugenics court, consisting of one judge assisted by two doctors, and their decisions are reached only after a thorough and conscientious inquiry into each case. In the report for the year 1934, published on July 3, 1935, we find that in all 84,525 petitions were filed in the 205 eugenics courts—i.e., about one case per 771 of the population. There were 42,903 males and 41,662 females. Of this number, 64,449 or about 75 per cent were heard before the courts, and sterilization was ordered in 98.8 [per cent] of the cases—i.e., 56,244 persons. In 3,692 cases (6.2 per cent) the petitions were rejected,

while in 4,563 the petition was either withdrawn or else referred to a superior eugenics court, of which twenty-six participated in the ultimate decisions.

Of 8,219 appeals taken against a court order for sterilization, only 377 were allowed. In 438 cases, appeals were made against the rejection of sterilization petitions ordered by the eugenics court of first instance. And, of these, 299 heard before the end of 1934 ended in the granting of the petition in 179 cases, and the reversal of the decision of the first court. In regard to pregnant women, it has been decided that if a valid court has ruled that sterilization should take place, the pregnancy may be interrupted provided that this is done before the sixth month of pregnancy.

The importance of these measures will be appreciated, as Dr Burgdörfer points out, when it is remembered that according to the last census there were 2,000,000 sufferers from incurable disease, crippledom and insanity in the country. The cost of maintaining them was 1,000,000,000 Reichsmarks, or about 76,000,000 a year—a burden which is not only useless but also actively pernicious, seeing that under it the sound cannot have the number of desirable healthy children they might otherwise give the country. To continue suffering such a burden and allowing it to increase, as it inevitably would if it were not dealt with, amounts to sacrificing the sound for the unsound. And this only a nation that has forgotten the laws of good husbandry through generations of urbanization could ever tolerate.

A further measure, known as the Law to Protect the Hereditary Health of the German People (October 18, 1935), provides for the refusal of marriage certificates to all applicants who fail to reach certain standards of health. Thus, a marriage certificate must be refused (1) to all parties suffering from an infectious disease which may affect the other partner or the children of the marriage; (2) to all parties suffering from a mental disorder which would make it contrary to public policy for them to marry; and (3) to all parties affected with a hereditary disease within the scope of the law of July 14, 1933, described above.

If both of the parties to the proposed marriage are foreigners, or if the prospective husband is a foreigner, the law does not apply. But if a foreign woman wishes to marry a German citizen, she must subject herself to a medical examination and obtain her *Ehetauglichkeitszeugnis*—her certificate of fitness for marriage.

The law makes it compulsory for these certificates to be obtained from the local bureau of health, and all people contemplating marriage have to undergo a medical examination before they can obtain their certificates. But these purely negative measures do not satisfy the present rulers of Germany, and, side by side with them, they have instituted positive measures, not merely for encouraging marriage and large families, but also and above all for giving such encouragement only to desirable and sound couples. Thus, the unhealthy and pornocratic tendency of town life is stigmatized and honour is given where it is due—i.e., to those who are a guarantee of a desirable coming generation and who, as married couples, are fit to lead to lead normal lives as parents.

The first measure dealing with this policy, formed part (para. X) of the Law for the Reduction of Unemployment of June 1, 1933. It provided that all young couples who desired to marry, and who had not the means to do so, could obtain from the government a loan to the extent of 1,000 marks in order to help them set up a home. But other measures have since confirmed and amplified these provisions, as, for instance, those of July 1933, August 1933 and March 1934.

The conditions under which the loan is granted are, however, severe. The parties to the marriage contract are required to be of German blood, hereditarily sound, and free from any disease, infectious or otherwise, which would make their marriage incompatible with the best public interest. From August 1933 to March 1935, 400,738 such loans were made, of an average of 600 marks apiece, and the statistics show not only a sudden increase in marriages throughout the Reich, but also—and this was one of the objects of the measure—a corresponding decline in unemployment, owing to the number of posts vacated by the girls concerned. The number of marriages encouraged under this law were far more numerous in the urban than in the rural districts, and rose to the level of 12.6 per thousand in towns of more than 100,000 inhabitants.

The loans carry no interest, but are repayable at the rate of 1 per cent per month. Thus, a loan of 600 marks is repaid by 100 monthly installments of 6 marks. If, however, children are born of the marriage, a quarter of the loan is remitted for each child, and the repayments are suspended for a year. Of the 400,738 marriages which took place under these conditions, 182,355 children were born by end of March 1935, and a large proportion of the recovery of the German birthrate may justly be ascribed to these measures.

But these are not the only measures adopted by the government to promote soundness and good health in the nation. From the health record books of the *Hitler Jugend*—the corps of young Germans constituting the youth movement in Germany—to the biological selection of the SA (*Sturmabteilung*) known as the SS, all of whose members strike the onlooker by the splendour of their health, build and looks, no detail is lost sight of which can transvalue the Socratic values still latent in the people, and make them honour, seek and favour the sound in mind and body. The SS men may be encountered in every walk of life, and before the stranger, familiar with the spectacle of widespread degeneration at home, has learnt to read the signs or symbols proclaiming their order, his attention is usually drawn to them by their exceptionally fine condition and bearing. Our chauffeur on one occasion happened to be a man of this type, whose biological rank was obviously high, and as I was then unaware of the significance of the various badges worn in present-day Germany, I commented to my host on the healthy manly appearance of his servant. 'He belongs to the SS, the biological cream of the SA', replied my host. And he proceeded to inform me that not only did the young man belong to [the] highest biological class, but that his wife, too, when he took one, would require to be the same. In fact, no marriage certificate would be granted either to

him or his fiancé unless she could satisfy the relevant authorities that she came up to his standard.

No sense of humour? Lucky Germany!

