

Johannes Malthaner, '31M.A., is an instructor in modern languages at the University, now on leave of absence. He is spending his leave engaged in graduate work at the University of Heidelberg in Germany. As Malthaner is a native German who was away from his country during the rise of Hitlerism, his impression of the tremendous change which has swept the country is fresh. He will resume his University faculty duties in 1935.

I Find Germany Enthusiastic under Hitler

BY JOHANNES MALTHANER, '31M.A.

THE drastic change that has taken place in Germany within the last year is most evident when I compare it with the situation of ten years ago when I left the country.

Predominating was the party strife that divided the population down to the offices, shops and even the families. Bitter hatred led often to violence and gave the whole public life a tenseness that prevented business recovery. The lack of leadership and absence of continuity of government prevented an effective program and successful fight against the growing Communistic danger. How great this danger was one can realize only by speaking to many people from various classes. Only a few examples:

My sister has a dry goods store in a village and she told me that on Saturday evenings the village loafers gathered before her store and told her that very soon they would take over the store. A cousin of mine, a fairly well to do farmer, drew his money out of the bank because the village feared the bank would be seized by the Communists.

A pastor told me that the demonstrations against church and religion were getting more and more hateful. The mayor of the village said, "Thank God, I can again sleep quietly and enjoy my work. I was not sure when I should get a bullet through my window."

A teacher declared that reverence and politeness towards older and better situated people was almost unknown, that schoolboys even took a defiant attitude toward their teachers and any authority. A young teacher who came sometimes to practice his English confirmed all this

and defended the Communistic view. In a teachers college he had belonged to a circle of Communists and was full of their ideas: there was no God, the Bible a story book, religion good to make slaves of free people, capitalism and private property a crime, but Communism the salvation of humanity and the remedy for all the troubles of the world.

He spoke openly to us since he trusted us, but otherwise he had to keep quiet. Several of his Communist friends were in a concentration camp and he was under observation.

I am convinced that the danger of Communism was imminent and not exaggerated by the Nazis.

With the exception of the Jewish race, all classes of the German people, one dares to say, have accepted now the new government and feel happy under the rule of Mr. Hitler who indeed has already shown unexpected resourcefulness and leadership in the many vexing problems. How Mr. Hitler undertook to shake off all control by other parties making himself the accepted dictator, in fact, of Germany in a few weeks, how he crushed all other parties, even the Catholic party, how his men became the leaders in the labor unions and created an undreamed of coöperation throughout the much divided Germany, how all this was done without bloodshed and without upsetting trade and public life, is indeed a marvelous accomplishment that must be admired whether one is in favor of the new government or not.

Not only has Hitler proved himself a great politician but he has shown unusual understanding of the German



people or they would not have rallied to him so unanimously. It was like the waving of a magic wand when the new government found the courage to take up the fight against the treaty of Versailles with its many unjust and discriminating provisions. Hitler's decision to leave the disarmament conference and the League of Nations was heralded as a great victory in Germany and won him the masses of the people.

One can not realize in foreign countries how deeply the Germans resented the discrimination against them and how they longed for a strong man to lead them after the many years of the policy of fulfillment that apparently did not convince the former enemies of the desire for peace and coöperation with all nations. The recent *Volk* referendum and election were evidences of the new order and the new spirit in Germany. Only a few months before, we read in the American newspapers about many shootings at the elections in Germany, but at this time I walked with my family through the streets of Heidelberg and went even to some polls without witnessing a single disturbance. I have never seen such enthusiasm as was evident before the election.

Posters and streamers in practically every window urged citizens to do their duty, lecturers in parks and public places instructed the common people of Germany's position. On the day before the election long lines of cars and trucks loaded with young people went through the streets singing patriotic songs, bands gave concerts in public places, students marched in troops of several hundred

chanting, "Germany has disarmed. It is not Germany that threatens the world peace. Everyone vote for Hitler. Who does not vote is a Volk traitor!"

A fine example of the new spirit of *Volksgemeinschaft*, the communion of the people, is the great winter help for the poor. Formerly, the state treasury of the communities had to take care of the needy and great sums were spent. Taxes grew likewise and corruption was rampant. Now, a spirit of responsibility is fostered and each family eats on the first Sunday of each month a one-pot meal and gives the saving to the winter help. Even the public eating places and hotels are held to this rule. Every Sunday boys and girls are collecting on the streets for this purpose and there is hardly a person who does not wear the little flower testifying that he is helping.

Great processions with flags and bands and uniforms are frequent but all show this new unity of the people; there are not any more parades of the classes, but all are of the people as a unity, the mechanic marching side by side with the master, the student with his professor, all classes and professions being represented.

Nothing is more evident in Germany than this new spirit. It may be interpreted as a new war spirit, but it is surely more. It is true that Hitler has created this new spirit but it is even as true that this new wave is carrying him now. One night, recently, I attended an impressive memorial service for the fallen students of the university. In the inner court of the university, over five thousand students were assembled before the memorial tower that bears the names of some four hundred young men. A solemn procession with the Hitler flag marched up and laid down two wreaths while all stood bareheaded and silently raised their hands in salute to their fallen comrades. A lonely drum and one fife played *Ich haf einen Kameraden*. Then, the student leader stepped forward and said, "We have not given up the fight and we shall never give up the fight to the good end. We swear it to our comrades who laid down their lives for our country."

The short celebration ended with the singing of the new battle song of the Hitler movement and cheers for "The Leader." I think nobody who has been present at such demonstrations, that are quite frequent now, can escape their irresistible power and this enthusiasm that was never witnessed since the first days of the war.

The brown uniforms, of course, dominate the university life; the Fascist salute and the clicking of heels are most evident. Even the new Rector, that is the President, wore at his recent inauguration the Hitler uniform in sharp con-

trast to the black robes and broad professor hats of the faculty. I am sure that many felt with me that a good deal of the dignity of the occasion was sacrificed.

Rigid rules now rob the students of much of their "academic freedom." Within the first four semesters, every student—foreigners of course are accepted—is required to do one year labor service in organized camps. Likewise, he has to enroll in the Wednesday afternoon field marches that have a kind of military appearance. Whether one wants to call this military training or not, I believe it is good for many of these young men who formerly, too often, sought mastery in beer drinking and carried to the extreme the clanish fraternity life.

The student duels, *Mensur*, are again permitted and even encouraged; the bandaged heads and new red cuts across the faces are growing quickly in number. This "bloody" sport has not yet lost its attractiveness for the German students. I counted about forty-five cuts in the face of one student and one had eight new cuts from one *Mensur* only. All first year students will have to live now in "houses of comradeship," similar to our boarding houses or dormitories, where they are strictly supervised and re-

ceive political instruction and physical training. Special lecture courses, dealing mainly with the political history and general civic information, are compulsory for all students.

By official rule the customary *Guten Tag* has been substituted by the Fascist salute with the words *Heil Hitler*. Children in school are drilled in this greeting and all government officials and employees are required to use it. There are Hitler organizations for everybody, veterans, laborers, students, even women and children down to nine years of age. All have their meetings and special training courses.

There are such frequent marchings that often traffic is hampered and marching columns are required to carry rear lights after dark. Many instances of progress could be mentioned; unemployment is still decreasing, more than two million men having gone to work in eight months. Taxes are lowered. The government now will cancel the delinquent taxes in an equal amount is used for improvement of property. Five thousand political prisoners were released for Christmas.

It is too early to evaluate the Hitler government but it is certain that the people have new courage and faith in the future.

Sooner Mother Dies

Mrs. H. Warner Newby, mother of the family that probably holds the record for the most years of attendance at the University, died January 14 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Merle Newby Buttram, in Oklahoma City.

Mrs. Newby, who was 76 years old, held the unique distinction of having been the guiding inspiration to six children who gained eight degrees at the University over a period of thirty-six years.

She often expressed gratification over the training her children gained at the University and was counted as one of the University's warmest friends.

One of her sons, Errett R. Newby, now secretary of the Buttram Petroleum company in Oklahoma City and a member of the University of Oklahoma Alumni association executive board, was employed as registrar at the University from 1908 to 1919. He also is a member of the Stadium-Union Memorial fund board of trustees and a trustee of the O. U. Life Membership Trust.

Mrs. Newby's elder daughter, Merle, is the wife of Frank Buttram, '10as, '12

M.A., one of the University's outstanding alumni.

Mrs. Newby came to Oklahoma in 1900 from Denver, Colorado, and four years later two of her children, Merle and Errett, entered the University. The family had continuance attendance at the University from 1904 until 1921.

Mrs. Newby is survived by three sons, Jerry, John and Errett, who are in business in Oklahoma City, and two daughters, Merle and Jessie. One son, Warner, died several years ago. Miss Jessie Newby is a member of the Central State Teachers college faculty and lives in Oklahoma City.

The years her family attended the University and degrees they received follow:

	YEARS	DATE	DEGREES	
Errett	4	1904-08	'07B.M.,	'08B.A.
Merle	8	1904-12	'06B.M.,	'12B.A.
Jerry	6	1906-12	'12B.A.,	
Jessie	4	1907-10	'10B.A.,	'25M.A.
		Summer	1925	
John	7	1907-14		
Warner	7	1914-21	'21B.A.,	
Totals	36		8 degrees	