



system with some of the patients. None of the patients seemed elated by a victory over only one enemy, and the talk revolved mostly around the questions of what outfits would be sent to continue the fight in the Pacific and who would remain in Germany for the occupation. One lad said, with no apparent cynicism, "I'm sorry for all the civilians that are going to wake up tomorrow with a hangover and a war still on their hands."

Last Word

THIS may well be our final story on Adolf Hitler, and you may be sure we're not trying to lay the foundations for a Hitler legend—just cleaning up some odds and ends, such as the fact that two savage German shepherd dogs were the only animals he ever owned, that he had throwing flowers in his path made a penal offense (they might explode), that he was fond of cactus for interior decoration, and that he never had a checkbook in his life. He had his famous forelock cut off when he got a letter from a barber in Athens who said it was unbecoming, meat for cartoonists, and an evidence of poor barbering. Mussolini told a confidant, "Hitler is just a bad imitation of me."

Hitler did not by any means receive a unanimously bad press outside the Reich. George Bernard Shaw hailed his first actions as Chancellor as "perfectly right." Bishop Wade of the Methodist Episcopal Church said that he was not wholly bad but did have some bad advisers. He was a teetotaler, and this won him some admirers, too, though his oldest brother, Alois Hitler, a bartender in Berlin, was probably not among them. Hitler's father, by the way, died while drinking in a tavern in the village of Leonding, near Linz. Over the doorway of the tavern was the motto "Whether Christian, Pagan, Jew, we've a drink that waits for you." Hitler's habit of making important moves or announcements on Saturday resulted in a decision to keep the Paris Bourse closed Saturdays during some of those tense moments of 1937. Among the evils he introduced into our society was a revival of astrology. He was said to have chosen for the Munich coup of 1938 the moment when the sun, moon, and planets were in good configuration with his chart. Hearing of this, certain Washington believers began lobbying for the appointment of a federal astrologer. Presumably in a spirit of pure irony, Hitler was once voted the world's greatest man by the Princeton freshmen

and proposed for the Nobel Peace Prize by the Swedish senate. He was not formally called *Der Führer* until 1939. Before that he was *Reichsführer, Reichskanzler, und Höchstkommmandierende der Armee*.

The official fiction was that Hitler drew no salary or other emoluments, and lived on the royalties from "Mein Kampf." His black Mercedes-Benz car held the record for the run between Stuttgart and Munich. It was specifically forbidden for members of the master race to name babies after him. A Hungarian factory owner once forbade his workers to wear mustaches cut like Hitler's, declaring that they were beneath the dignity of a Hungarian, and a Czech court once ruled that to call a man a Hitler was slander. In death notices printed within the Reich, Hitler was invoked instead of God. A German linotyper once got a stiff jail sentence for accidentally or intentionally making "Heil Hitler" read "Heilt Hitler"—"Cure Hitler."

Before the war, Hitler could recite from memory the name of every warship of the British and American navies and the cast of every German movie comedy. The night after the 1934 "blood purge," he made his friend Putzi Hanfstaengl play bits of "Die Meistersinger" to him over and over. Of his library of six thousand volumes, the only one he ever gave any evidence of having read was Houston Stewart Chamberlain's "Foundations of the Nineteenth Century." He used to say he could get the gist of a book by running his hands over it. One piece of Hitler art that was extant in Germany as recently as ten years ago was a poster he painted in 1909 for the manufacturers of Teddy's Perspiration Powder; he did this after twice flunking his entrance tests to the Vienna Academy of Art. He had a dozen pairs of spectacles at each of his desks, various pairs for various hours of the day and night. In 1937, he prophesied

that Berlin would be completely rebuilt within twenty years.

1918

ERICH MARIA REMARQUE, the German novelist, who is in process of becoming an American citizen, told us last Sunday what it was like in Germany as the rumors of defeat and the revolution began to spread in 1918. He was twenty years old then, an infantryman, and had been wounded in the trenches and sent to a hospital in Düsseldorf. Early in November he was dismissed as cured, he reported to his garrison headquarters in the Westphalian town of Minden, and he was ordered to rejoin his company, which was in Belgium. This was by no means simple, since many battered German outfits had been thrown together and no longer had their old names. The streets of Minden were full of soldiers who had overstayed their leave and who, in view of the news of approaching defeat and the mutiny at Kiel, said they had no intention of going back. The trains coming from the front were full of deserters, but those going in the other direction were full, too. The men going up to the front talked about the food shortage, which was so severe that a potato was regarded as a delicacy, and about the rumors of defeat, which many were inclined to pooh-pooh. It took Remarque four and a half days to find his company, which had been withdrawn from the front lines. He was just in time to hear his commanding officer making a farewell speech. "Let us not forget those who are dead," he concluded. "The war is finished. Goodbye." Remarque can't recall whether this was on the twelfth or thirteenth of November.

Remarque does recall that most of the members of the company tried to stay together to return to their garrison headquarters, where they were to receive their discharge papers, but that they had to break up into small groups because of the overburdened trains. Some didn't bother to go back, and a quaint sidelight on German minor efficiency during disaster is the fact that they got their papers two weeks later by mail. Most of the soldiers were apathetic about the defeat but enraged by the flight of the Kaiser. It set off a wave of anti-officer feeling, but generally the only violence done the officers was ripping off their epaulettes. Remarque and six of his friends hung around in the local railroad station for several days after their discharge before they finally got on a train headed for





"... And now the time has come to disband. We have been through stormy times together and I can only say that, from my standpoint, I regard the privilege of our having been associated together as enough to justify the formation of a National Air-Raid Wardens Legion, which I earnestly hope to see born, to perpetuate the ties forged in the furnace of war. To allow these ties to ..."

Germany. Somebody had set up a soup kitchen in the station, so they managed to get enough to eat. The train had some wounded men on it, several of whom died during the trip. Also, several stowaways on top of the coaches were swept off and killed when the train passed through a low tunnel. Most of the soldiers were in poor spirits, but as they crossed the border into Germany, they began to sing. Remarque remembered that one of the songs was a dreary little number about a prostitute who longed for her home in Hamburg.

At the first stop inside Germany, Remarque recalls, the local *Bürgermeister* met the train and made a speech saying that the soldiers had fought well and that Germany was proud of them. As the train continued into Germany they were forcibly reminded that they had indeed fought well: there was almost no damage to be seen—no dead animals, no devastated villages, no bomb craters. "As far as the soldiers were concerned, theirs didn't look like a defeated coun-

try," Remarque said. "France and Belgium to them were the defeated countries. There they had seen plenty of destruction. Germany hadn't lost any more soldiers than the Allies had. The German soldiers came back—and there was Germany. It looked like the country that had *won* the war." Inside of a year, books and pamphlets began to appear claiming that Germany would have won the war if she'd fought for another three months, and so on. However, Remarque didn't have to wait a year before bumping into this point of view. On the day he got back to his home town, as he was walking from the railroad station to his parents' house, he ran into a hundred townspeople who were having a vigorous little street riot. It had started in a beer *Stube*, an innocent bystander told him; a group of unreconstructed nationalists had asked the pianist to play "Deutschland über Alles" and then had attacked some other patrons who wouldn't join in the singing. "The whole damn business was

starting all over again, right there in my home town, while the armistice was still news," Remarque said, plainly still appalled. "Six weeks later I was in Berlin, at the Eden Hotel. There in the lobby were some of my old officers, and there on their tunics were the epaulettes that had been ripped off. Pretty soon even the little ex-lieutenants—reserve officers, mind you—were putting their old rank in the Wehrmacht on their calling cards."

Program

MONDAY morning the question of the proper celebration of V-E Day arose in a certain progressive-school class. In good progressive-school fashion, the teacher suggested that the children work out their own program, and left the room. Returning some minutes later, she found that they had got together on a program all right, and had jotted it down on the blackboard: "1. Prayer. 2. Refreshments."