

The German Mentality

"German Versus Hun." Anthology collected by Carl Brinitzer and Berthe Grossbard (George Allen and Unwin, London).

IN this book more than 200 German writers are cited to testify to the disposition of their fellow-countrymen. Some of them, notably Goethe, Heine and Nietzsche, are often in the witness-box. The witnesses come from all the centuries since the Renaissance: they belong to many parties and sects.

The purpose of the collection is to demonstrate that the German is a leopard who does not change his spots. As long ago as 1531 Sebastian Frank wrote that "the Germans are a thoroughly vindictive people and a terror to all other nations." Nietzsche called them "the camp followers of European culture." They hate progress. Goethe questioned whether any other nation "has such a passion for moving backwards." Arnold Ruge said that "German patriotism is always directed against the future." Friedrich Hebbel declared that "history has done nothing whatever for the Germans." Hans Fischer went so far as to say that "the real Germany cannot be civilised." Schopenhauer tells us that the Germans "follow like sheep and follow asses," while Dr. Goebbels, in one of his few truthful moments, brands them as "a slave people."

One of the few amusing quotations is that in which Hans Kerrl, Minister of Public Worship in the Third Reich, affirms that "the essence of National Socialism is faith and its deeds are love." This is certainly News!

"The Wonderful Fair," by Florence Austin (Hassell Press, Adelaide)—All the favorite characters of nursery rhyme appear in this charming little play for children—including "Mary, Mary," who is, strangely enough, not "contrary" any longer. It should prove ideal for performance by nursery schools at Christmas "break-ups."

"The Unknown Warrior," by Mrs. Willett Bevan. (Robert Dey, Son & Co., Sydney)—These verses, republished in a tiny book from "Sketches in Verse and Prose," trace out the imagined brief life-story of the "unknown warrior," who fell in the Great War. The feeling which inspired them will be shared by any mother mourning the loss of a son in the last war or in this; and the sincerity of this tribute to the fallen soldier who stands for all others who fall unknown fighting for high ideals atones in some degree for the mediocrity of the verses.