

**MODERN GERMAN PROSE; A
READER FOR ADVANCED
CLASSES. COMPILED AND
ANNOTATED. [NEW YORK-1908]**

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Modern German Prose; A Reader for Advanced Classes. Compiled and Annotated. [New York-1908] by A. B. Nichols

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A. B. NICHOLS

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COMPILED AND ANNOTATED

BY

A. B. NICHOLS

PROFESSOR OF GERMAN IN SIMMONS COLLEGE



NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

1908

IN MEMORIAM

Prof. J. Henry Senger

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PREFACE.

GERMAN is a difficult tongue. Teachers of modern languages would, I conceive, agree that the command of vocabulary and idiom which can be acquired in French in three years demands four years in German. In the first two years little more can be accomplished — I am speaking now of reading — than the mastery of narrative prose and of the easier plays of the classic period. To the third year are usually allotted the major works of Lessing, Goethe and Schiller. I would not for a moment underrate the value of these as training in literature. They are stimulating and profitable in the highest degree. But if a student's formal study of German ends here, he is left quite unprepared for the very different task of coping with contemporary literature of a serious sort. When he attempts to read modern biography, history, literary criticism, political and scientific discussions, — topics that will chiefly engage his attention if he aims to appropriate the results of German thought and research, — he will find himself face to face with a new and difficult task.

It is to bridge the gap between the German of Goethe and Schiller and that of the essay, review and editorial of to-day that this selection aims. Where a place can be found for it in the present crowded curriculum is a question for the individual teacher to solve. In many cases, in my opinion, it might wisely supplant the traditional third-year work, in others it might supplement it. In any case I feel sure that there are many teachers who will be glad to avail themselves of the opportunity to introduce their students to contemporary German prose in its various aspects.

In making my selection I have been governed by the wish to present a large variety of topics and of styles, even at the cost of making the table of contents a somewhat miscellaneous one. I have therefore not attempted to classify the material beyond arranging it approximately in order of difficulty. The first half of the Reader is made up of comparatively easy selections, some of them very easy, to encourage sight-reading in class and out. The second half contains matter distinctly more difficult. I have also tried to make the selections such as will appeal to the student's interest and not make too large demands on his general information. The notes do not attempt to develop all the lines of comment that the text suggests, but simply to supply the most essential information on the topics discussed. I have used a free hand in bringing the extracts within the requisite compass and in eliminating matter which would present unprofitable difficulty, but the writer's argument is in every case left intact.

A. B. N.

SIMMONS COLLEGE,
September, 1908.

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Erster Teil