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caught any smugglers now, since he had been transferred here from the Czech border, because here it had been arranged that no customs men should be on duty between midnight and six a.m. In this way there was brought about a practical abolition of customs duties along the Austro-German frontier, without any formal agreement which would offend the letter of the Versailles Treaty.

We visited Passau, and left Germany for good, drifting down the broad and winding Danube. The river was as fast-flowing as the Inn, but so broad as to be dull for canoeing, which requires interesting rapids. We idled down between dark green hills, dominated here and there by great stone buildings, and finally packed up the collapsible canoes at Linz.

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LINZ, when we arrived, was decorated with curious bluish-purple flags, quartered and then divided again diagonally by red stripes. They told us these were English flags, in honour of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Vienna. There were crowds in the streets, but this city where Hitler spent his schooldays we did not find a cheerful place. Bank-clerks fortified their egos by cultivating Hitler moustaches, and doubles of the bogeyman of Europe were not uncommon. Street islands were decorated with dummy bombs to advertise the only visible positive action of the Austrian Government in the face of chronic unemployment and poverty, the organisation of air-raid precautions. At the inn, a small girl of about seven had the job of bringing hot water to the bedrooms. I remembered the little boy I had seen hauling a barge against the current of the Inn. Seeing child labour was a new experience.

We left by train for Salzburg, where the Musical Festival was in progress, and I have never heard so many wrong notes in my life as we heard there in one evening. The reason was that all those who could play were at the Festival, leaving only those who couldn't play to make up the cafe orchestras. These orchestras got plenty of applause though, despite their playing, because of the fact

that they played Nazi marches. To say "Heil Hitler!" was illegal, but to clap the hands after a Nazi tune was allowed. Which side of the border the cafe crowds came from, there was no way of telling. There was a grim joke in Austria at that time that the situation was hopeless, but not serious. It was only half true.

Near by, we visited the Hallein salt-mines, whose galleries ran under the frontier towards a German salt-mining town called Berchtesgaden. We entered the mine halfway up the mountain, and they gave us white coats and leather aprons worn literally backside-about, so that we could slide down wooden chutes without sartorial injury. A miner turned tourist guide, an original of the cheerful dwarfs of such tales as Snow White, led us on a fairy-tale journey through mine passages containing prehistoric workings, down numberless slides into other passages, into a chapel inside the mountain, and across subterranean lakes in boats. Finally a long downhill run astride curious trolleys on narrow-gauge rails brought us out into daylight almost down in the valley. Just over 18 months later we heard that salt-miners of Hallein had been about the first Austrians to die fighting the Nazi invaders. The tragedy was that the employed workers comprised the only reliable body of anti-Nazis, and that their power had already been broken in their unsuccessful rising against the dictatorship of Dollfuss. Thus Austria, in her misery, was a ripe plum for Hitler.

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IT seems necessary to attempt to state my impression of the Germans as we saw them in those days, and despite everything we knew then and know now, the impression of Germans we actually met, people who put us up for the night and so on, was that they had great human kindness which could be stretched to include strangers; and that agrees with the impressions of numerous friends. How can the contradiction be resolved? Was it that the good qualities resided in the women only, and not in their sons? Certainly the old military system, and the new one even more thoroughly, did all it could to root out every trace of home influence from the characters of the young men, and later from the young women also. One might

say they were naturally a pleasant people, over-awed and in many cases converted by a cult of brutality; but that is not saying much more than that good and evil contend against each other.

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STREET SCENE in 1936 outside the travel bureau in Linz, the city where Hitler spent his schooldays. The bomb in the centre of the square is just Government propaganda, advertising the Heimwehr and its Air Raid Precaution activities