

Student Days

In the land of don'ts

IN thinking during the past few weeks over my experiences and impressions formed during a stay of two years in Germany, not long before the Great War, I have been embarrassed by a wealth of matter, and have decided to speak mainly of Berlin and North Germany.

Leaving New Zealand on short notice in the month of August, I went direct to London, and after 24 hours in that city travelled across to Berlin in order to begin time for the commencement of the university session. The journey between the two capitals occupied about 24 hours, and it had no dull moments. The train journey to Harwich, the trip across the North Sea to Hook of Holland, and then the journey through Holland and Germany, with their first insight of the scenery and people of two new countries, were all engrossing. My first trouble was in the Berlin railway station, where the loss of my luggage and my almost total ignorance of the language had me in difficulties for a time.

First impressions are always strongest, and those of my first day in Germany, in a strange land among strange people, are enduring. The long day spent in speeding through a picturesque countryside in the full glory of its autumn tints and by towns and quaint villages was one of ever-changing interest.

Nor shall I soon forget my first night in a German bed. You all know that there you sleep on a feather mattress with another on top of you. I had been warned about it, and if I had been shorter or my covering mattress had been longer the night would have been comfortable, although somewhat warm. As it was I spent the night with my feet and my chest alternately cold.

THEN followed experiences. For my first bath I paid 1/6, which was more than I paid for my breakfast. At no place in my two years' stay did I find that the cost of the bath was included with that of the board and residence.

The meals were novel to me. Breakfast served at 7 a.m. in the bedroom consisted of coffee and one small roll and butter, so I paid extra for an increased ration. By the time for the mid-day meal, served about 1.30 or 2 p.m., I was ravenous, and was thankful for the substantial nature of the helpings. I soon noticed that about 10 a.m. everyone produced a sandwich, whether he was a tram conductor, a bank clerk or a university professor, and that became a warning to me to slip into an automatic restaurant where a 10 pfennig piece (1½d.), inserted in the right slot, would produce a hot drink, a glass of beer and a cake or sandwich.

The evening meal came at 8 o'clock, for

A Talk from 3YA

by

Dr. D. E. HANSEN

the working day in Germany was a long one. For that meal one had a hot meat dish, cheeses of many kinds and strengths, and sliced cold meats, washed down with bottled beer. At this meal I made the acquaintance of raw sliced ham, which is extensively eaten in Germany, but I never became reconciled to it.

On the whole, however, the food was acceptable to the British palate. One never saw white bread, except that the morning roll was made of white flour and supplied hot at each house before 7 a.m. The dark bread, made of rye flour, was most palatable, and would command a ready sale here. In Prussia particularly, however, the people love sour things, just as we love sweet ones, and the bread was commonly mixed before baking with a good dash of vinegar and did not agree with me.

"Guten Abend, meine Damen und Herren"

Twenty years ago Dr. Hansen went to Germany to study at the Berlin University and, being a New Zealand M.A., he was considered to have passed the German matriculation examination. German life he found queer—his first night in a German bed left him but little impressed with German standards of comfort; their meals he found most difficult, and because of his ignorance of their language he at first often went hungry, or walked because he could not ask for a ticket. But all this was only a phase in his becoming a fully-fledged research student when he learned to understand and appreciate the German. His talk, telling of his impressions of pre-War Germany, abounds in interesting sidelights which reflect the essential differences between German life and our own.

YOU have all heard of sauer kraut, made from sliced and slightly fermented cabbage with vinegar. It is the sourest dish imaginable, and can safely be described as an acquired taste. Beef, pork and veal were eaten freely, all of excellent quality. Mutton was almost unknown.

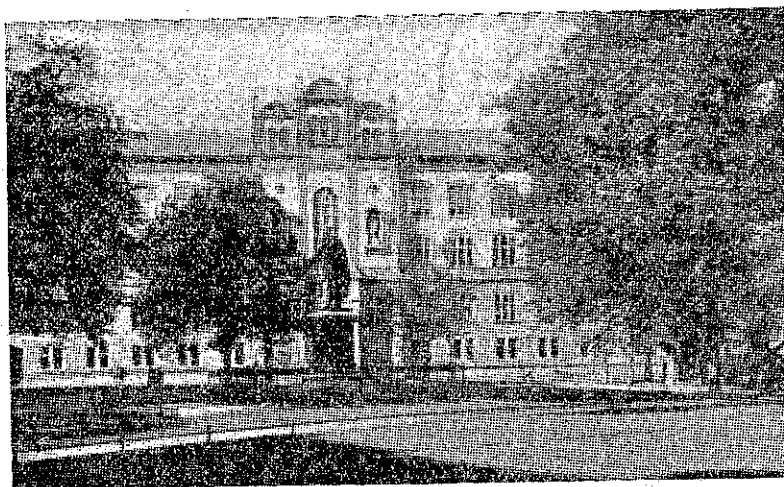
The standard meat food of Germany for any meal other than dinner is the sausage or wurst. There are literally dozens of

varieties, of all sizes, shapes and colours. They are made—some of liver, some of blood and others of a variety of meats. All are well seasoned and are usually bought cooked and ready for eating. Ours

is a poor country by comparison, with only its beef sausage, its pork sausage and the monstrosity called Belgian sausage since the outbreak of the Great War.

The time is opportune here for a campaign for at least a brighter and better sausage, and more kinds of them.

On the other hand, I missed such regular articles of diet as toast, scones, fruit cake, pies, porridge, and most kinds of milk puddings, which were obtainable only in occasional reform or vegetarian restaurants. As I have devoted some (Continued overleaf.)



The universities of Germany play a large part in the cultural development of the world. This, the Rostock University, is typically German. In spite of industrial importance of the port, it, together with the rest of the town, still retains its mediaeval appearance. In front of the university is a statue of Blucher, who was born in that town.