

**HEATH'S MODERN
LANGUAGE SERIES.
APRILWETTER**

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Heath's Modern Language Series. Aprilwetter by Hans Arnold

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HANS ARNOLD

**HEATH'S MODERN
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Heath's Modern Language Series

Aprilwetter

von

Hans Arnold

EDITED WITH NOTES AND VOCABULARY

BY

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INTRODUCTION

FRAU BABETTE VON BÜLOW (*nom de plume*, Hans Arnold) was born September 30, 1850 at Warmbrunn Silesia, her father being the well-known Professor Felix Eberty, an author of no mean repute. She was reared and educated at Breslau and at a French *pension*. Having married Premier (First) Lieutenant von Bülow she shared with him the migratory life of an army officer, living successively at Berlin, Breslau, Metz, Strassburg, Hanover and various other places. In a letter, in which she kindly granted the editor permission to use such of her writings as seemed adapted to his purpose, Frau von Bülow remarks that there is nothing extraordinary or startling, or even especially worth recording, about her career; that she is the happy mother of a happy family and that she finds time amid her duties as a wife and mother to cultivate her taste for writing.

That she has "found time" to do so appears from the formidable list of the children of her fancy appended to this introduction. These *Novellen*, tales, short stories, sketches, or whatever one may call them, offer a most pleasing variety of impressions and experiences gained in her ever shifting home. One may well regard them as the precipitates of her *Wanderjahre*.

The three stories herewith submitted to teachers and students of German were chosen for their genuine, sparkling humor, for their fidelity in depicting good-naturedly

enough, 'tis true — some of our foibles, and finally, for the excellent, live, spontaneous, and unaffected language in which they are couched. Babette von Bülow does not aspire to an expression of any species of *Weltschmerz*; she does not present any problem-novel nor yet any profound psychological studies. Her sketches are not "deep." Her world is not a vale of tears and life is still worth living, even though a conventional "white lie" gets people into entanglements and difficulties, and despite the fact that unwelcome visitors do, occasionally, camp down upon relatives for a week or more. Again, the editor feels sure that most of us (*im alten Register*) can gaze into the embers of memory, knock off the ashes from the logs, and see visions arising similar to those in *Von Taufe zu Taufe*. In fact *Aprilwetter* moods and experiences are our common heritage and property. We recognize them as such at once and enjoy them accordingly.

But, in addition to the kindly raillery, *persiflage*, or whatever we may call it, there is a delightful local coloring in these sketches, a coloring that captivates the reader. The characteristically German flavor blends beautifully with the universally human. The avidity with which books like *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch* or *Wee Macgregor* are read by our American youth shows how they appreciate this kind of literature. As appears from the short biographical notice given above, Babette von Bülow has had ample opportunity to study average human life. She occupied (and still occupies) an unquestioned vantage ground for watching and reporting the doings of every-day humanity about her. Her sisters in

the literary field are frequently not content to portray the simple life about them. Names like that of Helene Böhlau (*Der schöne Valentin*, 1868, *Der Rangierbahnhof*, 1896), of Ricarda Huch (*Ludolf Ursleu*, 1893), of Isolde Kurz (*Italienische Erzählungen*, 1895), come at once to mind in making this statement. Other writers again, while marvellously successful in the reproduction of their specific surroundings (Clara Viebig, *Kinder der Eifel*, 1897; Hermine Villinger, *Schwarzwaldgeschichten*, 1892), present almost insuperable difficulties to the English and American student by reason of the frequent use of a pronounced dialect, if for no other. These authors are more ambitious than Frau von Bülow in their literary labors, the first three mentioned reflecting especially and distinctively the modern *Zeitgeist*.

Considerations such as these have induced the editor to prepare "*Aprilwetter*" for class-room purposes. It is well to pave the way, and shorten the road as much as possible, to an intelligent appreciation of foreign books. For these reasons too, the editor has been rather more liberal in his notes than might at first thought seem desirable or wise. Long experience in the class-room has taught him that the best results can be attained only as the language teacher proceeds on the theory that the subject he teaches is *primarily an art* and *secondarily a science*. This involves acquaintance with average colloquial usage. The learner must first fix in his mind a large fund of foreign idioms; he must apprehend them as thought-units before he can be adequately successful in rendering them in his own tongue. Moreover it must not be forgotten that the large majority of

high school and (younger) college students are really unacquainted with the intricacies of English. They have not yet acquired sufficient self direction and sureness of touch to venture far. A certain degree of independence and self assurance must be cultivated, before the learner can be induced to launch out into the more turbid waters.

It is hoped that my colleagues will approve the plan pursued both in the selection of the text and in the preparation of the notes. I have, at all times, had the learner's needs before me, and have sought to make the interpretation of the narrative more life-like and real than could be done by the student's own unaided efforts.

The following represents Frau von Bülow's literary labors:

Novellen, 1. Bd., 1881: *Die Hausgenossen*. — *Und doch!* — *Der tolle Junker*. — *Finderlohn*. — *Glück muss man haben*. *Novellen*, 2. Bd., 1884: *Die kranke Familie*. — *Angenehme Gäste*. — *Schach der Königin*. — *Eine Landpartie*. — *Papas Zahnschmerzen*. *Geburtstagfreuden*, 1884; *Fünf neue Novellen*, 1885; *Berlin-Ostende mit zehntägigem Retourbillet*, 1886; *Ein neues Novellenbuch*, 1886; *Der Umzug und andere Novellen*, 1889; *Theorie und Praxis*, 1890; *Lustige Geschichten*, 1890; *Zwei Friedfertige*, 1891; *Einst im Mai und andere Novellen*, 1892; *Dornen um die Rose*, 1893; *Aprilwetter*, 1893; 6. Aufl., 1901; *Sonnenstäubchen*, 1894; *Maskiert und andere Novellen*, 1899; *Christel und andere Novellen*, 1900.

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