

**GERMAN POETRY FOR
REPETITION: A GRADUATED
COLLECTION OF POPULAR AND
CLASSICAL PIECES AND
EXTRACTS**

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German Poetry for Repetition: A Graduated Collection of Popular and Classical Pieces and
Extracts by C. A. Buchheim

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German
POETRY FOR REPETITION

A GRADUATED COLLECTION OF
POPULAR AND CLASSICAL PIECES AND EXTRACTS

With copious English Notes for Learners

EDITED BY

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PREFACE.

THE learning of Poetry by heart constitutes, according to my opinion, based on long experience, a far more important element in the acquisition of foreign languages, than is generally assumed. One of the great advantages arising from it, is the fact, that it offers excellent means of accustoming the learners to pay particular attention, from the very first, to a correct and distinct pronunciation; and the next is, that they get at an early stage into the habit of 'hearing their own voices' in the foreign language. One of the greatest obstacles in learning to *speak* a foreign language is undoubtedly the circumstance that people—from mere want of practice—cannot easily muster up courage to hear themselves speaking in the unused, foreign tongue, although they may have sufficient confidence to write in it. The mere reading aloud in the class,

the repeating of single words and phrases does by no means give that assurance, which is imparted to the learners by the process of reciting aloud, with proper emphasis and accentuation, a poem in the presence of others. This practice is acknowledged to be of great importance even in our own language, and is still more useful in a foreign tongue. The early learning of poetry affords also this advantage, that it makes the study of the foreign language at once more interesting, than it can be made by any other means ; not to speak of the great intellectual benefit and enjoyment derived from an early and continuous cultivation of poetical taste in general.

In order then to give efficient and handy help for the attainment of those advantages, I have made and annotated the present collection. In the selection of the poems and extracts I have paid special regard both to their merit, from a literary point of view, and to their rhythmical form, giving only pieces which could easily be learnt by heart and which, to use the words of the Rev. H. Twells, in the preface to his well-known 'English Poetry for Repetition,' 'seem most likely to arrest the attention and dwell in the memory of young persons.'

On the other hand I found it not only compatible with the object of this publication, but absolutely necessary, to exclude poems of inordinate length, such as Schiller's *Glocke*, his *Kampf mit dem Drachen*, &c. I have also refrained from giving pieces which bear an exclusively descriptive stamp, and I have given only a few, but very short, didactic poems, which could easily be committed to memory. Several patriotic poems have also been inserted, more especially such as are of a heroic character, and are sure to strike a sympathetic chord in the hearts of the young, to whatever nationality they may belong. On the whole, however, I have selected such poetical productions as are of general, *human* interest. Narrative poetry will likewise be found largely represented, more particularly in the more advanced Divisions.

With a view of making the present collection more attractive, I have taken great care to avoid monotony in the selection of the Poems, which will be found to offer considerable variety. There are tender, grave and humorous pieces; but I believe that nearly all of them will be found perfectly suitable for *repetition* in class, and many of them

for *public recitations*. For the latter purpose I have selected poems, which can be divided among several pupils, and which I need not specially point out to the teacher.

In arranging the order of the pieces I have strictly adhered—more specially in the first two divisions—to the principle of *graduation*, beginning with the very easiest, both as regards the language, contents and length of the Poems.

The annotations have been made in strict accordance with the special object of this publication, which is not, to offer to the learners practice in construing German poetry, but simply to furnish them with suitable poetical materials for *repetition*, provided at the same time with ample help to make out the meaning with the greatest ease. I have, therefore, given such assistance in the *notes*, as will place even *mere beginners*, in a position to translate the Poems, without much loss of time, with the mere help of any good, small dictionary, such, for instance, as the well-arranged German Pocket Dictionary by Mr. F. W. Longman. I have, however, besides giving mere 'translation-notes,' also fully explained the general meaning of the Poems, whenever this seemed to me necessary, and I have also given such

historical and literary information, as I thought requisite for the thorough understanding of the text. I was guided in this, as in all my commentaries, by the saying of Goethe :

Was man nicht versteht, besitzt man nicht.

The young of the present generation have to master a multiplicity of subjects, and the time allotted to the study of modern languages in our schools is, unfortunately, still very scanty ; it is, therefore, hoped that the abundant help given in the *notes*—more particularly to the two first divisions—will not be considered as a superfluous aid for saving the time of teachers and pupils—and of those hard-working students who are their own masters—a class, by the way, for whom I feel special respect and consideration.

In conclusion I cannot help expressing the wish, that this volume, with the editing of which I have taken considerable pains, may afford to the English students of German—who, as a rule, admire and appreciate the poetry of Germany as greatly as German readers admire and appreciate the kindred poetry of this country—the practical advantage, the moral benefit and the intellectual gratification, for

which it is intended, and that it may form in its modest way a practical *Vademecum* for all learners of German.

The favourable reception with which the present volume has met may, it is hoped, be taken as an un-failing sign that it supplied a real want in the educational literature of this country, and that there is still a large class of students who give their attention to subjects which, though having no direct bearing upon Examinations, are useful for the acquisition of knowledge in general. In recording this circumstance, which must be gratifying to all earnest educationists, I cannot help expressing my individual satisfaction at the numerous acknowledgments of approval and thanks I received from eminent teachers of German for having provided them with a handy means of carrying out systematically the learning of German Poetry by heart. In conclusion, I have to state that in issuing the *Second* Edition of this volume I have carefully revised both the *Text* and the *Notes*.

C. A. BUCHHEIM.