

**HEINE: SELECTIONS FROM
THE REISEBILDER AND
OTHER PROSE WORKS**

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Heine: Selections from the Reisebilder and other prose works by C. Colbeck

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MACMILLAN'S SERIES
OF
FOREIGN SCHOOL CLASSICS

EDITED BY

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HEINE

SELECTIONS FROM THE
REISEBILDER

And other Prose Works

EDITED, WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTION

BY

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PREFACE.

It has long been my desire to render available for use in schools and for general readers some portion of Heine's *Reisebilder*, and I have gladly availed myself of the opportunity afforded by the request of Messrs. Macmillan and Co. that I would contribute to their series of Foreign Classics. No German prose that I am acquainted with is at once so witty, so good in style, and so attractive in matter. It may be thought too hard for the standard of attainment in German commonly reached in our schools, but this standard, it must be remembered, is rising year by year; and at the present moment, when it is likely that Cambridge will establish a Modern Languages Tripos, to be faint-hearted in enterprise least becomes the teachers who have long recognised German as affording at once the practical advantages of a Modern Language and the linguistic training of which Latin and Greek have been supposed to hold a monopoly.

The present selection contains nearly all the *Harzreise* and the *Norderney*, and the best part of the *Buch Le Grand*, together with a few shorter extracts from

the later prose works which are illustrative of what precedes. Much more might have been added from the *Englische Fragmente* and the *Deutschland* alone had space permitted. In the Notes, besides explaining allusions and difficulties, I have commented upon the chief points of German Syntax with reference to special works on the subject. In this portion of the Notes I fear that I may sometimes have aimed too high, and sometimes descended too low. It is hard to maintain an even standard, but I have taken as a guide my own experience as a teacher, and set down just such explanations as I should have given in oral lecturing. I confess that it is not without much inward satisfaction that I have pressed the arch-enemy of England and of pedagogues into the service of English education, and made him point many a grammatical moral. The Introduction contains a life of Heine, which seemed indispensable. No handbook of German Literature gives anything like an adequate account of either his life or his works, and even special works are neither numerous nor easily accessible to the ordinary reader. I hope that the few pages here devoted to the life of Heine may, together with the inevitable influence of his own words, arouse sufficient interest to make the student desire ampler information. If so, he will find it in Stigand's *Life, Work, and Opinions of Heinrich Heine*, published in 1875. I have found it very useful, and have here and there made short extracts from it, which are acknowledged

as they occur. At the same time, it is only right to say that the best portion of it is taken from Strodtmann's *Heinrich Heine's Leben und Werke*, and that Mr. Stigand's own pages only too often justify the complaint made against his work, in Meyer's *Conversations-Lexikon*, that it is rather a diatribe against the Germans than a biography of Heine. Strodtmann's work mentioned above is full, and in most respects admirable; of especial value are the criticisms on Heine, quoted at length from contemporary writers, criticisms which go far to make one believe that German Literature had by no means sunk so low as Heine asserted. Alfred Meissner, a friend of Heine's, has left us a volume of *Erinnerungen*, chiefly valuable for the latter part of Heine's life, and there is a little book *Souvenirs de la Vie Intime de Henri Heine*, written by his niece, the Princesse de la Rocca, which is interesting and evidently sincere, though its critical and literary value is small. English readers probably already know Mr. Matthew Arnold's essay on Heine in the *Essays in Criticism*. There seems to me to lurk in it, amidst much that is excellent, a note of condescension which goes far to spoil the whole. If it is so, the beautiful poem called *Heine's Grave*, of which a few lines stand at the head of this volume, forms a worthy palinode. Lord Houghton's essay on Heine in his *Monographs* only requires to be known to be appreciated. It deals chiefly with the period of Heine's life in Paris, where the author made his ac-

quaintance. The French translation of the *Reisebilder*, executed by Heine himself in 1831, has here and there been very useful. There is also an English translation, published in America by Mr. Leland, which is strangely inaccurate in its renderings, and inadequate even when correct. Far different both in style and accuracy are the excellent versions in Snodgrass's *Heine's Wit, Wisdom, and Pathos*, of which it is difficult to speak too highly. The Preface by Théophile Gautier to the French edition of Heine's works published by Michel Lévy Frères in 1877, concludes the list of works which I have consulted. Of translations of Heine's Songs it seems useless to speak here. Those who are likely to read this volume will be sufficiently advanced in German to read the *Buch der Lieder* in the original, and those who know the original best will care least for even the most successful translations.

HARROW, April 1883.