

**CLARENDON PRESS SERIES.
MODERN GERMAN READER: A
GRADUATED COLLECTION OF
PROSE EXTRACTS FROM MODERN
GERMAN WRITERS, PART I**

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from Modern German Writers, Part I by C. A. Buchheim

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C. A. BUCHHEIM

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MODERN GERMAN READER

A GRADUATED COLLECTION
OF PROSE EXTRACTS
FROM MODERN GERMAN WRITERS

EDITED BY

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PART I

*WITH ENGLISH NOTES, A GRAMMATICAL APPENDIX,
AND A COMPLETE VOCABULARY*

Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1881

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PREFACE.

IN preparing the present volume, which forms the First Part of my 'Modern German Reader,' I have been guided by two principles. The first is, that the Reading Book should be used from the first day of instruction. It is now generally admitted that the method which requires a full knowledge of Grammar, or at least of the accidents of the respective language, before proceeding to a 'construing book,' not only forms an impediment to the speedy and practical acquisition of languages, but is also apt to impart to the Pupils a distaste for the foreign idiom, before they have got any insight into its structure and spirit. Theory and practice must go hand in hand; and it is through this combination alone that the language becomes interesting and *alive*, as it were, or to speak with Friedrich Jakobs, 'the dry skeleton of paradigms assumes shape and body.'

The second principle upon which I have acted is, that the first beginnings in the study of a foreign language cannot be made too easy. The method of placing in the hands of beginners an advanced book and bidding them to struggle through the rugged path, beset on all sides with great difficulties, as best they can, and to deduce the theory by dint of their own efforts, is not less objectionable than the former one. It is, above all, productive of a superficiality and an uncertainty in the application of the rules, from which the student can never entirely free himself.

Following the above principles I have endeavoured to produce a *Reading Book* which could be used *as soon as the student has mastered the German Alphabet*, and which might remain his companion during the first year of his studies. The Sentences given under the heading of *Vorli-*

bung im Lesen und Construiren (pp. 1, 2), which have been literally translated in the *Tables of Construction* (Gram. Appendix, pp. 99, 100), and used as examples to illustrate the subsequent 'Rules for the Construction of Sentences,' will furnish the Pupils with sufficient materials for 'Preliminary practice in *reading* and *construing*.' The brief Fable of Lessing, which has also been literally translated in the *Appendix* and subjected to a full *Grammatical Analysis*, will further help them to become acquainted, both theoretically and practically, with the structure of the German sentence. It seemed to me advisable to pay special attention to that topic, as, in my opinion, the student of a foreign language cannot too soon make himself acquainted with the general features of the construction of sentences, and thus find out at once the formal differences and similarities between the foreign and his native tongue. He will then not have to grapple, almost for ever, with the peculiarities, or rather characteristics, of the 'order of words' of the foreign idiom.

Having carefully gone through the *Vorübung*, the Pupil will find no difficulty whatever in making out the Text of the present *Reader*, about the distinctive features of which it appears to me desirable to say a few words.

The Selections—all of which are, though short, still complete in themselves—have been made from the originals, and scarcely any of them will, so far as I am aware, be found in any other similar collections. This fact will, it is hoped, be particularly welcome to teachers, who must have read the extracts currently found in most Readers *usque ad nauseam*. I have given several instructive extracts, and I have also inserted amusing stories and humorous pieces, but I have avoided the trite hackneyed anecdotes which, being found in numerous Readers of nearly every language, are so well known to young students.

The present Selections have been made, with a few exceptions, from authors belonging to the present century, as it seemed to me an essential requisite to give, in a Reader of a modern language, chiefly modern specimens.

The Selections are also strictly *progressive*, both in point of style and contents. They further represent a considerable variety of style—the narrative, descriptive, and epistolary. The first, of course, preponderates, and will furnish the teacher with ample materials to employ the ‘interrogatory method’—by putting questions in German on the subject of the reading and letting the Pupils give their answers in the same language, which method I specially employed in a publication issued many years ago.

The *Notes* give a full explanation of all the idiomatic and difficult phrases occurring throughout the book, and the requisite historical, biographical and geographical information. They also contain besides etymological explanations a considerable number of Grammatical Rules, and numerous hints for translating from German into English, which may serve the student as a guide in his future more advanced studies of German. The ‘Help Notes,’ which are very abundant at the beginning—without rendering it superfluous on the part of the Pupil to think for himself, or to make use of the Vocabulary—diminish in proportion as the book progresses, as it may fairly be supposed that the student who has gone through a considerable portion of the *Reader* will not only remember the information given in the preceding pages of the *Notes*, but will also have made adequate progress in Grammar. For it should be remembered that the present volume is to be a *companion* only to the Grammar and not a substitute for it.

The *Vocabulary* has been worked out most elaborately. It is *grammatical* and *etymological*—as far as is compatible with a work like the present—and gives the rendering of *every* expression contained in the Text. There is no doubt that it is of very great advantage to become acquainted, at an early stage, with the etymology of foreign languages, more especially when they are so cognate to each other as German is to English. The formal similarity between two expressions has been pointed out by the simple expedient of printing the English words in *italics*; as, in similar matters, the eye is the best help for the memory. In other

instances—in which I have generally followed the best modern authorities—the roots or cognate words have been put in square brackets. The Vocabulary has, besides, been so arranged that the Pupils will find in it sufficient assistance, if they should enter a Class that has already gone through a portion of the *Reader*, or if the Teacher considers it advisable to deviate from the order in which the Extracts are given.

German Orthography is now in a state of transition, and is certain to undergo many more changes in the future. It seemed to me therefore advisable, in order not to confuse the Pupils, to adhere to the mode of spelling still currently used in Germany for printing the German Classics, and not to admit any innovations, until the rules of 'Spelling Reform' have been finally and universally settled in Germany. I have, however, adopted the modern terminology of *strong* and *weak* in the Vocabulary with regard to the verbs, and also in the 'Tables of Declensions and Conjugations,' which Tabular Views I would particularly recommend to the attention of Students, as also the 'Hints how to consult the *Notes* and the *Vocabulary*' (p. xii), which should be read through before the Book itself is taken in hand.

From the above description of the present *Reader* it will be seen that I have earnestly endeavoured to produce a serviceable text book for those who are desirous of obtaining a systematic and practical knowledge of German; but as a large number of Students are obliged to have recourse to a suitable guide for their Examinations, I may add that this volume will be found of assistance—as regards the translations from German into English—in the Examinations for Matriculation at the University of London; for admission to the Military and the Civil Service; for the Senior Candidates in the Oxford Local Examinations, and for the Pupils' Examinations conducted by the College of Preceptors.

C. A. BUCHHEIM.

KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON.

May, 1881.