

Short review of an important new German book

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The dawn was clear and hopeful. A few clouds skittered across the blue of an endless sky. Manuel, somewhat bashful, set the coffee before Oliver. In his woven shoes, a towel around the middle, he reminded Oliver of the statues of flute players on Greek vases. They looked at each other. «Your health!» Manuel smiled, lifting the thick coffee cup. Oliver lifted his, smiling back. The peace which had fallen on him was so new, so shockingly blissful, he had to learn how to accept it.

«You feel right, Oliver?» Manuel began and as Oliver simply nodded, he went on, a little hesitant. «Will you . . . can you come here again? To visit? I know I am only a stupid Brava and you are a real American, educated and nice and you have studied . . .» «Oh be quiet, Manuel!» Oliver went around the table and put his arm around the mahogany shoulders. «I want to be with you all the time. I will come tonight. And if you feel like it, I'll teach you how to read music.» Manuel did not answer. His thin fingers laced around Oliver's enormous hand, and Oliver drew him to the window. As they gazed out into the wide expanse of the bog where the huge trees held watch over the shimmering canals, where the blueish smoke from the Brava huts rose like hopeful banners into the morning, Oiver knew the turning point had come, right here. He was not alone any longer. The Wave could not hit him any more. Manuel stood by him and where Manuel was, the dark angels of fear and destruction had lost their power.

Short Review of an important new German book

Dr. Rudolf Klimmer. *Die Homosexualität*. 260 pages. Price 5 dollars, including postage. Can be ordered through The Circle.

Despite the fact that most of our English speaking subscribers will be unable to read the book by Dr. Klimmer, *Die Homosexualität*, we feel that a book of such importance should be brought to the notice of our over-seas friends. Dr. Klimmer is a specialist in nervous diseases, medical adviser to a prison, and a medical expert in the law-courts. He practises in Eastern Germany. To give the reason why Dr. Klimmer wrote his book, we quote from his introduction: «Homosexuals form a minority group at a disadvantage. Because homosexual people start their lives at a disadvantage I decided to write this book.»

From the point of view of «The Circle», the mention of our magazine no less than a dozen times in the extensive bibliography attached to the book has shown us that the work «The Circle» has been doing for 27 years has at least not been in vain.

Instead of a lengthy review of this highly important book, we prefer to acquaint our English speaking subscribers with some pointed extracts.

THE CIRCLE

Extracts from: Dr. Rudolf Klimmer, *Die Homosexualität*.

As a practical result of looking at homosexuality from a purely biologically scientific standpoint, three facts are indisputably established, no matter whether homosexuality is looked upon as inherent or as caused by environmental influences:

the darkened shadows of faraway bodies crouch to watch you.

The slow maelstrom of my bed received me, the vortex turned slowly around: lights winked, colors came and went, there was silent music crashing (now loud, now pianissimo) in my secret ear. And turning, turning, the bed bore me in a circle around the square limits of the room.

«Come to bed!» I rose half upright, and shouted. «In a minute!», he called. I stumbled to the door of the bathroom, peeked through the crack. He stood naked, one hand caressing the shoulder and arm of his other side. Over and over again, whilst he watched in the mirrors a thousand tall and ivory figures stroking their arms, their thighs, the flatness of their bellies, posing, turning, the face in profile, in full — the rosy lights catching and weaving a pattern of light and shadow, beautiful, beautiful . . .

I reeled to bed again, and the slow circular turning bore me down, down, down, and red poppies filled the air with slumbrous fragrance, and a lute struck a note like a crystal bell.

Then it was dawn. Through the black curtains sliced a thin edge of chill grey light. I listened, moving my tongue over dry lips. The rosy lights were still on, and I heard the faint sound of rustling, of stroking . . . I staggered to the crack of the door, and looked.

The window was a little open, a vagrant breeze flitted through. It rustled the green leaves of a gigantic flower, rooted in the mosaic of the floor — seven feet tall, the green stem slender and swaying, and the white calyx drooping. The sweet odor overpowered me. «Tom!» I called, opening the door.

Nothing, nothing — only the thin rustle of the pointed leaves, caressing the stem, the whisper of the white flowers turning ever so lightly, paper-thin, funereal sweet. And in the silent mirrors, a thousand milk-white narcissi bowed a little.

Oh, I am the envy of my friends! Now they come every night to visit me, to see my wondrous bloom! So little trouble — a bit of water once a day! The scent — as of heaven sprinkled in my room!

And I, so happy with my flower, tending it, loving it (the hunting days are ended), caressing its stem, plucking its petals, inhaling the terrible odor of its chalice, and (a secret!) oft-times at night feeling it slip into my room, to wind its tendrils gently around my body, pinioning my arms to my side, fastening my legs to the bed — almost like wide webbed straps, whilst I lay in the gentle embrace of my flower, knowing it cannot escape, for I hold it and it holds me, and the wide window has grown bars of itself, so that my Tom cannot leave.

— — Steward.

Last Minute Book Review

«*The Feathers of Death*» by Simon Raven, 15 sh., published by Anthony Blond, London. Here is a worthy successor to Walter Baxter's «*Look down in Mercy*» and surpassing Baxter's novel in so far as it deals nearly exclusively with the homosexual theme. This first novel tells the, alas, tragic love story of a 23 years' old English officer and an 18 years' old private in an English colony, somewhere in Africa. Written in a prose equally excellent in its descriptive passages as in its dialogue, full of subtle irony, typically English in its understatements, entirely human and understanding in its approach to the homosexual theme the book moves on to its tragic conclusion with the inevitability of a Greek tragedy. Definitely one of the best books to have appeared in years and highly recommended. B.

Notice to our new subscribers

If you are interested in former bound volumes of THE CIRCLE you can order them at the price of eight dollars for each volume. The volumes from 1953 to 1958 are usually in stock.

We would also like to remind our English speaking subscribers that there are usually quite a few ads in English in «*Das Kleine Blatt*». Ads in it cost three dollars for one to four lines, four dollars for five to eight lines. *The Circle.*