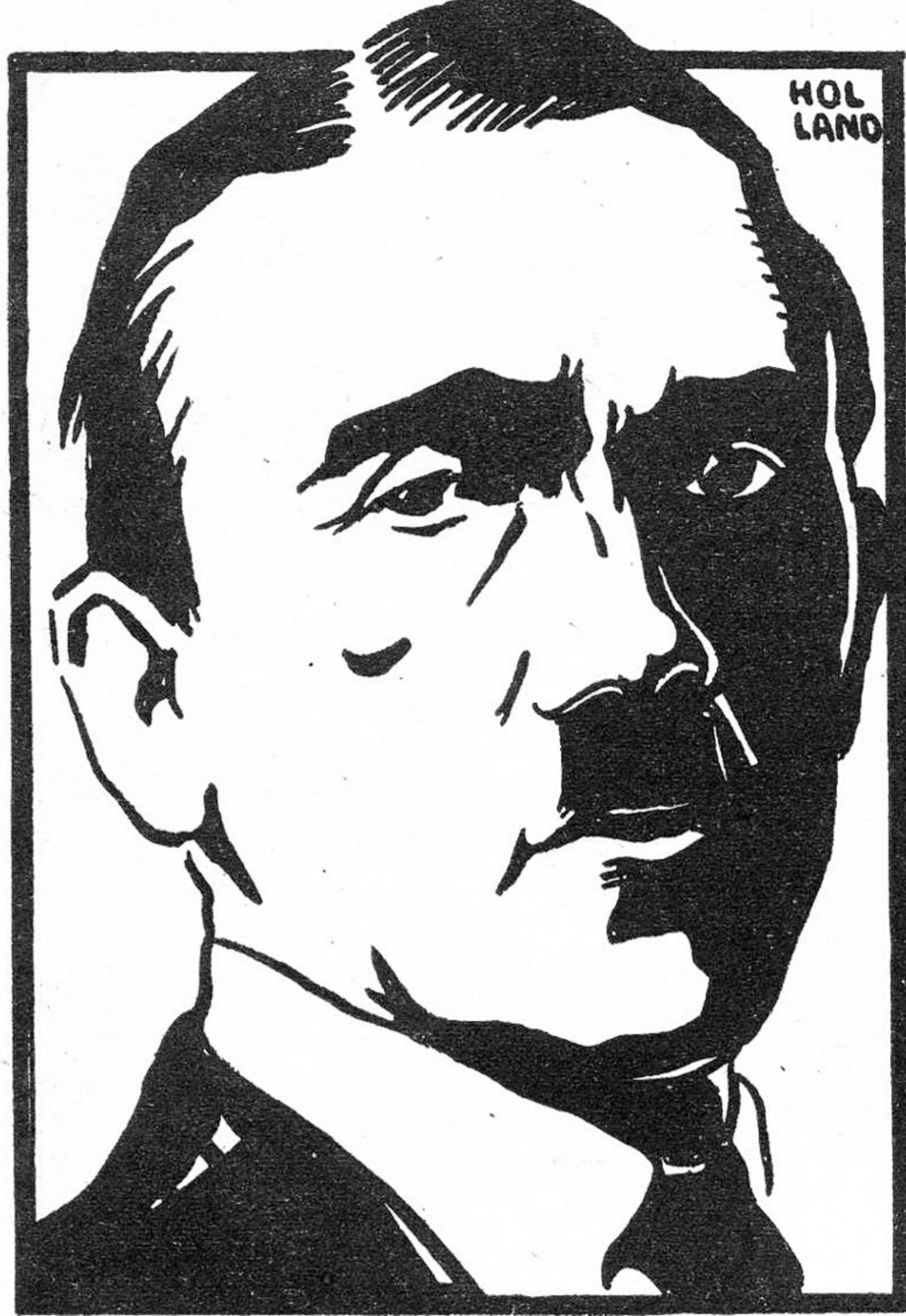


PEOPLE TALKED ABOUT



GERMANY'S POLITICAL RACKETEER

Adolph Hitler borrowed his iron hand from Mussolini, his swastika symbol from the ancients, his brown shirt from the American doughboy and his Mustache from Charlie Chaplin.

(See page 10)

GERMANY'S THORN

A **DOLPH HITLER** (see front cover), the Austrian-born German who for two years has been trying to break the Hindenburg line, is one of the most unusual men who has ever risen to political influence. His political program is a queer hodgepodge of sense and nonsense, and his personal character combines the virtues of a patriot and the follies of a mountebank.

He first saw the light of day in a little village in Upper Austria in 1889. He and his sister Paula were the children of an Austrian customs officer by a second marriage. His father died when he was still very young, and his mother when he was 18. As the son of a public official he could have obtained an education, which he coveted very much, at the expense of the state; but that would have necessitated separation from Paula, whom he refused to leave.

Vienna, the capital of imperial Austria-Hungary, with its wealth and poverty, its romance and drudgery, was his destination when he set out from his native village. At first he tried his hand at painting in water colors. But nobody wanted his pictures and he was compelled to turn from painting pictures to painting houses. At one time he gladly accepted a job as street sweeper. After several years of hardship he migrated to Munich, the capital of Bavaria, where he arrived in 1912, earning his livelihood as a house painter and interior decorator, and architect's draughtsman on occasion.

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Adolph Hitler

Hitler felt within himself an urge to rise above his condition of poverty and drudgery. From the beginning he identified himself with Germany rather than Austria and he resolved to make himself the foremost political speaker in the German empire. Every corner of political philosophy was explored in his wide reading.

Like Mussolini and many other dictators and would-be dictators, he began as a radical socialist. Poorest of the poor himself, he became the champion of all the poor. When the war broke out—again like Mussolini—he did not let his socialistic leanings prevent him from entering the military service with genuine gusto. His was a brilliant military career in a small way. Gassed once, wounded twice, decorated thrice for valor in action, he was discharged from the army a thorough nationalist. He had gone all the way from socialism to fascism and already had become completely identified with his adopted country.

A new and valuable experience came to him when he was made an instructing officer in the Reichswehr, the tiny army allowed Germany under the terms of the Versailles treaty. In 1919 he founded the national socialist workers' party to oppose the social democrats. A semi-military organization known as the Hitler volunteers was formed to support the party. Already at that time he was recognized as the chief reactionary leader in Bavaria.

In November, 1923, he headed the premature revolt in Munich generally referred to as the Hitler "putsch." It was quashed on the second day and its leader condemned to five years detention in the Landsberg fortress. While Hitler was incarcerated his stock fell to its lowest ebb and for a time he lost confidence in both himself and his followers. But his sudden release less than a year later revived his hope and he proceeded to reorganize his national socialist party—now variously known as fascist, Nazi and brownshirt.

Hitler now is moving heaven and earth to make himself master of Germany. His followers often refer to him as the German Oliver Cromwell. To the youth of his country he directs his most eloquent appeals. He appeals to their ambition, their pride and their high spirits. The flower of the youth of Germany today march in his brown-shirt ranks.

Jews are a special object of his enmity. They will have no place in his system. And he wants no women in politics. Not one of the 230 Hitlerite members of the new Reichstag is a woman, although there are many women in that body. Recently, when queried on this subject, he stated that he was in favor of a husband for every woman in Germany. He believes the home, not the political arena, is woman's proper sphere. Just how he hopes to carry out his program is not known, for there are more women than men in the Reich.

Perhaps his strongest appeal to Germany is his promise to strike off the shackles placed on the nation by the Versailles treaty. Complete repudiation of all reparations, refutation of the war-guilt charge, full liberty to arm, these are his promises to the people. And he would abolish interest by law.

One of his pastimes is playing the piano. Wagnerian strains are his

Adolph Hitler

favorites. He was a close personal friend of the late Siegfried Wagner, son of the great composer and the promoter of the Bayreuth musical festival. Hitler is single and it is whispered in Germany that he intends to marry Frau Wagner.

PATHFINDER

DIGEST OF WORLD AFFAIRS

AUGUST 20, 1932

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