

MEIN KAMPF

MEIN KAMPF

ADOLF HITLER



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VOLUME I: *a retrospect*

Introduction	IX
<u>CHAPTER I</u>	
In The Home Of My Parents	2
<u>CHAPTER II</u>	
Years Of Study And Suffering In Vienna	17
<u>CHAPTER III</u>	
Political Reflections Arising Out Of My Sojourn In Vienna	59
<u>CHAPTER IV</u>	
Munich	117
<u>CHAPTER V</u>	
The World War	147
<u>CHAPTER VI</u>	
War Propaganda	165
<u>CHAPTER VII</u>	
The Revolution	177
<u>CHAPTER VIII</u>	
The Beginning Of My Political Activities	195
<u>CHAPTER IX</u>	
The German Labour Party	205
<u>CHAPTER X</u>	
Why The Second Reich Collapsed	213
<u>CHAPTER XI</u>	
Race And People	265
<u>CHAPTER XII</u>	
The First Stage In The Development Of The German National Socialist Labour Party	311

VOLUME II: *the national socialist movement*

CHAPTER I

Weltanschauung And Party 350

CHAPTER II

The State 365

CHAPTER III

Citizens And Subjects Of The State 413

CHAPTER IV

Personality And The Ideal Of The People's State 419

CHAPTER V

Weltanschauung And Organization 429

CHAPTER VI

The First Period Of Our Struggle 441

CHAPTER VII

The Conflict With The Red Forces 457

CHAPTER VIII

The Strong Is Strongest When Alone 481

CHAPTER IX

Fundamental Ideas Regarding The Nature And
Organization Of The Storm Troops 491

CHAPTER X

The Mask Of Federalism 525

CHAPTER XI

Propaganda And Organization 547

CHAPTER XII

The Problem Of The Trade Unions 563

CHAPTER XIII

The German Post-war Policy Of Alliances 575

CHAPTER XIV

Germany's Policy In Eastern Europe 607

CHAPTER XV

The Right To Self-defence 633

EPILOGUE 653

INTRODUCTION

author's preface

On April 1st, 1924, I began to serve my sentence of detention in the Fortress of Landsberg am Lech, following the verdict of the Munich People's Court of that time.

After years of uninterrupted labour it was now possible for the first time to begin a work which many had asked for and which I myself felt would be profitable for the Movement. So I decided to devote two volumes to a description not only of the aims of our Movement but also of its development. There is more to be learned from this than from any purely doctrinaire treatise.

This has also given me the opportunity of describing my own development in so far as such a description is necessary to the understanding of the first as well as the second volume and to destroy the legendary fabrications which the Jewish Press have circulated about me.

In this work I turn not to strangers but to those followers of the Movement whose hearts belong to it and who wish to study it more profoundly. I know that fewer people are won over by the written word than by the spoken word and that every great movement on this earth owes its growth to great speakers and not to great writers.

Nevertheless, in order to produce more equality and uniformity in the defence of any doctrine, its fundamental principles must be committed to writing. May these two volumes therefore serve as the building stones which I contribute to the joint work.



The Fortress,
Landsberg am Lech.

At half-past twelve in the afternoon of November 9th, 1923, those whose names are given below fell in front of the FELDHERNHALLE and in the forecourt of the former War Ministry in Munich for their loyal faith in the resurrection of their people:

Alfarth, Felix, Merchant, born July 5th, 1901.

Bauriedl, Andreas, Hatmaker, born May 4th, 1879.

Casella, Theodor, Bank Official, born August 8th, 1900.

Ehrlich, Wilhelm, Bank Official, born August 19th, 1894.

Faust, Martin, Bank Official, born January 27th, 1901.

Hechenberger, Anton, Locksmith, born September 28th, 1902.

Koerner, Oskar, Merchant, born January 4th, 1875.

Kuhn, Karl, Head Waiter, born July 25th, 1897.

Laforce, Karl, Student of Engineering, born October 28th, 1904.

Neubauer, Kurt, Waiter, born March 27th, 1899.

Pape, Claus von, Merchant, born August 16th, 1904.

Pfordten, Theodor von der, Councillor to the Superior Provincial Court, born May 14th, 1873.

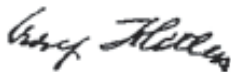
Rickmers, Johann, retired Cavalry Captain, born May 7th, 1881.

Scheubner-Richter, Max Erwin von, Dr. of Engineering, born January 9th, 1884.

Stransky, Lorenz Ritter von, Engineer, born March 14th, 1899.

Wolf, Wilhelm, Merchant, born October 19th, 1898.

So-called national officials refused to allow the dead heroes a common burial. So I dedicate the first volume of this work to them as a common memorial, that the memory of those martyrs may be a permanent source of light for the followers of our Movement.



The Fortress,
Landsberg a/L., October 16th, 1924

translator's introduction

In placing before the reader this unabridged translation of Adolf Hitler's book, MEIN KAMPF, I feel it my duty to call attention to certain historical facts which must be borne in mind if the reader would form a fair judgment of what is written in this extraordinary work.

The first volume of MEIN KAMPF was written while the author was imprisoned in a Bavarian fortress. How did he get there and why? The answer to that question is important, because the book deals with the events which brought the author into this plight and because he wrote under the emotional stress caused by the historical happenings of the time. It was the hour of Germany's deepest humiliation, somewhat parallel to that of a little over a century before, when Napoleon had dismembered the old German Empire and French soldiers occupied almost the whole of Germany.

In the beginning of 1923 the French invaded Germany, occupied the Ruhr district and seized several German towns in the Rhineland. This was a flagrant breach of international law and was protested against by every section of British political opinion at that time. The Germans could not effectively defend themselves, as they had been already disarmed under the provisions of the Versailles Treaty. To make the situation more fraught with disaster for Germany, and therefore more appalling in its prospect, the French carried on an intensive propaganda for the separation of the Rhineland from the German Republic and the establishment of an independent Rhenania. Money was poured out lavishly to bribe agitators to carry on this work, and some of the most insidious elements of the German population became active in the pay of the invader. At the same time a vigorous movement was being carried on in Bavaria for the secession of that country and the establishment of an independent Catholic monarchy there, under vassalage to France, as Napoleon had done when he made Maximilian the first King of Bavaria in 1805.

The separatist movement in the Rhineland went so far that some leading German politicians came out in favour of it, suggesting that if the Rhineland were thus ceded it might be possible for the German Republic to strike a bargain with the French in regard to Reparations. But in Bavaria the movement went even farther. And it was more far-reaching in its implications; for, if an independent Catholic monarchy could be set up in Bavaria, the next move would have been a union with Catholic German-Austria possibly under a Habsburg King. Thus a Catholic BLOC would have been created which would extend from the Rhineland through Bavaria and Austria into the Danube Valley and would have been at least under the moral and military, if not the full political, hegemony of France. The dream seems fantastic now, but it was considered quite a practical thing in those fantastic times. The effect of putting such a plan into action would have meant the complete dismemberment of Germany; and that is what French diplomacy aimed at. Of course such an aim no longer exists. And I should not recall what must now seem "old, unhappy, far-off things" to the modern generation, were it not that they were very near and actual at the time *MEIN KAMPF* was written and were more unhappy then than we can even imagine now.

By the autumn of 1923 the separatist movement in Bavaria was on the point of becoming an accomplished fact. General von Lossow, the Bavarian chief of the REICHSWEHR no longer took orders from Berlin. The flag of the German Republic was rarely to be seen, finally, the Bavarian Prime Minister decided to proclaim an independent Bavaria and its secession from the German Republic. This was to have taken place on the eve of the Fifth Anniversary of the establishment of the German Republic (November 9th, 1918.)

Hitler staged a counter-stroke. For several days he had been mobilizing his storm battalions in the neighbourhood of Munich, intending to make a national demonstration and hoping that the REICHSWEHR would stand by him to prevent secession. Ludendorff was with him. And he thought that the prestige of the great German Commander in the World War would be sufficient to win the allegiance of the professional army.

A meeting had been announced to take place in the Bürgerbräu Keller on the night of November 8th. The Bavarian patriotic societies were gathered there, and the Prime Minister, Dr. von Kahr, started to read his official PRONUNCIAMENTO, which practically amounted to a

proclamation of Bavarian independence and secession from the Republic. While von Kahr was speaking Hitler entered the hall, followed by Ludendorff. And the meeting was broken up.

Next day the Nazi battalions took the street for the purpose of making a mass demonstration in favour of national union. They marched in massed formation, led by Hitler and Ludendorff. As they reached one of the central squares of the city the army opened fire on them. Sixteen of the marchers were instantly killed, and two died of their wounds in the local barracks of the REICHSWEHR. Several others were wounded also. Hitler fell on the pavement and broke a collar-bone. Ludendorff marched straight up to the soldiers who were firing from the barricade, but not a man dared draw a trigger on his old Commander.

Hitler was arrested with several of his comrades and imprisoned in the fortress of Landsberg on the River Lech. On February 26th, 1924, he was brought to trial before the VOLKSGERICHT, or People's Court in Munich. He was sentenced to detention in a fortress for five years. With several companions, who had been also sentenced to various periods of imprisonment, he returned to Landsberg am Lech and remained there until the 20th of the following December, when he was released. In all he spent about thirteen months in prison. It was during this period that he wrote the first volume of MEIN KAMPF.

If we bear all this in mind we can account for the emotional stress under which MEIN KAMPF was written. Hitler was naturally incensed against the Bavarian government authorities, against the footling patriotic societies who were pawns in the French game, though often unconsciously so, and of course against the French. That he should write harshly of the French was only natural in the circumstances. At that time there was no exaggeration whatsoever in calling France the implacable and mortal enemy of Germany. Such language was being used by even the pacifists themselves, not only in Germany but abroad. And even though the second volume of MEIN KAMPF was written after Hitler's release from prison and was published after the French had left the Ruhr, the tramp of the invading armies still echoed in German ears, and the terrible ravages that had been wrought in the industrial and financial life of Germany, as a consequence of the French invasion, had plunged the country into a state of social and economic chaos. In France itself the franc fell to fifty per cent of its previous value. Indeed, the whole of Europe had been brought to the brink of ruin, following the French invasion of the Ruhr and Rhineland.

But, as those things belong to the limbo of a dead past that nobody wishes to have remembered now, it is often asked: Why doesn't Hitler revise *MEIN KAMPF*? The answer, as I think, which would immediately come into the mind of an impartial critic, is that *MEIN KAMPF* is an historical document which bears the imprint of its own time. To revise it would involve taking it out of its historical context. Moreover Hitler has declared that his acts and public statements constitute a partial revision of his book and are to be taken as such. This refers especially to the statements in *MEIN KAMPF* regarding France and those German kinsfolk that have not yet been incorporated in the *REICH*. On behalf of Germany he has definitely acknowledged the German portion of South Tyrol as permanently belonging to Italy and, in regard to France, he has again and again declared that no grounds now exist for a conflict of political interests between Germany and France and that Germany has no territorial claims against France. Finally, I may note here that Hitler has also declared that, as he was only a political leader and not yet a statesman in a position of official responsibility, when he wrote this book, what he stated in *MEIN KAMPF* does not implicate him as Chancellor of the *REICH*.

I now come to some references in the text which are frequently recurring and which may not always be clear to every reader. For instance, Hitler speaks indiscriminately of the German *REICH*. Sometimes he means to refer to the first *REICH*, or Empire, and sometimes to the German Empire as founded under William I in 1871. Incidentally the regime which he inaugurated in 1933 is generally known as the *THIRD REICH*, though this expression is not used in *MEIN KAMPF*. Hitler also speaks of the Austrian *REICH* and the East Mark, without always explicitly distinguishing between the Habsburg Empire and Austria proper. If the reader will bear the following historical outline in mind, he will understand the references as they occur.

The word *REICH*, which is a German form of the Latin word *REGNUM*, does not mean Kingdom or Empire or Republic. It is a sort of basic word that may apply to any form of Constitution. Perhaps our word, Realm, would be the best translation, though the word Empire can be used when the *REICH* was actually an Empire. The forerunner of the first German Empire was the Holy Roman Empire which Charlemagne founded in A.D. 800. Charlemagne was King of the Franks, a group of Germanic tribes that subsequently became Romanized. In the tenth century Charlemagne's Empire passed into German hands when Otto I (936-

973) became Emperor. As the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, its formal appellation, it continued to exist under German Emperors until Napoleon overran and dismembered Germany during the first decade of the last century. On August 6th, 1806, the last Emperor, Francis II, formally resigned the German crown. In the following October Napoleon entered Berlin in triumph, after the Battle of Jena.

After the fall of Napoleon a movement set in for the reunion of the German states in one Empire. But the first decisive step towards that end was the foundation of the Second German Empire in 1871, after the Franco-Prussian War. This Empire, however, did not include the German lands which remained under the Habsburg Crown. These were known as German Austria. It was Bismarck's dream to unite German Austria with the German Empire; but it remained only a dream until Hitler turned it into a reality in 1938'. It is well to bear that point in mind, because this dream of reuniting all the German states in one REICH has been a dominant feature of German patriotism and statesmanship for over a century and has been one of Hitler's ideals since his childhood.

In MEIN KAMPF Hitler often speaks of the East Mark. This East Mark—i.e. eastern frontier land—was founded by Charlemagne as the eastern bulwark of the Empire. It was inhabited principally by Germano-Celtic tribes called Bajuvari and stood for centuries as the firm bulwark of Western Christendom against invasion from the East, especially against the Turks. Geographically it was almost identical with German Austria.

There are a few points more that I wish to mention in this introductory note. For instance, I have let the word WELTANSCHAUUNG stand in its original form very often. We have no one English word to convey the same meaning as the German word, and it would have burdened the text too much if I were to use a circumlocution each time the word occurs. WELTANSCHAUUNG literally means "Outlook-on-the-World". But as generally used in German this outlook on the world means a whole system of ideas associated together in an organic unity—ideas of human life, human values, cultural and religious ideas, politics, economics, etc., in fact a totalitarian view of human existence. Thus Christianity could be called a WELTANSCHAUUNG, and Mohammedanism could be called a WELTANSCHAUUNG, and Socialism could be called a WELTANSCHAUUNG, especially as preached in Russia. National Socialism claims definitely to be a WELTANSCHAUUNG.

Another word I have often left standing in the original is VÖLKISCH. The basic word here is VOLK, which is sometimes translated as PEOPLE; but the German word, VOLK, means the whole body of the PEOPLE without any distinction of class or caste. It is a primary word also that suggests what might be called the basic national stock. Now, after the defeat in 1918, the downfall of the Monarchy and the destruction of the aristocracy and the upper classes, the concept of DAS VOLK came into prominence as the unifying co-efficient which would embrace the whole German people. Hence the large number of VÖLKISCH societies that arose after the war and hence also the National Socialist concept of unification which is expressed by the word VOLKSGEMEINSCHAFT, or folk community. This is used in contradistinction to the Socialist concept of the nation as being divided into classes. Hitler's ideal is the VÖLKISCHER STAAT, which I have translated as the People's State.

Finally, I would point out that the term Social Democracy may be misleading in English, as it has not a democratic connotation in our sense. It was the name given to the Socialist Party in Germany. And that Party was purely Marxist; but it adopted the name Social Democrat in order to appeal to the democratic sections of the German people.

JAMES MURPHY.

Abbots Langley, February, 1939

VOLUME I:
A RETROSPECT

CHAPTER ONE

in the home of my parents

It has turned out fortunate for me today that destiny appointed Braunau-on-the-Inn to be my birthplace. For that little town is situated just on the frontier between those two States the reunion of which seems, at least to us of the younger generation, a task to which we should devote our lives and in the pursuit of which every possible means should be employed.

German-Austria must be restored to the great German Motherland. And not indeed on any grounds of economic calculation whatsoever. No, no. Even if the union were a matter of economic indifference, and even if it were to be disadvantageous from the economic standpoint, still it ought to take place. People of the same blood should be in the same REICH. The German people will have no right to engage in a colonial policy until they shall have brought all their children together in the one State. When the territory of the REICH embraces all the Germans and finds itself unable to assure them a livelihood, only then can the moral right arise, from the need of the people to acquire foreign territory. The plough is then the sword; and the tears of war will produce the daily bread for the generations to come.

And so this little frontier town appeared to me as the symbol of a great task. But in another regard also it points to a lesson that is applicable to our day. Over a hundred years ago this sequestered spot was the scene of a tragic calamity which affected the whole German nation and will be remembered for ever, at least in the annals of German history. At the time of our Fatherland's deepest humiliation a bookseller, Johannes Palm, uncompromising nationalist and enemy of the French, was put to death here because he had the misfortune to have loved Germany well. He obstinately refused to disclose the names of his associates, or rather the principals who were chiefly responsible for the affair. Just as it happened with Leo Schlageter. The former, like the latter, was denounced to the French by a Government agent. It was a

director of police from Augsburg who won an ignoble renown on that occasion and set the example which was to be copied at a later date by the neo-German officials of the REICH under Herr Severing's regime.¹

In this little town on the Inn, haloed by the memory of a German martyr, a town that was Bavarian by blood but under the rule of the Austrian State, my parents were domiciled towards the end of the last century. My father was a civil servant who fulfilled his duties very conscientiously. My mother looked after the household and lovingly devoted herself to the care of her children. From that period I have not retained very much in my memory; because after a few years my father had to leave that frontier town which I had come to love so much and take up a new post farther down the Inn valley, at Passau, therefore actually in Germany itself.

[Note 1. In order to understand the reference here, and similar references in later portions of MEIN KAMPF, the following must be borne in mind:

From 1792 to 1814 the French Revolutionary Armies overran Germany. In 1800 Bavaria shared in the Austrian defeat at Hohenlinden and the French occupied Munich. In 1805 the Bavarian Elector was made King of Bavaria by Napoleon and stipulated to back up Napoleon in all his wars with a force of 30,000 men. Thus Bavaria became the absolute vassal of the French. This was 'The Time of Germany's Deepest Humiliation', Which is referred to again and again by Hitler. In 1806 a pamphlet entitled 'Germany's Deepest Humiliation' was published in South Germany. Among those who helped to circulate the pamphlet was the Nürnberg bookseller, Johannes Philipp Palm. He was denounced to the French by a Bavarian police agent. At his trial he refused to disclose the name of the author. By Napoleon's orders, he was shot at Braunau-on-the-Innon August 26th, 1806. A monument erected to him on the site of the execution was one of the first public objects that made an impression on Hitler as a little boy.

Leo Schlageter's case was in many respects parallel to that of Johannes Palm. Schlageter was a German theological student who volunteered for service in 1914. He became an artillery officer and won the Iron Cross of both classes. When the French occupied the Ruhr in 1923 Schlageter helped to organize the passive resistance on the German side. He and his companions blew up a railway bridge for the purpose of making the transport of coal to France more difficult. Those who took part in the affair were denounced to the French by a German informer. Schlageter took the whole responsibility on his own shoulders and was condemned to death, his companions being sentenced to various terms of imprisonment and penal servitude by the French Court. Schlageter refused to disclose the identity of those who issued the order to blow up the railway bridge and he would not plead for mercy before a French Court. He was shot by a French firing-squad on May 26th, 1923. Severing was at that time German Minister of the Interior. It is said that representations were made, to him on Schlageter's behalf and that he refused to interfere.

Schlageter has become the chief martyr of the German resistance to the French occupation of the Ruhr and also one of the great heroes of the National Socialist Movement. He had joined the Movement at a very early stage, his card of membership bearing the number 61.]

In those days it was the usual lot of an Austrian civil servant to be transferred periodically from one post to another. Not long after coming to Passau my father was transferred to Linz, and while there he retired finally to live on his pension. But this did not mean that the old gentleman would now rest from his labours.

He was the son of a poor cottager, and while still a boy he grew restless and left home. When he was barely thirteen years old he buckled on his satchel and set forth from his native woodland parish. Despite the dissuasion of villagers who could speak from 'experience,' he went to Vienna to learn a trade there. This was in the fiftieth year of the last century. It was a sore trial, that of deciding to leave home and face the unknown, with three gulden in his pocket. By when the boy of thirteen was a lad of seventeen and had passed his apprenticeship examination as a craftsman he was not content. Quite the contrary. The persistent economic depression of that period and the constant want and misery strengthened his resolution to give up working at a trade and strive for 'something higher.' As a boy it had seemed to him that the position of the parish priest in his native village was the highest in the scale of human attainment; but now that the big city had enlarged his outlook the young man looked up to the dignity of a State official as the highest of all. With the tenacity of one whom misery and trouble had already made old when only halfway through his youth the young man of seventeen obstinately set out on his new project and stuck to it until he won through. He became a civil servant. He was about twenty-three years old, I think, when he succeeded in making himself what he had resolved to become. Thus he was able to fulfill the promise he had made as a poor boy not to return to his native village until he was 'somebody.'

He had gained his end. But in the village there was nobody who had remembered him as a little boy, and the village itself had become strange to him.

Now at last, when he was fifty-six years old, he gave up his active career; but he could not bear to be idle for a single day. On the outskirts of the small market town of Lambach in Upper Austria he bought a farm and tilled it himself. Thus, at the end of a long and hard-working career, he came back to the life which his father had led.

It was at this period that I first began to have ideals of my own. I spent a good deal of time scampering about in the open, on the long road from school, and mixing up with some of the roughest of the boys, which caused my mother many anxious moments. All this tended to

make me something quite the reverse of a stay-at-home. I gave scarcely any serious thought to the question of choosing a vocation in life; but I was certainly quite out of sympathy with the kind of career which my father had followed. I think that an inborn talent for speaking now began to develop and take shape during the more or less strenuous arguments which I used to have with my comrades. I had become a juvenile ringleader who learned well and easily at school but was rather difficult to manage. In my free time I practiced singing in the choir of the monastery church at Lambach, and thus it happened that I was placed in a very favourable position to be emotionally impressed again and again by the magnificent splendour of ecclesiastical ceremonial. What could be more natural for me than to look upon the Abbot as representing the highest human ideal worth striving for, just as the position of the humble village priest had appeared to my father in his own boyhood days? At least, that was my idea for a while. But the juvenile disputes I had with my father did not lead him to appreciate his son's oratorical gifts in such a way as to see in them a favourable promise for such a career, and so he naturally could not understand the boyish ideas I had in my head at that time. This contradiction in my character made him feel somewhat anxious.

As a matter of fact, that transitory yearning after such a vocation soon gave way to hopes that were better suited to my temperament. Browsing through my father's books, I chanced to come across some publications that dealt with military subjects. One of these publications was a popular history of the Franco-German War of 1870-71. It consisted of two volumes of an illustrated periodical dating from those years. These became my favourite reading. In a little while that great and heroic conflict began to take first place in my mind. And from that time onwards I became more and more enthusiastic about everything that was in any way connected with war or military affairs.

But this story of the Franco-German War had a special significance for me on other grounds also. For the first time, and as yet only in quite a vague way, the question began to present itself: Is there a difference—and if there be, what is it—between the Germans who fought that war and the other Germans? Why did not Austria also take part in it? Why did not my father and all the others fight in that struggle? Are we not the same as the other Germans? Do we not all belong together?

That was the first time that this problem began to agitate my small brain. And from the replies that were given to the questions which I

asked very tentatively, I was forced to accept the fact, though with a secret envy, that not all Germans had the good luck to belong to Bismarck's Empire. This was something that I could not understand.

It was decided that I should study. Considering my character as a whole, and especially my temperament, my father decided that the classical subjects studied at the Lyceum were not suited to my natural talents. He thought that the REALSCHULE² would suit me better. My obvious talent for drawing confirmed him in that view; for in his opinion drawing was a subject too much neglected in the Austrian GYMNASIUM. Probably also the memory of the hard road which he himself had travelled contributed to make him look upon classical studies as unpractical and accordingly to set little value on them. At the back of his mind he had the idea that his son also should become an official of the Government. Indeed he had decided on that career for me. The difficulties through which he had to struggle in making his own career led him to overestimate what he had achieved, because this was exclusively the result of his own indefatigable industry and energy. The characteristic pride of the self-made man urged him towards the idea that his son should follow the same calling and if possible rise to a higher position in it. Moreover, this idea was strengthened by the consideration that the results of his own life's industry had placed him in a position to facilitate his son's advancement in the same career.

He was simply incapable of imagining that I might reject what had meant everything in life to him. My father's decision was simple, definite, clear and, in his eyes, it was something to be taken for granted. A man of such a nature who had become an autocrat by reason of his own hard struggle for existence, could not think of allowing 'inexperienced' and irresponsible young fellows to choose their own careers. To act in such a way, where the future of his own son was concerned, would have been a grave and reprehensible weakness in the exercise of parental authority and responsibility, something utterly incompatible with his characteristic sense of duty.

And yet it had to be otherwise.

For the first time in my life—I was then eleven years old—I felt myself forced into open opposition. No matter how hard and determined my

[Note 2. Non-classical secondary school. The Lyceum and GYMNASIUM were classical or semi-classical secondary schools.]

father might be about putting his own plans and opinions into action, his son was no less obstinate in refusing to accept ideas on which he set little or no value.

I would not become a civil servant.

No amount of persuasion and no amount of 'grave' warnings could break down that opposition. I would not become a State official, not on any account. All the attempts which my father made to arouse in me a love or liking for that profession, by picturing his own career for me, had only the opposite effect. It nauseated me to think that one day I might be fettered to an office stool, that I could not dispose of my own time but would be forced to spend the whole of my life filling out forms.

One can imagine what kind of thoughts such a prospect awakened in the mind of a young fellow who was by no means what is called a 'good boy' in the current sense of that term. The ridiculously easy school tasks which we were given made it possible for me to spend far more time in the open air than at home. Today, when my political opponents pry into my life with diligent scrutiny, as far back as the days of my boyhood, so as finally to be able to prove what disreputable tricks this Hitler was accustomed to in his young days, I thank heaven that I can look back to those happy days and find the memory of them helpful. The fields and the woods were then the terrain on which all disputes were fought out.

Even attendance at the REALSCHULE could not alter my way of spending my time. But I had now another battle to fight.

So long as the paternal plan to make a State functionary contradicted my own inclinations only in the abstract, the conflict was easy to bear. I could be discreet about expressing my personal views and thus avoid constantly recurrent disputes. My own resolution not to become a Government official was sufficient for the time being to put my mind completely at rest. I held on to that resolution inexorably. But the situation became more difficult once I had a positive plan of my own which I might present to my father as a counter-suggestion. This happened when I was twelve years old. How it came about I cannot exactly say now; but one day it became clear to me that I would be a painter—I mean an artist. That I had an aptitude for drawing was an admitted fact. It was even one of the reasons why my father had sent me to the REALSCHULE; but he had never thought of having that talent developed in such a way that I could take up painting as a professional career. Quite the contrary. When, as a result of my renewed refusal to adopt his

favourite plan, my father asked me for the first time what I myself really wished to be, the resolution that I had already formed expressed itself almost automatically. For a while my father was speechless. "A painter? An artist-painter?" he exclaimed.

He wondered whether I was in a sound state of mind. He thought that he might not have caught my words rightly, or that he had misunderstood what I meant. But when I had explained my ideas to him and he saw how seriously I took them, he opposed them with that full determination which was characteristic of him. His decision was exceedingly simple and could not be deflected from its course by any consideration of what my own natural qualifications really were.

"Artist! Not as long as I live, never." As the son had inherited some of the father's obstinacy, besides having other qualities of his own, my reply was equally energetic. But it stated something quite the contrary.

At that our struggle became stalemate. The father would not abandon his 'Never', and I became all the more consolidated in my 'Nevertheless'.

Naturally the resulting situation was not pleasant. The old gentleman was bitterly annoyed; and indeed so was I, although I really loved him. My father forbade me to entertain any hopes of taking up the art of painting as a profession. I went a step further and declared that I would not study anything else. With such declarations the situation became still more strained, so that the old gentleman irrevocably decided to assert his parental authority at all costs. That led me to adopt an attitude of circumspect silence, but I put my threat into execution. I thought that, once it became clear to my father that I was making no progress at the REALSCHULE, for weal or for woe, he would be forced to allow me to follow the happy career I had dreamed of.

I do not know whether I calculated rightly or not. Certainly my failure to make progress became quite visible in the school. I studied just the subjects that appealed to me, especially those which I thought might be of advantage to me later on as a painter. What did not appear to have any importance from this point of view, or what did not otherwise appeal to me favourably, I completely sabotaged. My school reports of that time were always in the extremes of good or bad, according to the subject and the interest it had for me. In one column my qualification read 'very good' or 'excellent'. In another it read 'average' or even 'below average'. By far my best subjects were geography and, even more so, general history. These were my two favourite subjects, and I led the class in them.

When I look back over so many years and try to judge the results of that experience I find two very significant facts standing out clearly before my mind.

First, I became a nationalist.

Second, I learned to understand and grasp the true meaning of history.

The old Austria was a multi-national State. In those days at least the citizens of the German Empire, taken through and through, could not understand what that fact meant in the everyday life of the individuals within such a State. After the magnificent triumphant march of the victorious armies in the Franco-German War the Germans in the REICH became steadily more and more estranged from the Germans beyond their frontiers, partly because they did not deign to appreciate those other Germans at their true value or simply because they were incapable of doing so.

The Germans of the REICH did not realize that if the Germans in Austria had not been of the best racial stock they could never have given the stamp of their own character to an Empire of 52 millions, so definitely that in Germany itself the idea arose—though quite an erroneous one—that Austria was a German State. That was an error which led to dire consequences; but all the same it was a magnificent testimony to the character of the ten million Germans in that East Mark.³ Only very few of the Germans in the REICH itself had an idea of the bitter struggle which those Eastern Germans had to carry on daily for the preservation of their German language, their German schools and their German character. Only today, when a tragic fate has torn several millions of our kinsfolk away from the REICH and has forced them to live under the rule of the stranger, dreaming of that common fatherland towards which all their yearnings are directed and struggling to uphold at least the sacred right of using their mother tongue—only now have the wider circles of the German population come to realize what it means to have to fight for the traditions of one's race. And so at last perhaps there are people here and there who can assess the greatness of that German spirit which animated the old East Mark and enabled those people, left entirely dependent on their own resources, to defend the Empire against the Orient for several centuries and subsequently to

[Note 3. See *Translator's Introduction*.]