



Memoirs and Diary

of

Heymann Arzt

Born Tremessen, January 5, 1866

Died Berlin, March 13, 1931

To my Cousins

I have finally bestirred myself to the long deferred chore of translating the diary of our grandfather Heymann, whom we remember as Heinz Arzt. The document came to me quite a few years ago, lovingly reproduced in facsimile and bound by my aunt Edith Beal. I am sure that all of you have derived as much pleasure from reading it as I have, and the thought comes to mind that perhaps later generations might still enjoy this remarkable work.

It is quite likely that these, our descendants, will not master the German language, let alone the German script (Suetterlin) in which the diary is written, and it is for that reason that I tackled the English translation. In so doing, I have made every effort to remain as true as possible to the original manuscript, and to project not only the meaning but, as best I could, the tone and flavor of our grandfather's writings.

An understanding of the German school system will help with the "memoir" part of the diary. Elementary School (Volksschule) ran for 8 years; however, boys opting for "higher" education left the primary school after 4 years, and enrolled in a Gymnasium; girls went to a Lyceum. They entered at the Sexta level; the following grades were, in ascending order: Quinta, Quarta, Tertia, Secunda and Prima. The top three levels were divided into upper and lower grades, i.e. Untertertia, Obertertia, etc., so that the Gymnasium took a total of 9 years to graduation. During the German Empire, it was common for boys to graduate after 6 years, following completion of Untersecunda, at which time they qualified for one year of voluntary military service (this type of diploma was known as the "Einjaehrige").

In describing living quarters, I am using the American nomenclature. What we call the first floor is in Germany called Parterre; their first floor is our second, and so on. The towns and cities mentioned in the memoirs are mostly situated in and around the province of Posen, and were then part of the German Empire. Following World Wars I and II, these territories were ceded to Poland, and many localities were renamed. I am listing below some of these towns with their old German and present Polish names, as best I can:

Gnesen	-	Gniezno	Schubin	-	Szubin
Hindenburg	-	Zabrze	Stettin	-	Szczecin
Inowrazlaw	-	Inowroclaw	Tremessen	-	Trzemeszno
Posen	-	Poznan	Wittkowo	-	Witkowo
Rogasen	-	Rogono	Znin	-	Znin

Burbank, California, Fall 1991

Fritz Philippsborn

I resided:

until September 27, 1882, in	Tremessen
from Sep. 27, 1882 to May 2, 1888, in	Berlin
from May 2, 1888 to Aug. 26, 1888, in	Tremessen
from Aug 26, 1888 to Sep. 30, 1888, in	Berlin
from Sep. 30, 1888 to Jan. 1, 1889, in	Nordhausen
from Jan. 1, 1889 to Jan. 4, 1889, in	Berlin
from Jan. 4, 1889 to Mar. 21, 1889, in	Oldenburg

CURRICULUM VITAE
until August 20th, 1888

The abundant free time of which, unfortunately, I can currently dispose on the one hand, and the desire, on the other hand, to give to my family a complete picture of my activities to date of which they are ignorant and which they misunderstand, have finally given me the impetus to begin this diary. I had this planned already for a long time, but constantly other things interfered, and I had to postpone it for a more convenient time. Thus, at this time I have only a few notes of my comings and goings up to this point, and these consist only of loose leaves with many omissions, caused partly by lack of time and partly by sheer negligence. I can not honestly say that I am a great fan of diaries and such because the time and effort which one must devote to such hobbies, and which is essentially wasted, bears no relationship to the eventual pleasure derived from the leafing through these yellowed papers, and the vivid memories of the good old times. The past usually registers in the memory as a good time, even when there is no cause for it, because we have a better recollection of the pleasures than of the unpleasantnesses and troubles we have endured. The remembrance of the latter weakens fast, because we are naturally reluctant to remember hard times, while it often gives us pleasure to relive in spirit the carefree hours of our youth. Only one who has abundant time and a large portion of endurance and willpower will therefore put into action the oft postponed plan to produce a proper diary, and I want to see whether I shall succeed in harnessing my willpower and continue the work here begun without leaving too many pauses and gaps in my narrative.

I was born on January 5th, 1866, or according to the Jewish calendar the 17th Thebet 5626 after the Creation, in Tremessen then called Trzemescno, in the province of Posen, in the house on Johannisstrasse No. 135, corner of Bergstrasse, which is even today owned by my relatives. At a later time I shall render a description of my native town. At my baptism (brith) which took place on January 12th, 1866, I received the name Heymann (Chaim ben Nussen Awruhüm) after my paternal grandfather. My parents are the late Nathan Arzt, and the current Mrs. Johanna David, widowed Arzt, nee Szetschki, both of the Jewish religion in which I was raised as well. I can only give very little information

about my late father. I have very few papers in my hands which could give me any clue to his past, and I have seldom discussed the dear departed either with my dear Mama or my siblings; yes, I must confess to some discomfort when he is discussed, even though I heard only good things about him. I finally avoided, out of a certain reluctance which I can not explain, any reference to him, and his memory only lives on in my heart. Thus it happened that up to this date I know next to nothing of my paternal relatives, not even whether I have any close ones. Only in recent days did I come into possession of some letters in Jewish script which I could not decipher, and I asked Mr. Rothmann to let me know their contents, and just today I learned of the last days of my grandparents, and how they ended in misery and poverty. Some of the letters were addressed to my father by a sister with the sad news of the deaths, after long illness, of his mother on March 20, 1848 (the 15th Adar 5608), and of his father a short time later, on September 2 (the 4th of Elul) of the same year. From his dying father he received a command, dictated to a stranger, to come to him, and to promise him, as his only son, to say the Kaddish for his parents, and to care for their burial places. The letters give evidence of much worry and need, almost like a cry for help. I don't know whether my dear father was in a position to materially help his people; from all I have learned, I must doubt it. This is about all the material at my disposal regarding the parents of my late father, and only now through a coincidence have I received these sad news. It must be terrible, wanting to help with all one's heart and not being able to; the suffering is deeper than that of the one appealing for our help, and ten times more so when it involves one's parents.

If one may lend credence to the number of years shown on my father's tombstone, he was thirty-three years old when his parents died; hence, he must have been born in the year 1815. Yet I would not swear by it, because even today I have no proof of the accuracy of these dates. Considering the penurious situation of his parents, his childhood and youth can not have been too pampered, but rather agitated. Following his rather complete training he had good experience, and I have been told that he lived for seven years in Berlin, five in Breslau, and also in Znin, Esein and Schubin. The major part of his youth was spent in various apprenticeships, where he was trained as a bookbinder and manufacturer of notions (costume jewelry?). He was very capable, and did outstanding work, as proof of which we own several examples of his handiwork. I have also learned from other sides that his work had a solid reputation and was locally much in demand. From Schubin he moved to Tremessen; according to an official document this must have taken place in early 1840. This document is a so-called Certificate of Toleration, which was required in the then Grand Duchy of Posen of all Jews who needed permission to settle there with their families, and had to be renewed annually. Only the revolution of 1848 brought to my fellow Jews the long yearned for and well deserved equality with

their contemporaries; however, this became fully effective only with the enactment of the federal law of July 3rd, 1869 regarding civil rights.

The last Certificate of Toleration of my father's, in my possession, is dated March 4th, 1848. On this document I also find the name of his first wife Auguste (I believe her nickname was Golde), born one year earlier than my father. Both were married before their 24th year, because according to this paper they were already married in early 1840; it is possible, though, that they forged the bond several years earlier. Of this woman I only know that she was married to my late father for at least twenty-four years, and that their union was not a very harmonious one. The main reason was apparently that she remained childless; however, it also appears that she was not much to look at, being either partially or totally blind in one eye. She died on Tuesday, the 13th of September 1864 (the 12th Elul 5624) at five o'clock in the morning, aged fifty years, and is buried in the local cemetery next to my father. Supposedly she wrote her own obituary. I have no further information on this woman, because I lack all documentation.

My father did not remain a widower for long, especially since over the years he had attained a certain prosperity. Only four months later, on January 18, 1865 he became engaged to my mother; they were married on the 23rd of March of the same year in her home town of Gnesen, the neighboring town of Tremessen. The wedding had actually been planned for the previous day, the 22nd; however, due to Kaiser Wilhelm I.'s birthday celebrations no music was available, and the festivities had to be moved to the following day. My father was forty-nine years old at the time, and my mother twenty-nine, i.e. twenty years his junior. Their union was a fairly happy one, especially since the hitherto childless man sired four children, three sons and one daughter, but it lasted only too short a time. Only five and a-half years later, on August 30, 1870 (the 5th Elul 5630), one day after the anniversary of his father's death, my dear Papa died as a result of an inguinal hernia, at the age of fifty-five years, leaving behind his wife and four minor children. He died too soon, much too soon; of all my siblings I sustained the greatest loss, for seldom has a child felt more deeply than I the loss of his procreator, or missed more painfully his guidance. I followed the wrong career which cheated me out of my youthful dreams, and robbed me of my few juvenile pleasures, my cheerfulness and my happiness, all because I needed him. I should have followed him into the grave; thus I would have been happy. When death takes the father of a minor boy, or the mother of a girl, they may as well join them in their graves, for they have lost the best part of their lives. Surely my future would have run a different course, had it only been granted my dear father to remain longer, but it was not to be!

I remember him only very, very faintly (I was, at the time of his death four-and-a-half years old), almost no recollection of his face, only the outline of his strong and ample body. Try as I may, I cannot recall his features, no matter how long I may gaze at his photograph. After all, the picture was taken five years before his passing, shortly after his wedding with my beloved Mama, but I have been told that it is a very good likeness. As I visualize the dear departed, he must have been tall and strong, somewhat like my brother Albert, also resembling him in the face which was surrounded by a yellowish beard. The picture seems to mirror Albert's features.

As I have mentioned, it appears that in his lifetime he did not have too many happy days; almost to his end he had to work hard in order to earn a decent living, and bitter misery must often have been his companion. Two episodes of his life truly illustrate how he had to fight the relentless fate. At the time of his first marriage he was so poor that he had to borrow eighteen Thaler from his sister Bertha Arnheim (to whom I shall return at a later time), in order to have an outfit made, so as to appear as a proper suitor. He paid the money back in small installments, except for four Thaler which he could not repay after the wedding. It is also possible that he was ashamed to tell his young bride that he still had debts from his bachelor days, especially as he probably felt that his sister would not create problems because of four Thaler. However, she probably also had no money to spare, because when she did not get her money despite many reminders, she took her brother to court, and had the money forcibly retrieved in spite of all his assurances that he was momentarily unable to repay her. The logical result was a falling out of the siblings. I was also told that when he lived at the market square, on the second floor of what is now the Berliner house, the large building of Paradies was going up across the street, and he collected some wooden scraps so as to build a fire against the fierce cold. The owner, however, who had witnessed the illegal gathering, had my father summoned after he had taken his basket with the wood home, requesting its immediate return or face legal action. And my father had to comply; he had to return the wood himself since he could not afford a porter, nor did he have the money to pay the hardhearted rich man. Too bad that my father was not around to behold the fate of Paradies; how he sank lower and lower, and how now his wife and children and grandchildren are in bitter need. The wealth is gone, and almost nothing left of the erstwhile grandeur, while my father slowly progressed, and at the time of his death at least had the assurance of knowing his sorrowing family well provided for. In addition to cash, furniture, etc., in the amount of about ten thousand Mark, there remained two properties free of debt: my birthplace, Johannis-Str. 135, and across the street Johannis-Str. No. 66, both valued at about twenty thousand Mark.

During his lifetime, my dear father supposedly drank on occasion a glass or so more than absolutely necessary, but as far as I know, this was his only weakness; other than that I have heard nothing but praise about him. An appeal to him from one in need never went unheeded. He knew from bitter experience the taste of want and poverty, and therefore was always ready to lend a helping hand to the weak and downtrodden, just as he always knew how to obtain justice for himself when it was denied him, since he was well versed in language, both oral and written. Mama frequently talks about him, but it is always in praise; never have I heard of any characteristic deserving of censure. Even now, that Mama has remarried, she seems to enjoy talking of the dear departed, and hardly a day goes by without some mention of him, although, as I said before, I dislike hearing his name pronounced in public. I know so little of the dear deceased, and practically nothing of his family affairs. I have already told of his parents. Supposedly there were two sisters, but he was the only son. I understand that the above mentioned Bertha Arnheim was the eldest, and that she worked as a midwife in Rogasen. A daughter of hers was supposed to marry my father when he was widowed, but nothing came of it because of the animosity between the siblings caused by the above related lawsuit. Their daughter, now that the mother has been dead for several years, also lives in Rogasen, and I am told that she has already married for the second time. The other sister, Sara, lived for several years in Znín where she was married, but she lived in great poverty. In 1866 my father sent both her daughters to America at his own expense; I don't know whether they had any relatives there. The children sent for their mother soon afterwards. Whether any of them are still alive, I do not know; they only wrote once after the death of my dear Papa, requesting details of his passing, the date of his death, and about his family. My dear Mama wrote at length, but never received the requested reply. I would have gone to Rogasen long ago to look for my relatives there, but I always lacked the means. There I probably would have ascertained more news of my father; well, it may still come to pass, and as soon as I have a few extra Marks, my first trip will be to Rogasen and to Exín, where supposedly my dear grandparents are buried. This is all I can relate about my father. Should I later on receive any more information, I shall add it.

Fortunately, even now I have the opportunity to do just that. I have just come into possession of an official document which not only increases but justifies my doubts as to the accuracy of his age mentioned on his tombstone. This paper is sort of a certificate of good conduct and at the same time a confirmation that my dear father established himself as a bookbinder in Schubín on the 4th of February 1826. Now, it is hard to believe, assuming that he was born in the year 1815, that a boy of barely eleven set up his own business, and I am probably not too much mistaken when I surmise that he was born at least ten years earlier, i.e. in

1805, so that he was twenty by the time he set up shop. Under date of the 19th of April 1827, on the same document, the magistrate of Schubin issues him a commendation, and certifies that he works with distinction, and is well able to sustain his family. Thus at the time of his death my father was about sixty-five years old. Even the year of his death is wrong on his tombstone, which was written by Mr. Riess. It shows the year 5631, although 5630 is correct. The parents of my father were called Heymann (after whom I was named) and Rose (from whom my sister got her name) Arzt. My father himself actually had two names: "Nathan Abraham".

I shall now talk about my dear Mama. She was born in Gnesen on the 2nd of December 1835. Her parents were David and Hindel (in German probably Irene or Henriette) Szetschki nee Wreszinski, both of the Jewish religion. At the time the parents married they were very poor; however, little by little they prospered, especially when the children became old enough to help. I remember both of them quite well. My grandfather was a man of more than medium height with very kind features; my grandmother was also quite tall, more than average for a woman. As a result, their children were also rather tall. My grandparents' marriage was a good and serene one, as could be expected from their peaceful personalities, and graced with a rich blessing of children. My dear grandmother, who at her wedding was twenty-three years old, two years the senior of her husband, bore him fourteen children, six sons and eight daughters; however, when the parents died only three daughters remained, all of them married and in good circumstances. In the meantime one of these, the oldest, has passed on, so that only two sisters are living, my dear Mama and Mrs. Marie Brachvogel, in Gnesen. I shall refer to her later on.

My grandparents had a tailor shop which, after a very modest beginning, developed into a rather respectable clothing business which is now in the hands of the son-in-law, Marcus Brachvogel. On Saturdays and Jewish holy days the shop was always closed, since the grandparents were very observant. In the year 1873 (the 16th Iyar 5633) my grandmother died after a brief illness at the age of seventy-two (must have been born in 1801) from old age, having always been a little sickly, and in the following year 1874 (the 22nd Thebet 5634) my dear grandfather died as a result of an accident caused by a pole falling on his foot. Both lived in Gnesen and are buried there on the Jewish cemetery. I attended both funerals with my Mama in Gnesen, and was honored with the duty of saying the Kaddish for both of them in the synagogue on the anniversaries of their deaths. Shortly after my grandparents' passing, a major fight erupted among the three sisters, the legal heirs, over the distribution of the estate. The youngest, Marie Brachvogel, who had lived with her parents and had cared for her father until his death, claimed that very

little was left, but the other sister who knew better, insisted on payment of a major amount, and so it ended up in court. The legal action, to begin with, ate up a tremendous amount of costs, with the only result that my dear Mama, in order to settle the argument and out of the goodness of her heart, decided to forgo her share of the estate which, according to the testament, was the largest part. Now Mrs. Brachvogel is paying her sister, Mrs. Wollmann, a small amount in relation to the size of the estate, keeping the lion's share for herself: all the cash, two properties, a long established, prosperous business and all the household furnishings. She steadfastly refused to take the oath regarding the true value of the estate. My dear Mama was completely left out.

The parents of my late grandfather lived in Gnesen. His father died when he was only half a year old. Strangely enough, they were not called Szetschki, like their son, but Aronsohn. When the ordinance came out that the jews in Posen province were to acquire proper surnames, rather than the Jewish names they had previously held, my grandfather called himself not Aronsohn like his father, but chose Szetschki.

My grandmother's parents were domiciled in Wittkowo; their names were Moses (from whom my brother Albert received his second name) and Pauline Wreszinski. They had four children, one son and three daughters, the youngest of which was my grandmother. The son was the retired rabbi Marcus Wreszinski, married to Sara, living in Tremessen. He died there, 89 years old, in 1875, and she in her 86th year on the 13th of July 1885. This brother outlived all his sisters. My grandmother's oldest sister was Marie, married to Seelig Pflaum, master tailor, residing in Tremessen where he also died. He died, aged 88, on August 4, 1880, and she, at 75 years of age, in the year 1867. Both these couples lie buried in the local Jewish cemetery. The second sister was Rose, married to her cousin Mathias Wreszinski, of Gnesen, and had fourteen children. I know nothing much about her. The youngest of the children was my dear grandmother. In order to keep the family tree more lucid, I am not listing individually the children of my grandmother's siblings, the cousins of my dear mother, but will rather show them in a separate table further down.

The surviving children after my grandparents' passing, i.e. the sisters of my mother, my aunts, are as follows:

The oldest was Hanna (Channa) born, to the best of my knowledge, in 1833; she was first married to a hatter named Israel, and she bore him a daughter, Taube, in the year 1858 on a Shabat, who is married to a headwear manufacturer, Leiser Thorner, in Berlin. The father, however, died after only two years of marriage. My aunt then married Marcus Wollmann, also a hatter and furrier. She bore him seven children, four sons and three daughters, all

of them now residing in Berlin. Initially my uncle and aunt Wollmann lived in Gnesen; however, when my aunt's parents died and she received a small inheritance, they moved to Posen. At first they did quite well, but the business was not properly taken care of, and the overhead, rent and taxes plus the family's expenses got out of hand, and in the year 1876 they had to stop paying their bills. With need and want now besetting the family, this must have severely depressed my aunt who used to enjoy a comfortable life in her parental home, for two years later, in 1878 (the 1st of Av 5638) she died of yellow jaundice, and was buried in Posen with great honors.

It should not have been too difficult for her sister, Mrs. Marie Brachvogel, who lived in well-to-do circumstances, to save the sister of her own flesh and blood, but rather than assist her with word and deed in her hour of need, she wrote my dear Mama a letter in which she triumphantly announced the downfall of her older sister. Only when they were at the end of their tether, when news came that there was a public collection for the family in Posen, when perfect strangers answered the call, this ter-magant, my aunt, finally decided to make a concession to public opinion, and sent her sister a beggarly gift. My mother who had to provide for four minor children, and certainly had no money to spare, also had to contribute. She gave gladly and with all her heart, and she cried because she was powerless to help more. But even this small subsidy came too late. Shortly thereafter, all the remaining inventory was sold, and Wollmann moved back to Gnesen, leaving his wife and property in Posen. Shortly before my aunt passed away, my Mama and Mrs. Brachvogel went to Posen; they found their sister already quite ill, but there was still hope of recovery because she had always been a strong individual, and very seldom sick. Four weeks later aunt Wollmann died, leaving behind her husband and eight minor children. May she rest in peace!

The oldest child was twenty at the time, the youngest only half-a-year. Yes, in a way her sister, Marie Brachvogel, is to blame for the untimely death of her sister. Had she only, when she learned of her impoverished circumstances, stood helpfully by her, had she only insisted that they leave the expensive city of Posen, the strong and robust Mrs. Wollmann would surely not have passed away so soon, and of yellow jaundice. But she wanted the sister whom she hated because she had known how to obtain her rightful inheritance, hated for base and detestable reasons, to live in misery; in her shabby meanness she could not deny herself the satisfaction of seeing the hated sister ruined and dying in poverty. Well, there is vindication for everything on this earth. The woman has not had much pleasure from the fortune gathered through her legacy-hunting, and besides... anything can happen.

Since I am on the subject of this sister, I shall now report everything about her. She is the youngest of the siblings as well as the tallest; a woman of uncommon size. Marie is married to Marcus Brachvogel. He had worked in the grandparents' house as a journeyman tailor, and he managed to win the love of his master's daughter. Although the parents were very much against this union, they finally gave in, especially since the latter insisted on receiving their consent. After the grandparents died she took over the entire business, following the conclusion of the above described legal wrangle with her sister Hanna, and in the last few years the business has grown considerably, so that they are now quite prosperous. On the 4th of August 1885, in Berlin, Landsberger Strasse 103, her son David who was staying in Berlin for rest and recovery (he was suffering from an ear ailment), accidentally fell over the banister of a stairway from the third floor, and is buried there in Weissensee cemetery. That disaster has so depressed his mother that she will probably never quite recover from it. Yes, it often seems to me that it has so overwhelmed her that her senses are muddled, and that her comprehension is weakened. The poor rich woman can not enjoy her wealth in the least; her constant melancholy drives away all those close to her, nor does she enjoy the respect of her fellow citizens. I pity her competent husband who is chained to her. Now the parents have only two children left, a boy, Adolf, born on the 11th July 1879, and a girl, Bertha, born on the 26th October 1874; the boy is studying in the Septima (2nd year of high school) in Gnesen, and the daughter is attending a girls' school.

Now, my dear Mama spent her youth in Gnesen. She did not enjoy much schooling; yet, she learned enough to help me frequently with my homework. As a young girl she, as well as her sisters, had to help the parents in their tailor shop, and had to sew along with the grownups. In her thirtieth year, on the 25th March 1865, she married my father Nathan Arzt, but had the misfortune, as I have told above, to lose her husband after five and a-half years of marriage, on the 30th August 1870. She remained with us four minor children of whom I, the eldest, was only four and a-half; my brother Hermann, the youngest, just three months old. After she gave up the bookbinding shop, and there being no monetary worries, she devoted herself entirely to our upbringing, and during the seven years of her widowhood she worked fairly hard, even though she did not need to, because she generally managed without a maid. Nevertheless, she kept her assets in perfect order; the tenants of our two houses never dared take any liberties even though the landlady was but a helpless woman, and she always fought for what was hers and knew how to obtain justice for herself.

Then suddenly, in the year 1877, she received proposals of marriage from Inowrazlaw, from a Mr. Itzig, and soon afterward from Mr. David, a widower. And, even though in all that time she had

not thought of remarriage, she now felt that her children were in need of a strong leader, that a man should take the education of her children in hand. Well, the father proposed marriage, and... the son won the hand of the widow. On the 3rd December 1877 my dear Mama was married, for the second time, to Mr. Hermann David, of Inowrazlaw, master tailor, and son of the widower David. He was born on the 17th August 1847, and spent his youth in his parental home. During the war of 1870/71 he was drafted as a craftsman, and served in Stettin for the duration; he never saw any action. Following that, he went to America and worked there with relatives for a short while, and returned home after one year. Almost his entire family resides in Inowrazlaw, and is quite numerous: he has three brothers and one sister, all of them married and with large families, he being the youngest. There is not much to tell about his appearance; he is of medium height and not unsightly, especially when he dresses up a little. But here, with that sloppy menage, he looks totally unkempt, and only seldom is he halfway presentable. His eyes are hazel, his brow is low, and he need not pay excess baggage for his learning. He can write, but so badly that he can barely put a few lines together, and his reading is quite laborious. I don't really know what he has learned during his entire lifetime.

He is a tailor alright, but he can barely put an object together only halfway decently, nor can he run a proper business. When he first came here, he lazed around for awhile, and then started building; apparently the house at No. 66 became dilapidated and had to be rebuilt, and when he got tenants he fought with them for no reason at all. While finishing a repair job he got into a fight with the pharmacist Koszutzki on the ground floor, during which he so mauled him that it resulted in a lawsuit for trespass and bodily harm, and a six-week jail sentence. The appeal was denied, and he had to atone for his transgression from the 19th January to the 2nd March 1880. The end result was a major bill for expenses for this, his first appearance. In the meantime he had opened a tailor workshop, and learned cutting from a journeyman who had studied at the Berlin academy. He then merrily started to work with all the available capital, i.e. he let the journeyman work and, when he was not sleeping, employed the free time for eating and idleness. It never occurs to him to do any work himself.

Thus it happened that during inventory taken in 1885 I found only two hundred Mark in assets. Three years later, in 1888, I once again took inventory, and this time the result exceeded all expectations. Even though during these three years the parents had received about a thousand Mark from myself and Albert, in addition to which my Papa had inherited over a thousand Mark at the death of his father on the 1st of May 1883, I now found two thousand Mark in liabilities, that is, their inventory was worth that much less than the amount of their debts. I was beside myself over such neglect of a business, since the trade is really

no worse than it used to be, but what good did it do? My Papa is simply no businessman, and our cat could have run the business as well as he. People are saying that it is hard to explain how they could have accumulated such debts. They shop at all kinds of local fairs, live frugally, watch for bargains, don't visit bars or the theater, and yet they have a plethora of debts. It is simply that they don't know how to manage money, or how to apply the numbers to their own circumstances. And it will hardly get any better, since they can't go back to school. As soon as I can get my hands on any kind of money, the parents will have to get rid of the business and retire, otherwise we'll never get out of this mess.

My dear Mama suffers under the present circumstances, but there is no way to help. She who never knew the meaning of privation, either in her parents' home, with her first husband or even as a widow, must now turn every penny around, deal with the annoyances of the market place, and constantly be in financial straits. The sheriff is almost a steady guest in their home. All this misery was caused by my Papa's total lack of business acumen; he is a total strawman, completely dominated by his wife, and only knows how to eat, drink and sleep - especially in the latter category his accomplishments are outstanding. He is however, a good, even a very good stepfather to us children, that I have to admit, but a great portion of his goodwill towards us is probably due to his fear of my mother who, as I mentioned, dominates him completely.

My Mama did not have any children from this second marriage. In her first one she had four. I was the first-born. On the 5th March 1867 my brother Albert Moses was born, on the 25th October 1868 my sister Rosa, and on the 2nd May 1870 my brother Hermann. My dear Mama is now in her fifty-third year - her husband is her junior by twelve years - and is a vigorous, sturdy woman, although she looks gaunt. Because of the worries of recent years, her hair is more gray than it should be, but otherwise she enjoys a healthy constitution, and is seldom unwell. She is relatively tall, as were her parents and siblings, and her features are friendly, albeit not particularly handsome. To us children she is an especially loving and affectionate mother, and no work is too hard for her, no trouble too great, if she can further our well-being. Even though she is blessed with a healthy dose of egoism, she helps those in need as best she can, and is always ready to stand by her fellow citizens in word and deed. She does not enjoy a very friendly relationship with her only surviving sister, Mrs. Brachvogel, of Gnesen, although in their younger years the sisters were on very intimate terms. This sister is a resentful woman who harbors no goodwill towards her closest and only blood relative, and would like nothing better than to see her dependent on her, and begging her for alms. And, since Mama in her recent predicaments frequently needed her help, she has shown the meanness of her character. Sometimes she even objected

when her husband wanted to render assistance, although she herself did not disburse or give away anything; they simply vouched for my parents with the moneylenders. This is also the main reason why these two sisters hardly ever get together.

Mama's relationship with her other local cousins, of whom a great many are around, is not especially friendly, and apparently both parties are equally to blame. Envy and jealousy are rampant, particularly here in Tremessen, and everybody begrudges everyone else. Yes, when one is totally defeated and cannot carry on, he will get help, but no sooner. Mama lives in a good relationship with her second spouse; initially, there were some major quarrels, but there are hardly any now. Mama has seen to it that all of us children received a good education, and did everything she could towards that end. In the last few years she has found religion and says her prayers every morning and evening; she will not miss a Saturday in the Synagogue or omit a fast day, and probably overdoes her piety somewhat. She was always a god-fearing woman, but in the past she was not quite so observant of all the prescribed ceremonies. May she have a long life amongst us! Now, before I start on my humble self, I want to talk a little about my siblings.

My brother Albert, nicknamed Arusch in his youth, was, as a boy, a rather wild and devil-may-care fellow, and fairly frequently the parents had occasion to acquaint him with physical and other forms of punishment. Nature endowed him with a good disposition, and in school he learned well but unwillingly. Homework was a word he only knew from hearsay. Only rarely would you see him touch a book, and during summer vacation he did nothing at all; his modus operandi was to compose any required writing one hour prior to the start of his classes. He learned with great ease, but even greater was his aversion to books. He completed the Sexta and Quinta in one year; however in the Quarta he had to repeat, and lost one year, and when he also failed to advance from Untertertia Papa, to Albert's delight, took him out of school, and placed him into apprenticeship with the firm of J.M. Werner, in Deutsch-Crone. [Note: The Sexta and Quinta were the 1st and 2nd grade, respectively, of a German Boy's High School (Gymnasium), following four years of Elementary School; Quarta and Untertertia were the 3rd and 4th grade, respectively.]

Albert was happy that he could now romp around and was no longer chained to a school desk, and his boss had a hard time taming him and reining him in. Twice Papa had to go and settle arguments; Albert would hardly have lasted in this one job and would have been up and away, if Papa, in his foresight, had not signed a contract with Mr. Werner obligating him to pay six hundred Mark compensation if Albert left this apprenticeship. The years of training went by, and on the 1st of July 1885 he graduated as a clerk, having learned the trades of distillery and the grocery business, and now he moved to Lissa where he only remained for a

short time. In obedience to Mama's wishes he had to resign this fairly good position because his boss was a gentile, and he would have had to work Saturdays, and he now moved to Berlin where he had the good fortune to find a job on the very first day. On October 1st he accepted a job with the liqueur export company Friedmann & Mendelssohn where he is still employed. Mr. Friedmann is a compatriot (Landsmann) of ours, which made it so easy for him to get the job. He entered with a starting salary of sixty Mark per month, and is now earning ninety Mark. The work is hard, and he has little free time.

He has not as yet done his military service but has twice been deferred for another year. He is quite tall but, considering his youth, not too strong, he has a full, ample face, a somewhat large nose, and enormously long legs. He is good natured beyond all measure; he will give away the shirt off his back, and it will probably cost him dearly until he learns more about human nature.

My sister Rosa underwent quite a bit of suffering in her youth, even though she is the only sister of us three boys. She can probably not brag of receiving special favors from us. She went to the local School for Jewish Citizens, and was very diligent, so that with twelve years of age she was already in the first grade (in Germany the final grade). At the age of fourteen she left school, and now helps Mama with the household chores. Tall by nature, like all of us, she is fairly hefty, has a high brow, brown eyes and hair, very beautiful small and white teeth, and is, with the exception of her Jewish nose, quite handsome. Her good nature is almost on a par with that of her brother Albert, and to the best of my judgment, she will eventually turn into a very capable housewife. May she be blessed with a good husband.

Hermann, the youngest of us, was always the so-called mother's boy, and as the youngest, always enjoyed an advantage. He went to school quite early, and was not yet nine when he entered the Gymnasium into the Sexta. He passed all grades with the exception of the Quarta in one year, and when, in 1885, he became qualified for his one year of voluntary military service, he left school because he had no taste for higher education, and came to Berlin where I was then serving my apprenticeship. Initially I tried to get him a job with the firm of N. Israel where I was apprenticed, and when that failed, my then landlord Feldmann, Rosenthaler-Str. No. 10, helped him to become an apprentice with the company of Simon Cohn, shirt manufacturers, where he also had Saturdays off, which was most important to my parents.

However, he did not like the work there, because as a young apprentice he was only occupied with stock keeping, a chore which was both boring and tiresome as well as strenuous. And when he kept complaining that he simply did not like it there, I finally decided to take him out of this job and find him another one.

When Hermann now tried to leave, his boss made a fuss, and declared that he would not release him under any circumstances, even though Hermann pleaded that he was not changing jobs, but wanted to go back to school and finish his studies. It so happens that at the time I chanced upon a newspaper article stating that an employer had sued the father of a young man for compensation because his son had left his apprenticeship, and that the case was dismissed because the contract had been concluded between the boss and the boy's mother and not his father, and therefore was not legally binding. I leaned on this argument, and when Cohn, after another request, still refused to release him, I simply told Hermann not to report for work.

Since I had a lot of free time at my disposal, because I was handling customs work for my company, I went to look for another job for him immediately on the following day. Moritz Levin, on Hausvoigteiplatz, had just advertised for an apprentice, and I introduced Hermann, but in vain; he did not get the job. They said to bring him back another time. While we were now standing on the corner of Oberwallstrasse and Hausvoigteiplatz, trying to figure out where to go next, I noticed across the street the large sign of the company Adolf Itzig & Co., Hausvoigteiplatz No. 9, and walked over there with Hermann. My inquiry about a vacancy was successful, and the owner of the company, Mr. Philipp Itzig hired him immediately under the following conditions: three years of apprenticeship with a monthly stipend of twenty Mark. I was supposed to write home for my parents consent to these terms, but instead I went there two days later and told them that my parents had accepted, and Hermann stayed there right away. He started his new job on September 17, 1885, after spending half a year with Simon Cohn.

Mr. Itzig now requested a written contract which I promised to produce. He gave Hermann two forms, one of which was signed by himself and which the parents were to keep; the other one was to be returned to him with their signatures. After giving the matter some thought, I decided not to send the forms to the parents but rather to sign them myself, telling Itzig that the contract had been sent to our residence. Hermann had now landed a very satisfactory job. After spending some time with stock keeping, his boss put him into the shipping department where he is still working, and reporting to the manager of the department. He knew how to earn the confidence and satisfaction of his bosses - Mr. Oppenheimer is a partner in the company - to the fullest extent, so that they cut his apprenticeship by half a year, and on the 1st of April 1888 made him a clerk with a starting salary of seventy five Mark. As an apprentice he had received a stipend of twenty Mark per month until January 1, 1887; then thirty Mark until the end of 1887, and fifty Mark for the last three months. He has a good and pleasant job, and certainly has a future, if he can only stick it out.

The firm deals in fabric for ladies' apparel of the latest fashion, and is one of the leading ones in Berlin in their category. They employ several traveling salesmen and about thirty people of the male sex - no women at all - and they have an important export trade to all corners of the world. Hermann came to Berlin as a fairly small lad, but has really shot up in the last year or two, and is now about my size, well over medium height, and will probably by and large get close to Albert's size; otherwise he is very slender with very friendly, I could almost say, feminine features, but also in his case the nose has turned out a trifle large. The two of us always roomed together and got along well; I did not pry into his private affairs and left him pretty much to himself, so as to give him as early as possible a sense of independence and self-assurance. By now he is a sturdy lad who gives me much pleasure, a gentleman *comme il faut*, almost a dandy. I have introduced him into all the families in Berlin where I socialize, and consequently he feels very much at home here.

As I have mentioned above, I was born on Friday, the 5th of January 1866, at eight o'clock in the evening, in Tremessen. My birthplace is Johannis-Str. 135 on the corner of Berg-Str., and the room in which I first greeted the world was on the second floor, the corner-attic room which looks out directly onto Berg-Str. I do not remember much of my early childhood; I can only recollect a few vignettes which I shall relate here. I recall, for instance, how my late father walked to the synagogue carrying me and my brother Albert each in one arm, and full of fatherly pride, paraded us to his pew which was in the first row.

The second recollection is an ugly one, yet I shall not leave it unmentioned, because I am reminded of it every day when I look into the mirror. As I already related when I described my father, he sometimes drank a tad more than necessary. One day he had gone with me to Bigalke's distillery on the market place, and on the way home, as he was crossing the gutter at the corner of the market place and Glas's house, he stumbled and fell down with me. I received an injury on my forehead from which I have a scar to this date. I don't really recall all the individual circumstances; I do remember lying in my cradle, my mother having brought me home, and my father leaning over me and being repulsed by my mother.

One further episode I want to relate here which occurred in the year of my father's death, three months before his demise. For the Whitsuntide (Pentecost) holiday my mother had ordered new boys' suits for Albert and myself from Kaplan, a neighbor on our floor, as a holiday surprise for her husband. I have no idea whether this had been done in violation of his orders; anyway, when we appeared in front of his bed in our new togs, he jumped out, had us undress, and threw the clothes into the fire on the holy Whitsun holiday. He died three months later.

I still remember vividly my mother standing in a corner of the room where he passed away - the same room I was born in - crying and moaning, refusing all words of consolation. I can still see the candles being lit, the deceased being bedded on straw on the floor of the room, and finally, very vividly, the plain black coffin being carried down the stairs and placed into the unadorned hearse. A good many people gave my father the final escort to the cemetery of the town in which, for over thirty years, he had labored and achieved prosperity, respect and esteem. Of the immediate family, I believe that only my mother's father was in attendance, but here my memory is a little hazy. During the first eight days of mourning prayers were said in the room where he died evenings and mornings; the Kaddish was recited to me and I repeated it.

My mother continued to run the business which my father had left her, bookbinding and notions, with the help of a journeyman named Wittkowski, but about two years later she gave it up, and little by little, sold down the individual items. Mama now devoted herself entirely to our care, as well as to the management of our two real estate properties and the rest of our assets and the household. At the age of five, Easter 1871, I was already led to school, to Mr. Riess, where until my sixth year I learned reading and writing. Afterwards, the same teacher gave me instruction in Hebrew, but I cannot say that in all those years - I was with him until my fourteenth year - I learned more than simple prayers, and even those not as well as I should have. I also learned to translate, but since we rushed through the individual lessons and paid no attention at all to grammar, I can not even translate the daily prayers into German, and understand only halfway their content. There was also practically no religious instruction, and my fairly good knowledge of the religion of my forefathers as well as that of other cultures are merely the result of my own personal studies.

At the age of six, Easter 1872, I was enrolled in the Public Jewish School which was then run by the present bookseller Hurwitz, but I only had the benefit of his instruction for four weeks. He retired, although only about forty years old, and his place was taken by Mr. Freudenthal to whom I am indebted for my further education. He was a good as well as a thorough teacher, and when, at Easter 1875, my Mama enrolled me in the Gymnasium at his desire and special request. I already had good knowledge of Latin, and was also well versed in other subjects, especially in German and Math. On April 8, 1875 I entered the Sexta, and finished that, as well as Quinta and Quarta in one year. In the Untertertia I ran into trouble and had to repeat, and even then barely squeaked through; however, I finished Obertertia brilliantly in one year, and as the first of five students, advanced to Untersecunda. Here I sat for one and a-half years, and on Yom Kippur of the year 1882 I advanced to Obersecunda, and at the same time, qualified for my one year of voluntary military serv-

ice, and quit school for good. I probably could have finished Untersecunda in one year had I not caught diphtheria from my brother Albert in the last quarter, just before the exams, and been forced to spend six weeks in bed.

All in all, I enjoyed learning in school, but comprehended only with difficulty. I had a special predilection for dead languages, Latin and Greek, in which, at the time of my leaving school, I was so firmly grounded that I could have held my own against any student of the Prima (senior class). I was very weak in Math for which I never had any use, and also in French which I found hard to pronounce, I did not earn any laurels. I did not receive any major demerits during my years in the Gymnasium, and only very seldom did I have to stay after school because of poor preparation of my lessons. I was never tardy in the entire time; only once I misread the clock by a whole hour. I did not take part in physical education, because according to a certificate from the late Dr. Zimmermann, I supposedly had a hernia. For a while I even wore a truss, but at this point I really don't know whether any of this ailment remains, or whether it has gone away.

I sang only in the lower grades, because my voice was simply too pitiful. By and large, I had little interest in the more technical subjects, or else my teachers did not know how to stimulate it. I got along well with my fellow students, and really did not have any enemies. I was good friends with Hermann Liebermann, who now works in a cigar factory in America, also Isidor Fuchs, active in his brother's business in Stettin; Solly Kuttner, now teacher at a public school and a native of Wreschen; Isidor Loewenthal, medical student and son of the widow Pauline Loewenthal; and Gustav Rothmann, medical student and son of the local merchant S. Rothmann. But I maintained a close friendship with only the latter two during recent years to the extent that I continued corresponding with them after we left school, and when they enrolled in the University of Berlin.

The Gymnasium which I attended was a "Progymnasium" under the direction of the rector Prof. Dr. Sarg, beginning with Sexta and ending with Untertertia. Since there was only a small number of students - about onehundred ten to onehundred twenty at my time - the teachers could give more attention to each individual, and if one really wanted to learn, one could become quite accomplished. Most of my fellow students were catholics, but relations between us were good, especially since they frequently needed us who worked a little harder. The teachers, however, often showed partiality although they would not openly admit to anti-semitism. Even during the years 1880-82, when anti-semitism was very prevalent, we were hardly bothered.

I did not have too many childhood diseases. I only remember the measles and a concurrent funny episode. My Mama was a little apprehensive, and when she found my body fully covered with small

dark red spots, she went to the tableware dealer Keil, now deceased, who lived on the ground floor, and asked him to come have a look at me. He was no hero either, and when Mama walked to my bed on the side opposite the door to pick me up and show me to Mr. Keil, he prudently remained at the threshold. No sooner, however, did he catch sight of my spot-covered skin, than he fearfully cried: "Why

don't you get a doctor?", and took off. I got well soon afterward, whereas Mr. Keil who was then over sixty years old, oddly enough contracted the same disease, and had to spend more than four weeks in bed.

Following my father's demise, a cousin of my Mama's, Mr. Levin Pflaum was named our guardian; a few years later, however, he was relieved from that post at her request, and his place was taken by Mr. Strelitz, the head of our community, who was murdered a year ago. Soon afterwards he was imputed to be acting in his own behalf, had to resign his post, and the grocer Bley now became our guardian. Our second guardian is our stepfather. Our guardians never paid a great deal of attention to us, and we could never complain of our guardians taking too much interest in our welfare. They merely enjoyed the honor.

On the 18th January 1879 I became bar mitzvah. It was celebrated with great pomp; the family had responded to my parent's invitation. Wollmann and Brachvogel and wife, from Gnesen, my Papa's father from Inowrazlav, etc., came to participate in the festivities. Following the service I had said Maftir and did the whole zeddre (Sch'maus), and - something that had not happened here in many a year - gave in front of all the assembled guests (a great many of local relatives and acquaintances had still turned up) a speech which had been drafted by my teacher Riess, and which is still in my possession. I thanked my parents for their care and devoted love, and promised always to honor the tenets of my religion. Halfway through the speech, just as I was dedicating a few words to my late father's memory, I got stuck, but it passed unnoticed because I was crying intensely, and those assembled felt that at this point some crying was perfectly in order. Soon, however, I continued to ad lib, and eventually landed back in my speech. Afterwards, Brachvogel spoke, and in the afternoon I had a reception for my colleagues.

There were few presents, and no books at all. Up to now, like most of my contemporaries, I had not regarded the obedience to our prescribed ceremonies with too much fervor, although I did not actually neglect them. Now, however, I became an outright fanatic, and, since at that time we had with us a Jewish journeyman, a Pole whose name I don't recall, and who acted very pious in spite of being an unmitigated scoundrel, and who egged me on in the strict obedience and observance of all rites, it awakened in me such piety, I could almost say religious fanaticism that it influenced my entire later development, physi-

cal as well as mental.

For one thing, I felt that the dairy foods my mother served were not sufficiently kosher, ate no butter and drank no milk, and since we did not always have fat (schmalz) in the house, I frequently made do with dry bread. Since my family made no serious protest, I continued this regimen until I left my parents' house in order to become a businessman, that is to say, for four whole years, and, these years being most crucial to the physical development, it weakened me to such an extent that to this date I still have to fight the aftereffects, and will probably not regain my entire strength for another few years. Nothing my parents said made any difference; in the contrary, the more they talked the more obstinate I became, to the point that my Mama even once complained to the rector of my Gymnasium that I would not eat at home, without any success. In addition, my Papa did not dare make any remarks because I was a stepson..

Not a day went by that I did not attend services, and one day in May when we had taken a walk to the Birkenhain, about a quarter of a mile away, I returned to town before sunset so that I would not under any circumstances miss the Mincha prayer. After completion of services I returned to my schoolmates. On Tischa b'Av I slept on the bare ground until my Mama came and prodded me into bed. As I grew older my mind matured. and I finally began to give some thought to why I was doing all this, with the end result that, as soon as I had left home I jettisoned everything, and - les extremes se touchent - became the exact opposite and now live a very free life.

The date of December 3, 1877 is still worth mentioning, because on that day I got a stepfather. However, since I have already reported about him above, I want to waste no further words. I was, at the time, in my eleventh year.

On Saturday, the 22nd September 1882, I qualified for my one year of voluntary military service, and now had to decide what was to become of me. I was, at the time, eager to learn, and it was my most ardent wish to remain in school and devote myself to my studies. Since my native town does not offer a Prima, I wanted to enroll in the Gymnasium in Gnesen, and during that time lodge at my uncle Brachvogel's. It never occurred to me that he could turn me down - that was out of the question - and reluctantly my Mama took the evening train with me to Gnesen on September 24 in order to obtain free lodging for me, because the parents pronounced themselves unable to come up with that money. As Mama had suspected, Brachvogel, with my aunt's full support, denied my request, and so I had to return with my Mama the next morning, having accomplished nothing. I was told later that Brachvogel had actually turned me down at the direct request of my Mama who feared, in view of my religious fanaticism, that I would turn to theological studies. I could never ascertain the truth of that rumor, and I didn't want to ask.

Too proud to plead, I left Gnesen, and worked on my departure for Berlin, since my cousin Adolf Wollmann had previously suggested that I should come to Berlin as soon as I had qualified for my one year's voluntary military service; it should be possible for me to find a suitable position. It was terribly hard for me to renounce my dearest wish to study; I wept bitterly while bidding my books farewell, and with sorrow and melancholy in my heart for having to submit to harsh reality, I turned my back on my native town on September 27 at 1:15 pm and arrived in Berlin at the Ostbahnhof at 10:50. My cousin Adolf greeted me there, and took me to the apartment of his sister, my cousin Mrs. Thorner, who at the time was attending the Leipzig fair with her husband.

My parents, who realized how painful it had been for me to take leave of my books, had told me to enjoy myself in Berlin during the holidays - Succoth was around the corner - and to come back if I did not like it. But it was only an empty phrase, and I left it at that. Immediately the following day, at Adolf's request, I introduced myself to his boss, Mr. Jacob Israel, owner of the department store N. Israel, and was promptly hired with a monthly stipend of 30 Mark.

Up to this point, my life had progressed rather evenly, and, although I could never complain of an abundance of wealth or entertainment, by the same token I had never endured a major misfortune. Now two misfortunes beset me at the same time, misfortunes whose magnitude I would only recognize with the passage of time. The first one was that I could not freely, following my own judgment, pick my career, but was compelled by circumstances to devote myself to the merchant class. I really had no interest in that trade or an inclination for it.

But this does not compare to the disaster, ten times as large, that made me land, of all places, at N. Israel. What I endured there during my three years' apprenticeship and subsequent service until the 1st May 1888 defies description. To begin with, I only reluctantly went to work, doing my job because it was my duty rather than from my own inclination, and I always looked on the house as my place of incarceration, my prison. From the very outset my strength was not equal to the heavy workload, and I could only handle it by summoning all my will power. In the beginning, I came home evenings so tired out, that I immediately, drowsy and overcome with fatigue, threw myself on the bed, took no food, and laid there fully dressed for hours, until the landlady came and suggested that I undress and go to bed properly.

I also found it hard to be standing constantly since I was used to be sitting down in school, and the very first day in the store I had cramps in my feet. Add to that the fact that the food was totally inadequate in terms of both quality and quantity for my

body which, weakened already by my four-year abstinence from dairy foods, had to cope with the strenuous work. Frequently I went to bed hungry and arose hungry, and hungry went back to work. Since I was still in my growing years, any weakening of my physique had to be doubly harmful. I consoled myself with the thought that the three years of apprenticeship would not be an eternity, and that things would get better after that. I was also sustained by the hope that I would finally be able to attain my fondest desire and return to my books. This was my ingrained thought, day and night; I had no interest in anything else, and worked diligently in my spare time since I intended to go back to school soon.

Four months had gone by this way; my situation was almost intolerable for me, and I was beside myself being still enslaved to the store counter, so I wrote home in February that I wanted to go back to school. In reply to my fervent plea to let me freely pick my own profession, I received on the 5th March 1883 a letter from my parents telling me that they had received a complaint from an executive of the company that I was lax in the performance of my duties, and that, unless there was an early improvement, he would be forced to discharge me. Mama now moaned that she was very disappointed at my causing her such grief; she would not have expected that from her eldest who should be setting an example to the younger ones, and the upshot was that I gave up on the idea of being released from the shackles to which I was tied to Israel's with inseparable bonds, and forced myself to accept the inevitable. As I found out later on, the story of the executive's complaint was a subterfuge of Mama's, simply invented to throw some fear into me, but I believed it, especially since at the time I had constant quarrels with the executive Conrad Brall, and I did not know that he was not authorized to lodge complaints on his own, let alone fire employees of the company.

I now worked twice as hard as before, but also felt twice as unhappy. I wept almost constantly over my hideous predicament, and for weeks, sometimes months, on end did not speak with my associates one word more than absolutely necessary. My disquiet continued to grow, and my nervousness increased from day to day, so that one day I lost my self-control to the extent that I suddenly began to weep, and would not calm down for some time. To the inquiries of my colleagues I explained that I had received bad news from home. Every day at N. Israel was for me a torment of hell, and doubly so during my apprenticeship. The inadequate food which was too little to live on and too much to die on, the occupation which exceeded my strength and which I detested, combined to sap my will.

I walked around looking like a skeleton, emaciated to my bones, but I always wrote home that I was fine and did not lack anything. On the one hand I did not want to worry the family, and on the other hand I knew that even if I did write them the truth,

they could not, and probably would not help me. Later on I fretted, in view of my growing depression and melancholy, that I might take leave of my senses and become insane, because I could think of nothing but the loss of my lifelong happiness, and I was probably not far from the road to the insane asylum.

My memory, which used to be excellent, slackened tremendously, and on one occasion when I was helping two ladies, and went to the third floor to get some merchandise, I totally forgot my customers and began to work on something else until they themselves brought my remarkable forgetfulness to my attention. Only by distancing myself for months from any mental activity and forcing myself to steer my thoughts in a different direction, was I able to strengthen my memory somewhat, but it still leaves much to be desired. I also became afflicted with attacks of numbness which came primarily while I slept; at first, it was a terrible feeling for me to wake up and be unable to move my limbs, but now I have become used to it, and it can happen that in the course of ten minutes I am awakened five times by attacks of numbness, and go right back to sleep. The worst part is that I hear and comprehend everything that goes on around me while I lie there paralyzed, and unable to move a finger. Up to now these symptoms have not disappeared, and I may have to put up with them a while longer as a souvenir from Israel's.

My intention to continue my studies was particularly evident by the fact that, in my youthful imprudence, I spent almost my entire allowance on the lottery because I still hoped to realize my plans, and I was inconsolable when these hopes as well came to nought. I would probably, in due time, have acquiesced to my lot if I had only found some cooperation at the store, but all I heard there, no matter how much I applied myself, were swear-words and abuse. I was particularly irritated by my immediate supervisor, the executive Brall, who did not miss an opportunity to slight me and insult me. The man disliked me, and showed it whenever he possibly could. He went to the boss untold times to have me fired, but he never succeeded because the boss was well disposed towards me. Thus I finished my apprenticeship on the 30th September 1885, and signed the contract submitted to me by Mr. Jacob Israel. In it I agreed to always perform my duties, and to be obedient to my superiors including those appointed by the boss, and I also agreed to the terms of fourteen days notice.

Even now my situation did not improve although I received a better salary; I was initially paid 900 Mark per year, but I had to help my brother Hermann out who was then an apprentice. In January 1886 my salary rose to 1050 Mark, and from then on by 150 Mark each year. Shortly after my apprenticeship was over, there was a vacancy in the knit goods department due to the death of the manager, Mr. Lindemann, and it was turned over to me under the special supervision of Hugo Abraham.

While the executive Brall had irritated me, my new boss tormented me wherever he could, debased me in front of my colleagues, and treated me worse than a manservant. I had to put up with everything in order to keep my job, but it kept getting worse, and the boss constantly received complaints from him as well as from Brall. On the 31st December 1887, as I received my wages, he told me that I would have to get along better with my supervisors; I would have liked nothing better than to be discharged and to be finally liberated from my odious predicament. I went to work with disgust, and left it angry and furious; at closing time, when I left the shop, I breathed a sigh of relief as though I had just been released from a one-year jail sentence. But now the hour of my deliverance was at hand.

Because of all the privations, I was in terrible physical shape, and during the previous winter I had acquired a cough which, at first, I disregarded, but which got worse from day to day because of all the dust in the store plus my exertions. By March 1888 I felt quite feeble, and therefore planned to go home for the Easter holidays in order to regain my strength. However, when on the 26th March 1888, at 7:00 p.m., on the eve of the Easter holiday, I asked my boss for two days off, he turned me down, even though I explained to him that I was unwell and was not traveling for pleasure. He responded by saying that if I was too weak I should look for another job, and this was all I wanted to hear; I immediately turned around and interpreted his remarks as a direct dismissal. When he realized my indifference to his outburst, he became furious and gave me official notice, to my utter delight. I was happy and content to be finally released. My yoke was broken, I could breathe freely, my imprisonment was at an end.

Meanwhile, my health had deteriorated to such an extent that I had to consult a physician who told me during the first examination that he had never seen such an emaciated individual, and that, had I waited another fortnight, I would have become ill of consumption. At present, both the right and left lobes of my lungs were affected, and under no circumstances should I remain at my job, but instead should spend some time in the country. On the tenth of April I was at Israel's for the last time, and when I went to lunch at twelve o'clock, I did not go back. On the 1st of May 1888 I finally gave up my position, and on the following day, at the suggestion of Dr. Hugo Loewenthal, Chaussee-Str. 115, Berlin, I went home to my parents for recuperation.

Yes, I went through hard times at N. Israel, a period of real suffering for me; yet I never complained to anyone, was always happy and exuberant, and played the part of the man of the world who had a good job and lived a carefree life. Even though I had already spent such a long time in Berlin, more than five and a-half years, I had not formed a strong enough relationship with anyone to assume that he would take an interest in my fate.

During my apprenticeship I did not have any close friends, because the regard for my pocketbook made it imperative for me to keep to myself and to avoid social contacts which always cause some expense, no matter how small. Only at the beginning of December 1885, when I went to Prof. Mrs. Sington, did I acquire a circle of acquaintances, because there I met the chairman of the literary group "Schiller", Mr. Waldeck Manasse, who introduced me into that society, and shortly afterward, on the 16th January 1886, I became an official member. I have much to be thankful for to the society. First of all, I realized how many gaps there were in my knowledge of literature, how deficient my entire learning in that discipline. I pursued every suggestion with untiring zeal, and soon I reached the point where I broadened my overall knowledge and was able to participate in every discussion, thus acquiring a certain standing among my colleagues.

In March of 1887, however, some differences arose among some of the "Schillerians"; I wanted to do away with certain situations in the society which were not what they should be, and, when my wishes were not fulfilled I resigned from the society even though I had planned to become a member of the board at the forthcoming elections. Primarily, however, my resignation was prompted by the lack of the time which my activity at the society required; I felt that I could not fulfill my duties as an active member in the manner which I considered proper and fitting.

In that society now, I became acquainted with all those of my colleagues who would henceforth become my circle of friends. First there was Moses Abraham, residing at Strassburger-Str. 25, ground floor, who introduced me to his family, also Max Manasse, Barnim-Str. 44, second floor, and Julius Meissner, Linien-Str. 10, second floor. All these families are possessed of a wealth of daughters, and I felt much at home there. Especially at the Abrahams I have spent a lot of time lately, and hardly a day went by that I did not spend an evening in their company. They are very pleasant, hospitable people; there is no mother but there are five daughters, four of them of marriageable age: Bertha, Henriette, Martha, Ella, Grete, plus two sons: the aforementioned Moses, and Eugen. I did not frequent the Manasses quite so much, but still went there fairly often; there are three marriageable daughters, Hedwig, Clara and Martha, and two sons, one of them in Aachen, and the other my colleague, Max; a very comfortable home, the father has been dead for many years, and the mother has all the makings of a nasty mother-in-law.

Previously I frequented the Meisners quite a bit, but have now quit completely. The following was the reason. Their son Julius had become so attached to me that on the 16th March 1887 we forged a bond of friendship with the intention of becoming and remaining true, intimate and lasting comrades. Our personalities were not so evenly matched that we would not have objected to one trait or another in each other, but we expected in the course of

time to make the necessary allowances. Now, Julius had one bad quality which I had noticed immediately, but which in time I hoped to overcome. That was his predilection for exaggeration. Whenever he told something, he himself had to be the hero, the most marvelous things happened solely to him, in short, he thought so highly of himself that his own opinions were irresistible, especially in the presence of ladies. So he bragged once to me that Miss Henriette Abraham had especially favored him, and even preferred him over me who at the time was seeking to obtain her goodwill. He declared, however, that out of friendship for me, knowing that I had a hankering for the lady, he had stood back, but that Miss Henriette had never been as friendly to anyone else as she had been to him.

Now, I knew from a positive source, from her own lips, that she disliked Julius, which he naturally and emphatically denied when I told him that he was in error, and that the lady had never shown the slightest interest in him. Never have I met another individual as conceited as Julius Meissner. It would have been all right with me if he had had any reason for his conceit, if he had been endowed with good looks, which was certainly not the case, if he had excelled in technical skills, in singing, athletics or whatever; none of that, he was not even so overwhelmingly intelligent that he could have said: "Look, I am smarter than my comrades". To the contrary, his perception often left a lot to be desired. But I still got along well with him in spite of his braggadocio which was mostly a pack of lies, because I recognized in him an upright and very good-natured personality.

Now, one day Meissner happened to meet Mr. Moritz Cohn, a relative of the ladies Abraham, and, during the course of the conversation, asked him why the ladies acted so cool towards him; they did not treat him like a relative, and, in his opinion, should act friendlier towards Cohn. At the time Cohn was striving, with admirable persistence, for the favors of Miss Martha Abraham, but with little success; the cute amazon did not, or seemed not to, want anything to do with him. Thus monsieur Cohn felt painfully touched by Meissner's remarks, and, since he is not overly intelligent, convinced himself that the ladies Abraham had really slighted him, and brought his tale of woe home to his mother, adding that even his friends, i.e. L. Meissner, were upset over it. The mother did not have the nerve to confront the ladies, her cousins, but instead appealed to her sister, Miss Basch, a first class rumormonger who, having nothing better to do, brought the red-hot news to the ladies Abraham.

These were indignant over the whole affair, and told me that Meissner was deceitful, that he talked behind people's backs, and that I need not pride myself of his friendship. The whole thing was very painful for me since I had no idea what had happened, and when the ladies now asserted that Meissner was a liar, I could not come to his defense because I knew that this was indeed

the case, even though he had nothing to gain by it; I could merely confine myself to plead his case by explaining that his bragging - which, however, sometimes stretched into lying - was an inborn trait, and that he should therefore not be judged too harshly. Yet, when I met him the following morning, and pleaded with him to avoid Abraham's house and not to go back there, for reasons which I could not explain, he refused; indeed, when I became insistent he uttered the ugly suspicion that I feared his competition for Miss Henriette, and that only I could have slandered him in order to remove him from the rivalry.

On the very next day he went there and declared upon his word of honor that he had never discussed the ladies with Moritz Cohn. Naturally, these believed him, and retracted their remarks made to me about Meissner. Now he was triumphant. When I now heard that Julius had given his word of honor that he had not talked about the ladies, I tried to find out the nature of Meissner's transgression against the ladies. I only knew from certain hints of the ladies who would not volunteer any further information, that Moritz Cohn was involved in the affair, and so I contacted him. I soon got to the bottom of it, and, as I had already surmised, Meissner, out of false pride, had neglected to tell the ladies of his crucial conversation with Cohn, and had intentionally compromised his word of honor. On the morning of the 15th November 1887 I confronted him, and insisted that he explain to the ladies that very evening that, when he gave them his word of honor, he had not thought of his conversation with Cohn - which he admitted to me verbatim as I had heard it from the latter - or else I would consider him a dishonorable person. He refused, and we parted company for ever.

On the very same day he went to Abraham's, justified himself as best he could, and when I went there in the evening, the ladies already knew about our falling out; oddly enough they did not seem to attach too much importance to the affair, because Meissner continued to visit there until June of this year. It puzzled me how honor can be judged in such different ways, but since he could take pride in having been a friend of mine, I did not want to pursue the matter any further. Soon afterwards he attempted a reconciliation with me, but it failed, as well as the last attempt on the 20th February of this year. I imposed very easy conditions, but he would not agree even to those; I only requested that he retract his insulting remarks towards Mr. Cohn, at least in writing if not in person, and I would straighten things out with the ladies Abraham. His pride, however, would not allow him to admit his wrongful behavior, and so I lost my friend, the only one I had regarded as such. It saddened me, in spite of all the lad's weaknesses, and I would have much preferred if the whole stupid affair had never happened.

Come to think of it, it is not that big a loss; one can not truly esteem a person who accuses his friend of such base and and vulgar calumnies. After we went our separate ways he first associated with my brother Albert, fought with him as well, and now he has chosen my brother Hermann as his intimate friend. He just works his way around. I have never become as close to anyone as I was with Meissner; all the other are good colleagues but not really friends. With Julius, I always knew that he would stand by me and help me to the best of his ability, but I never have that feeling with the others. At the store, I never had a close relationship; I was good friends with everybody, but we never got together.

As I once mentioned before, my lodgings were not the very best, but all I could expect for the money I spent. Initially, at the first two places I paid 36 Mark per month totally, including service. Then I spent forty Mark, without much of an improvement. At the fourth place I spent 48 Mark, but got from the frying pan into the fire. Here, at Mrs. Jacobi's, Charlotten-Str. 77, fourth floor, I found the worst eating arrangements yet. I never had my fill, and my hunger was such that on Sunday afternoons, when everybody went out, I stayed home and raided the pantry for stale remnants of bread. On the other hand, I am indebted to the woman. I learned how to act in better society, and lost some of my shyness.

At my next lodgings, at Feldmann, Rosenthaler-Str. 10, second floor, and August-Str. 39, second floor, the food was somewhat better. Later on, when I became a young man, I was actually worse off, because my parents, who were in straightened circumstances, needed our help, and we sent them every penny we could spare from our own meager resources. So it came that for almost three years, my brothers and I seldom - sometimes not for months on end - enjoyed a hot lunch; bread, bread and more bread was our sustenance, and sometimes I was satisfied to have only that, albeit dry. Add to that the arduous work at the store; the worst part was the constant climbing of stairs, and sometimes it seemed that I had to ascend to the second, third and fourth floors a hundred or more times a day.

The store carried manufactured goods, linens, underwear, furniture, fabrics for carpeting and draperies, etc. It comprised nearly three buildings, Spandauer-Str. 27-29, and is four stories high, in addition to ample basement rooms. It is a prominent establishment, one of the foremost in the capital, and employs internally about 250 people, among them about forty female workers, sales people and executives. Naturally, the boss can not constantly supervise this large number, and the apprentices, lacking any instruction, learn very little. When one leaves N. Israel after several years of work, one knows a little about every subject, but does not have a firm foundation in any. I endeavored to learn something solid, but my knowledge is mostly piecemeal.

I won't go into a further description of my character, personality and hometown. These can be discerned from my anonymous correspondence. It so happens that during my months of recuperation I did not know what to do with myself, and I came up with the peculiar idea of corresponding anonymously with a cultured lady. I placed an ad in the newspaper, and had nine responses; some of the replies were foolishness, but I made a fortunate choice, and have now been exchanging letters with a person for two months without having the slightest idea who my anonymous correspondent is. I hope that this will last for a long time.

During the time, since May, that I have spent here with my parents, I have recovered and rested quite well, and am ready to go back to work. The future looks dark; I don't have a job, but something suitable should turn up in Berlin. On the 26th August 1888, I shall be leaving, and will arrive there at midnight, to begin a new chapter in my life. Let us hope that Lady Fortune will smile on me with more benevolence than heretofore; in any event, I shall be facing my work with cheerful confidence, and hope for the best. In closing, I shall prepare a proper family tree, and thus conclude my memoirs.

Tremessen, the 20th August 1888

Heymann Arzt