SKETCHES FROM MY LIFE

ESPECIALLY OF MY YOUTH

By Isidorus Brennsohn, M.D.

“Into the ocean sails with a thousand masts the young man,

Quietly, on the rescued ship, floats into the harbor the old man.”

This simple tale is meant for my children and close relatives. If these pages should wind up in outsiders' hands, they will learn about the development of a Jewish boy exposed to dual influences—those of a Jewish environment and of the German-Baltic culture. In the biographical literature of our country I have not encountered a depiction of how these two factors worked together, which was not rare in my youth. It will therefore perhaps not lack interest. Since I am past the zenith of my life, I have written down this record from memory. I may have forgotten some of what actually happened and emphasized minor events, but what I am reporting here is true, as I lived and experienced it at the time.

Beginning and ending—the two ends of all life, of all things. I reached the first boundary in a dark autumn night in the year 1854 (on 15/27 September), in the days when in the Crimean War the siege of Sebastopol by the allies began. The consequences of war, which destroys human beings, encroached also on my young life; I entered the world as a fatherless orphan. I was born in Mitau, Kurland's [Curonia's] plain capital. In the garret of the Löwensterns' house in the main street mother and child battled death for weeks. With careful nursing my sweet grandmother kept me alive. Slowly my mother recovered, with the raw reality of being alone in life creeping up on her. Completely without resources, she had to think of making a living for herself and her child. She was twenty years old, and aroused sympathy from many quarters for her tragic fate and her courage in making her way through life on her own. With needlework she earned our scanty living.

Both on father's and mother's side I am descended from an old family in Kurland. I don't know much about my ancestors on father's side, since they lived outside Mitau (Tuckum etc.). My mother's family, on the other hand, was a well-known, long-established family. My great-grandfather was a home owner—Avigdor Kretzer—and belonged to the families which on 16 June 1794 received the special legal right to undisturbed residence in Kurland and Semgallen and Mitau, through the so-called Unalterable Plan "for the secure and unimpeded establishment and reception of a fixed number of Hebrew families, under the protection of His Princely Highness the Duke and of an Honorable Knight in the region of the dukedoms of Kurland and Semgallen in general, and in Mitau in particular."

(Wunderbar, History of the Jews in Livonia and Kurland, pp. 44 and 46)

MY FIRST YEARS

Not in an elegant house, nor in a modest middle-class home did I see the light of day on 15/ 27 September 1854, but in a poor garret in a house at the beginning of the main street in Mitau, the Loewensteins' house, then the Feitelbergs', and now belonging to the Jaszkés. My father had already died before I was born and had left my mother in the deepest poverty. Soon after my birth she became ill of a draining fever, which kept her bedridden for a long time and which weakened her a great deal. I was kept alive through artificial feeding and through the nursing care of my grandmother. After her recovery, my mother had to think of earning a living for herself and her child. She started to busy herself with sewing white goods and found support for this in her familiar circle. She was twenty years old, and evoked sympathy from many quarters because of her tragic fate and her courage in making her way through life on her own. When I was ten months old we moved into the neighboring Catholic Street into the house of clockmaker Gordon, which later came into the possession of the merchant Kaufmann. We lived there in an attic consisting of two rooms, three flights up, for more than fifteen years. The earliest memories of my childhood are connected with this home. Narrow, steep, neck-breaking stairs led up to it. These stairs came out upon a large attic; the door to our dwelling gave upon the front part, which received light from a window. The

rear section, on the other hand, was pitch-dark and also led to another garret, where the tailor Cherubin lived. The front room of our home had a window, located in the house's gable, from where you could look out on the roof of the neighbor's house—baker Höpker's—and far beyond on Catholic Street, which owed its name to the Catholic church with its old, four-cornered steeple. (The steeple has now been replaced with a new one.) The second room, which we called "the chamber" was nearly entirely dark, because its window faced the nearby wall of the Höpkers' house. From the narrow space between the two houses rose bad odors of rotting substances, decomposing bodies of cats and the like, penetrating into our chamber, which was our bedroom. The front room was the work room, where my mother earned our pitiful living with several young girls, her pupils. In summer, the sun beat down mercilessly on the south-facing room; in winter the space was so humid and cold that the walls were entirely covered with ice and snow, which I especially liked to scratch off with my nails. Once, during a violent thunderstorm, all the windowpanes in this room were knocked out by hail. The storm-whipped hail and rain flooded the floor. Wrapped in blankets I sat across from the window on the old, wormy sofa, watching the bad weather with horror, and yet with interest. Afterward, I amused myself by picking up the hail particles from the floor.

The roomy attic space, ringed by little rooms, where all kinds of old junk was visible through the cracks, populated my creative mind with the most varied images. When I became more independent and could take a chance at climbing the steep staircase by myself, I would sit on the threshold of our house by the street during the warm season,

where all the neighbors soon knew me and often spoke to me. I had particularly wavy hair, which came to my shoulders, and a delicate face with large, dreamy eyes. That's what my mother told me, and that is how I see myself portrayed in a photograph of that time. I was strictly forbidden to accept gifts from passing strangers. Once I received from someone I knew a paper sack with sweet black cherries, which I loved a lot. I couldn't resist the temptation. I accepted it and was punished for it.

As I grew braver, it wasn't enough anymore to run down the steep staircase, but I rode the steep railing into the depths at lightning speed. I remembered these daily sliding parties vividly once, when on a trip in the year 1890, dressed in mountain-climbing gear, I rushed down the railing into the depths of a salt mine in Berchtesgaden, holding on with the right hand, which was protected by a thick leather glove, to a strong rope strung nearby. Behind me, entrusting herself to my leadership and leaning on my shoulder, a tourist—a cute young girl— went along on the slide.

As I became more independent, I undertook excursions to the other side of the street, which was particularly narrow at this point, An old lady, Mrs. Liebchen Israelsohn, named Voss, who lived in the Herzenbergs' house across the street always gave me a friendly wave from her window. Eventually she succeeded in enticing me into her home, where she entertained me kindly, but kept me for a long time.

My memories go back a long way. I could have been at the most four years old at the

time of this event with Mrs. Liebchen. My mother, who had a lively spirit, wanted to be present at all the big and small happenings in our city's public life, and as soon as I could walk, she took me along everywhere. So it was with the torch parade, which was given for Emperor Alexander II, who stayed in Mitau in the year 1858. We were in a dense crowd—I saw nothing, of course, and my cap was torn from my head, so that I had to put up with my mother tying her handkerchief around my head, which she considered necessary in the cold weather. I, however, was embarrassed to be walking around the streets with that kerchief on my head. After I got home unnoticed, well aware that I had disobeyed my mother's orders and that I was headed for punishment, I hid in the wardrobe. My mother and grandmother, who had missed me for several hours, were very worried about me. Suddenly the wardrobe, which was in and of itself rickety and consisted of two parts, an upper and a lower one, fell from its base, with me in it, probably because of some careless movement of mine. I started screaming, was pulled out unhurt to the great joy of my loved ones, and remained unpunished this time.

I may have been five years old at the time. Early on, soon after I completed my fifth year of life, I was enrolled in a Jewish school, the Chedav of Israel Gutmann. The entrance examination consisted of the following: The teacher showed me with a carved little stylus-like stick the letter aleph (a). My assignment consisted in finding an identical letter. When I was immediately successful, a raisin fell from above ("the angels sent it") onto the book, and I was allowed to put this reward straight into my mouth. Now I had to walk the long way from our house day in, day out, to the school in Neu Street, a cross

street of Doblensch, next to what was later Salzmann's synagogue. There I was initiated into the mysteries of the old Hebrew (Loschan-Hakodesch, the sacred language) and soon learned to read and write in this language.

When I was eight years old, my maternal grandfather, named Kretzer, died at the age of seventy-eight. My grandfather Pesach Kretzer, who was born about 1784, was a direct descendant of Avigdor Kretzer. Avigdor Kretzer belonged to the sixty families who were reported by the representatives of Mitau's Jewry to the committee for the examination of general municipal matters in Mitau, especially of Jews, as entitled to civil rights in the year 1794. [My grandfather] was a goldsmith, born in Mitau, had owned a jewelry store in Wilna, but was impoverished as a result of burglary and illness, and had come to Mitau, where he made his living with small jeweler's jobs. It was the last day of *sukkoth*, the Feast of the Tabernacles, when Mother and Grandmother left the house early and left me with our landlord Gordon the entire day. Late at night they returned and brought me the greetings of my late grandfather. Now a difficult time began for me. Three times a day I had to perform the prayer for the dead (*kadisch*) for him in Salzmann's house of prayer (*minjan*) located on the other side of the street. To this end I was awakened early every day, as early as six o'clock, winter and summer, in all kinds of weather. Half asleep I was dressed, and half asleep I appeared in the house of prayer. But I was there also for the afternoon prayer (*mincha*) and the evening prayer (*mairiv*). Usually, a number of mourners, adults and children, recited this prayer in chorus.

Of the *chedar* of Israel Gutmann I remember very little, except for the face of the old teacher with the long beard; the narrow, half-dark room with the large, rough-hewn table; the dusty, dirty little yard, where boys were playing the button game; and a tall, nearly grown-up student, who rocked his upper body in prayer almost without interruption. We had lessons in German also, from teacher Nesselstrauss, who took his assignment quite seriously. For every blot he used to rap the tips of my fingers, which were pressed together, with a ruler. For a long time afterward I remembered this procedure with horror.

In my ninth year of life I took a step forward in my education. From the *chedar* of Israel Gutmann I went to the Jewish elementary school with instruction in German by teacher Behrmann. This was in the Palais Street, on the second floor of the house later belonging to the Heilsbergs, across from the Besthorn bookstore. It folded, however, after my first semester there.

At the same time, Rabbi Salomon Pucher, who had recently come to Mitau, opened a Jewish grade school with instruction in German, in which the young Mendelsohn, who until then had worked at Behrmann's school, became a teacher. The school was located in the Katharinen Street in a one-story house, which later belonged to a dentist, Neftel, across the street from the house of Baron Wolff on the Katharinenstift..

I have many sweet memories of this school. The young rabbi, who came from the old

Lithuanian town of Sklow, a graduate of the rabbis' school in Wilna, was an industrious man with a great thirst for knowledge and exalted plans for the cultural development of the people of his faith. He had an extraordinarily hard time with the language; the Lithuanian Jewish dialect bothered him greatly. But through his steely energy he overcame all difficulties, and in later years he spoke German without that annoying accent, and wrote long, witty articles in the *Baltic Monthly* (frequent epistles to the Kurlandish members of the Synod, *Baltic Monthly*, Vol. 16, pp 217-240, 1867), and in the Baltic daily press in the classic language of the German poets and in Ciceronian monthlies. We boys, however, amused ourselves at the time with his pronunciation and word stress, as, for instance,'*futurum* instead of *fu'turum*. The German teacher, Mr. Mendelsohn, who died in Riga a few years ago at a very old age, was a tall, gaunt man with a reddish blond beard and a strong voice, who took reasonable pains with us boys. As a result of his zeal, during a visit to the school by Secondary School Director Count Raczynski (Wilhelm, Count Raczynski, born 1808 in Zernhof near Mitau, died in Mitau in 1889, gymnasium inspector 1861-'70), I was able to shine with a recitation of Müller's poem "The Little Hydriot [sailor]." "I was a little boy/ could hardly stand yet/ my father then already/ took me with him to sea." The presentation pleased the director, and he wrote my name in his notebook.

From that time I remember a little event on the street. I passed the Katharinen foundation in Palais Street with another boy, and from the opposite direction came two German boys, laughing, in high spirits, and began to tease us as Jews. I took the

matter quite tragically, walked up to them, and preached to them: “Aren’t we all brothers? Don’t we all come from one Father? Why are you hurting our feelings?” The boys looked at me in amazement, and quietly left. Thus Jewish children are faced early with scorn, ridicule, and derision and malice, which repeats itself a hundred- and thousandfold in later life, which wounds their souls, and takes from them their innocence and unselfconsciousness and lessens their faith in justice, apart yet from the fact that because of their parentage, the Jews had great, undeserved obstacles put in their way in the acquisition of education and the free pursuit of life. Mankind has sinned a great deal against the Jews, and goes on sinning against them. The injustice, however, that we suffer and have suffered, must not entice us to hate. Jewry must show that it is more tolerant than its persecutors. Every Jew must strive to be charitable, conscientious, and good, so that the entire Jewish community may become a community of justice and an example to its oppressors.

Pucher’s school existed for only three semesters, and once again I was without regular schooling. I was about eleven years old at the time. My mother had great plans for me, especially because she received words of praise about me from all teachers. When we walked past the beautiful Gymnasium building in Palais Street, she always told me, “You must get in there too.” And so I got private instruction, learned Latin and had to decline *mensa* and conjugate *amo*. The teacher who was to introduce me into the halls of the Gymnasium was a student in the higher grades, by the name of Leopold Feitelsohn (born 1846, died 1903 in Reval, as an inspector with a branch of the national

bank there), who did not fill his assignment conscientiously, however. He came irregularly to the lessons, on occasion stayed away for weeks on end, or left the teaching to other friends in the higher grades, such as Karl Grünwald, subsequently a lawyer in Petersburg. What I had originally learned in the earlier lessons was forgotten by this time, supposedly because I had become lazy. The unconscientious instruction had indeed harmed me and made me reluctant to work. I wandered around the streets, ran after the wide Lithuanian sleds in winter in order to hitch short rides, stood for hours in front of the carousel on the market square too, sneaked inside it and helped it turn to earn the privilege of a free ride on the little horse.

In the mornings I went to the Jewish school of teacher Koppel, in the main street, in the garden of the house later belonging to Exner, the soap maker. Here I got to know the five books of Moses and the prophets thoroughly. I still have the Bible with the translation by Philippson that I used at the time. The poetic parts of the Bible affected me particularly. I couldn't get enough of the exalted language and the soaring speech of the prophet Isaiah.

For hours I listened with joy to the harmony of the glorious words and declaimed and recited over and over the most beautiful passages from the prophets. My general knowledge progressed but slowly, however, until finally my mother decided to have a serious talk with Feitelsohn.

In the meantime I had turned thirteen, and had celebrated my confirmation (*bar mizwah*) On a Saturday I was called upon in the large synagogue to read a passage from the Bible, and was now regarded as whole, that is to say that in a prayer meeting of ten men I now had the right to be counted among them.

Feitelsohn now finally conducted with some eagerness my preparations for the entrance examination for the Gymnasium. He had me tested for the fourth grade, to make sure that I ended up in the fifth, and so I really got into the fifth, although for this grade also, I demonstrated great insufficiencies. Enough, I was in the Gymnasium, to my mother's great joy and to the satisfaction of Feitelsohn, who had now made good his former wrongs.

But now—where to get the tuition money? Twenty rubles (per semester) was for my mother a quite unaffordable fortune. Things were materially pretty bad for us. When my mother had enough work, we had barely enough for our living and the rent of 44 rubels per year. But there were also times, and often enough, that work was scarce, when the room wasn't heated and we had nothing to eat for days on end, and I gathered the breadcrumbs from the drawer in tears. "Whoever does not eat his bread with tears, who never sat weeping sorrowfully on his bed, he does not know thee, heavenly power." Then one teaspoon after another went to the goldsmith, and finally my mother's wedding ring, to alleviate our worst need.

Early on I started to earn a little by giving lessons. I could hardly read myself when I already passed on my knowledge and taught reading for 40 kopecks per month. That it was impossible under these conditions to manage 20 rubles in tuition is understandable. A rescuing angel appeared in the person of Secondary School Inspector Karl Dannenberg (born 1832, died 1892, teacher at the Mitau Gymnasium since 1867, inspector since 1878, discharged from the service during the Russian takeover in 1890), to whom Mother in her need had appealed. He provided the tuition money for both semesters of the fifth grade, and I was saved, my future secured, the dark worries erased. For me real life began. The undisciplined instruction was forever past, and I quickly settled down in the class. The teachers liked me despite the great gaps in my knowledge, and I loved and enjoyed learning. At that time, the teachers were not yet civil servants, as they were later during the Russian takeover, but human beings and friends of children. The emphasis was not so much on the quantity of knowledge and the exact completion of the curriculum, as on the development of the spirit and of character. For this the Mitau Gymnasium was at that time particularly qualified. Therefore, its pupils enjoyed a good reputation and respect anywhere in the empire, and a graduate of the Mitau Gymnasium was usually successful in getting ahead in life.

MY GYMNASIUM YEARS

My most pleasant memories are connected with my Gymnasium years. In January 1868 I had entered fifth grade, and in May I experienced the first gymnastics meet in Bergledding. How glorious it was to march in closed ranks, through the city and through the woods and fields. Upon arrival in Bergledding, we formed a large circle and sang with enthusiasm: “Freedom, I mean it, which fills my heart, come with your luster, sweet heavenly sight.” Then our secondary teacher, Cruse (Friedrich Cruse, born 1815, died 1891, teacher at the Mitau Gymnasium 1845-‘77) ascended the speakers’ platform and spoke to us in words that made the youthful heart beat faster. Then began the joint games. *Plumpsack* gave rise to a lot of laughter when the boys who didn’t jump at the right time were knocked down by the “Plumpsack.” Then came the big first- and second-graders, and we, the smaller ones, climbed on their shoulders. High up there we wrestled with the other younger ones till they were dragged down. I was often the winner and was carried in triumph to new battles. At noon came an intermission. In the meadow long tables were set, where the students ate. For the Jewish students, about ten in number, a special table was set that conformed to the strict Jewish dietary laws. To my shame, we weren’t very well behaved at our special table. The boys screamed and quarreled and the greatest disorder prevailed at our table. The midday meal threw a

shadow over my festive joy. Not until the afternoon coffee, which we had with all the other students, did my good mood return. Then came the gymnastics exercises, in which especially first-grader Egbert Braatz (born 1849, physician in Libau 1880-89, in Konigsberg since 1892, professor at the university since 1907), later a professor in Königsberg, distinguished himself through his *Riesenschwung* [pommel horse jump?]. At later gymnastics meets standout gymnasts Theodor Bobienski (1854, died 1902), subsequently a contributor to the German *Petersburger Zeitung*, and Wilhelm Cruse (born 1855, died 1903), later a physician in Bauseke and Mitau, celebrated victories. The pyramid that was constructed by the students was beautiful. At the bottom were the strongest and most powerful students, back to back, and on their shoulders stood other students, and so several levels were built on top of each other, till finally at the top the smallest, most agile gymnast completed the structure, who cheerfully waved his cap and was rewarded with resounding applause. Then we had more running games, and we sang songs, and the teachers and students lay down on the slope of a hill in picturesque groups, and the first-graders were even allowed to smoke together with the teachers. And now the way back.

To the music of the band and the singing of cheerful songs we marched home in a happy mood. “I had a comrade in arms/ you’ll find none better/ the drum called us to battle/ he walked by my side/ in cadence with me.” Or: “The captain, long may he live/ he goes bravely ahead of us/ we follow him courageously on the bloody road to victory/ he leads us now to battle and victory/ he leads us some day, you brothers, into the

Father's house." Such and similar songs were started, and we sang along heartily. Shortly before our entry into the city, we lit our torches and led by a crowd of thousands, we marched through the town to the sounds of music, threw the torches on the lawn in front of the Gymnasium into a stake, and sang the old, ever young song "Gaudeamus igitur/ juvenes dum sumus." Thus I joined in the festivities of the gymnastics meet, which was a celebration for the entire town, at the end of my Gymnasium years.

As far as the fifth-grade teachers were concerned, the one students loved especially was Heinrich Seesemann (born 1838). High school teacher of religion, school principal in Fellin, and finally a pastor at Greizhof. I had the opportunity occasionally to attend his classes, when he substituted for another teacher. These lessons were a treat to me. He could tell captivating stories, and presented single events from general history in such an impressive manner that I remember them to this day. Solid, serious, and loyal is how he appeared to me; you trusted him and were glad to obey him, a true educator of youth.

Natural history was taught by Adolph Torney (born 1810, died 1874, teacher at the Gymnasium at Mitau 1848-68), from Hanover, a good-natured old man with a sense of humor. I owed him my nickname, "Brennglass" [magnifying glass), by which fellow students I was friends with addressed me from then on. A wonderful old gentleman was the German teacher, Arcov Trautwetter, whom I later treated medically in Mitau, when he was quite old. The boys learned very little from him. It was therefore no wonder that

he called me “Zero,” Brennsohn “Zero,” but he was not very serious about that. I didn’t learn German grammar till later, through teaching. *Docendo discimus* [we learn by teaching].

With the boys I got along fine. The large yard gave us the opportunity to play together, which led to friendships. In winter he new arrivals, the “frosh” were washed, that is, the boys in question were thrown into the snow and so pelted and rubbed with snow and chunks of ice, with the whole class participating, that they often had to stay home or in bed for days. I had a horror of the “washing,” but the boys were quite gentle with me.

At Christmas 1869 I was moved to the fourth grade. With it came the end of my and my mother’s worries over tuition money, for from now on I got free tuition. I was not quite ready for the fourth grade, however. The large gaps in my knowledge and the defects of my early instruction had not yet been compensated for. Thus, Golotusow, the Russian language teacher, could turn to me with the remark, “Brennsohn, they should have moved you on to the sixth grade, not the fourth.” But in the fourth grade, where, held back by illness, I spent two years, the gaps in my knowledge were gradually filled in, so that I was even able to win Golotusow’s friendship. Only in mathematics I didn’t get ahead too well, as a result of the unfocused instruction and passiveness of the high school teacher Napiersky, who did have a good reputation as a scholar. With a few exceptions mathematics was literally not learned in the entire Gymnasium. In Napiersky’s lessons we talked, read novels, prepared for the next lesson, made

mischief, and made noise. All candidates for graduation would definitely have failed the exam if Hugo Weidenmann, a mathematical genius and former pupil at the Gymnasium, hadn't made a habit of staying in Mitau around exam time, like a rescuing angel. For this purpose he stayed at a neighboring house, and solved the problems. With a particular sign, jangling a bunch of keys, the servant Schafe announced that the solved problems could be found in a previously agreed-upon place. One of the prospective graduates then went out, got the worksheets, and distributed them among the individual tables. The teachers supervising the exam in the hall sat at the rostrum, engrossed in their newspapers, and appeared to notice nothing of the process. Napiersky, who questioned me during the oral exam, was satisfied, since I had just solved the written assignment, with my answer; "Because I considered it correct." Thus, I was still denied a thorough knowledge of mathematics, which I have sadly missed in my later studies and work.

Latin, Greek, and history were my favorite subjects. From a very small amount of knowledge I worked myself up to writing the best unprepared Greek exercise, which initially quite astonished the then very young high school teacher Eduard Kurtz. Latin was taught us in the upper grades in the most dignified manner by the old "Roman," Inspector Julius Vogel. The beauty of the language appealed to me so much that I learned many passages from Cicero, Ovid, and Horace by heart, attempted to write letters in Latin, and at an occasional meeting on the street strove to respond in Latin to the Inspector's Latin words to me. To my astonishment, Librarian Eduard Fehre, who has died too young, told me a few years ago when we were figuring out a Latin

inscription together, that the news of my knowledge of the Latin language had traveled as far as Riga

We had history with Heinrich Diederichs. Those who knew him more closely, knew that the most contradictory character traits were combined in him. From deep feeling, from an almost fantastic enthusiasm for his ideals, he could go to being obstinate and stubborn and tyrannize his environment. In the Gymnasium he often frittered away the greater part of the lesson in empty chitchat with the boys. He had his pets among the nobility and the pastors' sons, upon whom he bestowed nicknames like "Pipifax" and such, and with whom he often spent most of the lesson hour bantering back and forth. But when he began his lecture, it was a joy to listen to him. These improprieties, by the way, occurred only in the fourth-grade lessons; from the third on his instruction was normal and undisturbed. During the German-French war of 1870/71 he spent many lesson periods reading German war songs to us, which he recited with great pathos. The students learned these poems by heart as well, and recited them during history lessons. "Now let the bells rejoice from tower to tower in a glorious storm/ the glow of thrusting flames exult/ the Lord has done great things for us/ Glory to God in the highest!" Or the "Trumpeter of Gravelotte":"You have spewed death and decay/ we have not suffered it; two columns infantry, two batteries, we have run over them." Thus the German-French war was kept alive in our memory. But he also brought other historical periods closer to our understanding and feeling by reciting relevant poems. "Every night gloomy songs are whispered by the Busento near Costenza/ from the water rings out

the answer and in eddies it echoes." So we learned and lamented Alerich's death and we, too, called out songs of praise to the Gothic army: "Roll the wave of the Busento, roll it from sea to sea."

It was very much interested in history. Perhaps it was because of that that Diedrich's attitude toward me was friendly. Moreover, he was my personal advisor, that is to say, he represented my interests in the school. Every teacher had a number of students to whom he was a personal advisor. He gave advice to his protégés or their parents, cautioned them betimes when they goofed up; parents consulted with him about the welfare of their children. This reciprocal relationship between students and teachers brought them closer together and constituted a great advantage to the school. As noted, I spent a lot of time on history, and compiled my knowledge from the most varied history books. Once Diedrichs asked in the third grade what a proletarian was. Since nobody answered, I spoke up. "Begetters of children," (the actual translation of *proletarian*) I burst out amid the homeric laughter of the class.

The history of the Jews, as far as it is interwoven with general history, he touched upon incidentally. After the last bloody revolt of the Jews under Bar-Kochba at the time of Hadrian, the name Jerusalem was abolished, and the Holy City was given the name "Aelia Hadriana." Jews were forbidden to live or stay in Jerusalem, and to spoil their entrance into the city especially, the figure of a swine was chiseled into the gate. Diedrichs related this last piece of information with particular enjoyment, it seemed to me at the time. When later on I settled in Mitau as a physician and became a member

of the Society for Literature and Art, we shared topics of interest again, and he encouraged me in my medical-historical-biographical studies. Although he had changed little in his outward demeanor, underneath he had become more refined in his views. The way he depicted a historical personality, their actions resulted inevitably from each other. A historical figure emerged vividly, and you had the impression that events could not have developed in any other way. It is regrettable that he did not write down his lectures. From a few notes he formed them in his head and presented them as complete speeches. His lectures were outstanding and left upon his listeners an inextinguishable impression.

In my first semester in the fourth grade, I experienced old Zimmermann, called “Grütz” [grit, groats; also: brains] by the boys, as a history teacher. He was a marvelous oddball. He called on the students row by row. If you didn’t want to answer, you said “I pass,” and you didn’t get your turn until the whole class had been asked questions, which took at least a semester.

Old Golotusow was an able teacher and he had written a widely known Russian anthology, but because of his stinginess he was the object of mockery by his students. The boys scattered copper coins in various spots in the classroom, which Golotusow immediately collected and pocketed, to the boys’ great amusement, In winter they threw snowballs at a place above his seat; then came a loud hello, while Golotusow looked in surprise in all directions, and finally upward, from where the melting snow dropped on

the rostrum and on his head. *“Ach, wy negodnyje maltschischki*” (oh, you useless boys) was his eternal refrain at our naughtiness.

In my third semester in the fourth grade, I became ill with the smallpox, which was introduced into France by the Turks during the German-French war, and which had then spread all over Europe. Half Mitau could be seen walking around at that time with faces disfigured by red

pockmarks. The illness kept me confined to the house for three months, and was the reason for my having to stay in the fourth grade for a fourth semester. From the third grade on I spent three semesters in each class, and each time it was mathematics that held me back.

I was now an upper-division student, and gave a lot of private lessons, so that I couldn’t start my schoolwork till late at night, often not until ten or eleven o’clock. I could already help my mother a little; the time of our greatest need was past. I was a delicate and weak boy, however, often suffered violent nosebleeds, and my health was damaged by the great exertions to which I was exposed at such an early age, so that I remained sickly my entire life.

Unfortunately, the already meager instruction in natural history in the fifth grade now came to an end. Nevertheless, nature appealed to me early. In the winter of 1868 (?) a magnificent comet hung above our garret window every evening, which delighted me for months. The contemplation of the starry skies put me in a festive mood. I was familiar

with the constellations, and becoming absorbed in the unfathomable mysteries of the firmament confronted me with ever new and unsolvable questions. When a thunderstorm approached, I climbed from the loft through a skylight through which you had a wide view to the horizon, in order to raise myself to a wonderful view of the majestically approaching storm, and the lightning flashes and the crashing and rolling of the thunder. I especially loved the forest, which you could reach from Mitau in a short half hour. “An incredibly sweet yearning drove me to go through the woods and meadows.”

Alt-Sorgenfrei was the frequent goal of my hikes, and I also fetched the flowers for my mother’s birthday there. That is where the forest began, where I could walk about for many hours, watching the work of ants or listening to the call and song of different birds here, or searching for a spot with many echos there. On my walks I also came to Henriettens Ruh, an idyllically located graveyard, where, as I was told, Juliane von Krüdener, the mystic friend of Alexander I, is supposed to have been buried. I did find the gravestone of a Frau Krüdener that may have led to this incorrect information. Juliane von Krüdener, however, is not buried there, but was interred in the Greek cemetery of Princess Golizyn in Karassu-Bazar in the Crimea, where she died on December 13/25, 1824. From my walks I brought home plants, bugs, and stones, and started collections of these. It was a special interest of mine to watch caterpillars in a glass vessel, to tend to them with the appropriate leaves, await their pupation, and cheer the emergence of butterflies. I also planted beans, peas, and other seeds in

flowerpots, and was happy at the first sprouting and the further growth of the plants.

In the sixties of the previous century, Mitau still showed many holdovers of the Middle Ages. On warm summer evenings the people who lived in our house (that is, the Gordons'
house)—and other neighbors joined them—sat on the wooden steps to the house. Of course I was always there, pulling little pieces of rotting wood out of the steps so I could watch them in the dark when they were lit. A bottle of light beer was retrieved from a nearby home to wet the lips among some harmless chatting. At ten o'clock the fancifully dressed night watchman took up his position at the nearby street corner, and intoned his medieval singsong: "Hear, ye gentlemen, and let it be told, the hour of ten has struck" and blew the hours on his whistle ten times. After the second reminder of the night watchman the neighbors parted and went to rest in their musty rooms, overheated during the hot day.

The civil guard, too, had a medieval touch, a memory of the guilds, also named the Green Guard, after their uniforms. On crown holidays, master shoemakers, tailors, bakers, butchers, plumbers and so forth, whom you otherwise saw only in their places of work, marched in richly decorated uniforms, preceded by a band, straight and crooked, limping and wobbling, through the streets of the town to the palace, to honor the Governor as the representative of the Emperor. The celebration often closed with the customary scuffle.

The fire damage in Mitau reminded you of the well-known picture “Roaring of fire in Krähwinkel.” As soon as the rattles of the night watchman and the fire alarms sounded, soon followed by a shower of feverish pealing of warning bells of churches, all windows opened and agitated people asked each other and those who were running past about the location of the fire. Usually, the red glow of the skies showed the way. It was dogmatic in Mitau that anyone who was physically at all able ran to the location of the fire to help, or just to watch. Since at the time Mitau did not have a water and sewer system, long chains of helpers formed, who passed on buckets of water. Unfortunately, at that time Mitau knew only two kinds of news that supplied topics of conversation: fires and deaths.

During my youth, a piece of the Middle Ages was also shown as criminals were led through the streets, which usually took place on Saturdays. In front, a company of soldiers strode to dull drum rolls; then followed the “shame wagon,” on which the criminal sat, hands and feet chained, visible to all, with on his chest a large shield announcing his crime. Thus he was taken to the “rotten table,” an unpaved spot in Wall Street, where in the stocks, the “Kak” [jail], according to the severity of his crime he was either exhibited for some length of time as a warning, or received a beating with a rod.

An idyllic sight was the cattle drive to the city pasture. Twice a day, early in the morning

and early in the afternoon, the horned milk-giving animals ran from their stables after the luring horn of the city herdsman, and willingly followed the leader. In the evening they ran quickly, with merry leaps to their home stables.

Mitau at the time was an almost purely German city of about 25,000 inhabitants, with 5,000 to 6,000 of these German-speaking Jews. The Latvians also became Germanized quickly in the city, and were not happy to be reminded of their Latvian origins. If you had nothing to do with the “locals”, and didn’t have a Latvian maid, you had no opportunity to learn the Latvian language. When as a young physician I went out into the country without knowing a word of Latvian, I had no small difficulties to overcome.

The classes were strictly separated from one another; even the death bells of the churches told of this separation. Only the nobility was entitled to have the death bells of the Trinity Church rung between noon and one o’clock in the afternoon. For other mortals the bells were rung at different times.

Similarly, it was the unspoken privilege of the nobles to occupy the best seats in theaters. Not until in later years, when this unwritten privilege of the nobility was no longer completely respected, did the rich merchant and the educated appear in the first-class galleries; Jews remained excluded. And when finally a Jew, banker Stern, had the courage to sit down in the first-class seats with his wife, the public’s attention moved

from the stage and focused on this quite uncommon sight, and in the next skit a limerick about “the Jew in first class” caused inextinguishable laughter.

The nobility possessed, thanks to their privileged position and substantial land ownership—by far the greater number of estates belonged to them—a significant moral and economic influence. In town also, the nobility owned the most beautiful houses. In Bach Street, on the Drixe, where the knightly residence, the casino, was also located, one noble palace adjoined another. The palace belonging to Count Medem-Elley was supposed to have been erected by the plans of Rastrelli, the builder of the castle of Mitau. At that time well over 100 noble families lived in the city of Mitau. They set the tone, and everyone bowed before them. Twice a year the landed gentry gathered in Mitau, at Neu-Johanni [midsummer solstice celebration], from June 12 to 15, and in the winter season. At Johanni, Mitau provided an extraordinarily colorful and lively picture. The main streets teemed with people; the marketplace was crowded with vehicles, stalls, and further with carousels, animals, puppet theaters and other amusement establishments, so that you could hardly make your way through the throng. All roads and hotels were packed, and many private homes also had guests. All payments and contracts were made and renewed at Johanni; and purchases and sales were made. Horse trading in particular flourished at this time; everywhere on the streets and in the yards you saw horse traders drive their horses past buyers, shouting “Whoa!”

In winter, noblemen drove through the streets with two horses before their carriages, with next to the driver, or on the running board in back of the carriage, a servant in ornate attire with white kid gloves. In front of the nobles' homes the carriages stopped; the passengers handed the servant a visiting card, which he took to the residence. Then began the balls in the casino, which usually ended in several engagements. The whole town was interested in those; for businesses it meant the purchase of trousseaus and work for many tradesmen. But apart from the personal interest, people were also genuinely interested in the families in question. Because the town was small, everybody was known and everyone was related to one another.

At Johanni guest performances by actors from Riga took place also, in the old wooden theater buildings next to the marketplace, where now the museum is. There we got to know and love them all, the well-known actors of that period: the cloverleaf of Livia Eichberger, Markward, and Butterweck; further Goebel, Anna Suhrland, and Karl Galster. We were excited about the creations of the most famous poets and composers, and how inexpensive all these things were! It cost 20 kopecks to obtain a place in the gallery (paradise). Sure, you had to be there early to get the place in front. I was there before four o'clock; at five thirty the door to the gallery was opened, and in a rush we captured our spots. "Then, indeed, I like to see the crowds/ when the current presses toward our booth/and with enormous and repeated pains/ wrings itself through the mercy gate/ In bright daylight, before four o'clock/ fights itself to the box office/ and as

though starving for bread at the bakery door/ nearly breaks its neck for a ticket."

Not to be forgotten is the circus, which was also erected on the marketplace at Johanni. From my early years I remember Circus Hinne with its tame lions. At the end [of the performance] the lion tamer stuck his head in the lion's jaws. In some foreign city he later became the victim of his profession in that a lion snapped its jaws shut. And what I learned about the theater, I owe nearly exclusively to that time, for in later years I have been able to visit the theater only occasionally. Then, however, I didn't miss any of the twenty guest performances. Evening after evening I captured my place in the gallery. And there the characters passed before me in plays such as tragedies, comedies, and in farces, and particularly in the opera. With emotion I yet remember Gretchen in Gounod's *Faust*. The lovely and moving melodies sounded in my ears day and night. And the comic opera. I still see the mischievous bandits' faces of Markwardt and Butterweck in *Fra Diavolo*.

How cheap life was in Mitau at that time. And yet, as always, there was plenty of poverty, so that even at the lowest prices you didn't have the means to buy anything. When my mother had earned a few rubels, I went with her to the nearby market, where we bought ten eggs for a *Finwer (Fünfer*) [a fiver], i.e., 7½ kopecks; for a pound of butter we paid 8 to 10 kopecks; a pound of meat cost 2 to 3 kopecks. And when I began to earn some money myself, it gave me the greatest pleasure to buy groceries and bring

them home. For a cord of birch wood I paid 6 rubles even in later years.

Except for the nobles' houses in Bach Street and Palais Street, and a few other stone houses in other streets, Mitau possessed wooden, for the most part single-story houses, which had not been painted perhaps for a lifetime. I still remember the depressing impression these shabby little houses made on me when as a student I arrived in my hometown from smart-looking Dorpat. But Mitau also possessed a few imposing buildings. The magnificent castle built by Rastrelli in 1737 with its noble, quiet forms, unfortunately burned down by Bermondt's army in 1919; the Gymnasium in Palais Street with its beautiful tower, also partly destroyed by Bermondt's disastrous men, to this day bears in its portal the inscription "Sapientiae et Musis." Furthermore, the house in Palais Street which has existed since back in 1699, in which Katharina von Bismarck in 1771 started the Katharinen foundation. The Herzenbergs' house on the corner of Catholic Street and the main street is also among the oldest buildings in town, and possesses historical significance. In 1726 Moritz von Sachsen, voted in as a duke by the state parliament, was formally besieged in this house by the Poles. Freed by the bodyguards of Duchess Anna Iwanowna, and taken into her palace, he squandered the favor of all his protectors, however, and eventually, in 1727, had to flee the country, disguised as a carriage driver, from the Russians, who had surrounded his last place of refuge on an island in the Usmaiten Sea. A quite old, modest, stretched-out wooden house with a high, gabled roof, named Jerusalem, in the marketplace near the Drixe

river, must be counted among the historical homes of Mitau. The Nolde brothers are said to have had their stopover in this house in 1615. They were dragged into the street by servants of the Duke, and beaten up. With this disastrous act Duke Wilhelm disgraced his name for eternity.

These are some of the few memorable moments in Mitau, which is so poor in historical memories and monuments, among which we can yet count the Jakob's canal, constructed by Duke Jakob, with whose dirty water, which made a mockery of all laws of hygiene, the town had to make do until a water main was constructed.

Let us return to my school experiences.

Under the direction of individual teachers, the students from the two upper grades at times undertook excursions in the environs of Mitau. I took part in two of these, which were led by Heinrich Seesemann, the trips to Doblen and Riga. The Doblen excursion was very nice. We traveled by train, about thirty in number, to Friedrichshof, then walked back the distance from the railroad station at Doblen, about 9 *werst* [Russian measurement, a little over 1 kilometer]. When we arrived, it was already dark and time to go to sleep. We found a fragrant bed of straw and hay in a schoolroom. Early the next morning we jumped up, washed ourselves at the well with cold water, got a slice of bread with butter and a glass of milk, and began our hike. Next we went to the ruins,

which we viewed in detail, climbing to all kinds of places and crawling into the cellar, and searching for subterranean passages which were supposed to have led from the castle far into the land. For breakfast we were invited to the Haarens' villa. Like a swarm of locusts we flung ourselves on the hospitably offered provisions. We ate everything in sight, so that in the end there was not a breadcrumb left in the house. For afternoon coffee we were invited to the German rectory by Pastor Bock. The pastor's wife had thoroughly prepared for us; the fragrant mocha flowed without interruption, and *schmand* [a sour-cream-based drink] was poured from large jugs. And the pastry! They entertained us with true Kurish hospitality, and we ate so much that we could initially hardly respond to the invitation to take part in races. But then the food settled, and we became all quick and lively, and raced the young ladies, a marvelous collection of whom had arrived, and who, on their part, were happy to let us catch them. Then it was, "Boys out!" The kind guests accompanied us for a ways through the "Boksche wood" and then we walked on back to the station to the marching song "We stick together/ as faithful brothers do/ When death horrifies us/ and when weapons rule/ We are all driven by a pure, happy purpose/ We all strive for one goal" and back to Mitau on the train.

The trip to Riga, also under the direction of Heinrich Seesemann, who was joined by other teachers, was exciting and interesting. With the expert guidance of historians we got to know the places where an important part of our national history had taken place. In the Schlosshof [castle grounds] we saw the statue of Walter von Plettenberg; in the

Schwarzhäupters' house they showed us the magnificent silver treasure; we were in the Ritterhaus [knight's house], climbed the cathedral and the Petri Church. The climb itself gave us great pleasure, and we did not consider at all the difficulties and the dangers into which a misstep could have landed us. Once we were high up, we enjoyed the gorgeous view and moved around quite carelessly in the narrow space, on the steep surface covered with sheet metal. When a few boys got way too daring, however, and leaned far over the parapet to look into the dizzying depth, even the courageous Seesemann got scared and warned us: "Boys, if you absolutely want to break your neck—please not in front of me." Our physical welfare was also well taken care of. Tired, but in good spirits, we returned home,

In the course of time we moved. In our old home, where we had lived for fifteen years, I had spent my entire youth, which was not as drab as you might perhaps imagine for a child that lived under such impoverished circumstances. I could move about more freely than the children of rich parents, whose steps were anxiously watched over by nannies and governesses. What wonderful afternoon hours I spent in the huge yard of brewer Simonowitz, on the main street at the Kallmeiers' house, which later belonged to Strecker, whose yard stretched from the main street to Katharinen Street. You knew that besides the Simonowitz boys, you'd find a large number of other boys there. We played horse, but mostly war, and accompanied our play with clear voices: "In Mantua the faithful farmer lay fettered/ In Mantua the enemy host carried him to his death."

On Friday afternoon I was invited into the living room as the only one of the strange boys, where round, friendly Mrs. Simonowitz offered me delicious cake with my coffee, and where the only daughter, Doris, a charming blond teenager, exercised her powers of attraction on me. But we also experienced many a sad event in our old home. One evening we found Grandmother with a broken hip on the floor of the little room. She had climbed onto the edge of the bed to look for something on top of the stove, and had fallen down. Now she lay, already blind, in bed for months, and when she got up she was also crippled.

My religious feelings were developed by my mother and grandmother. I was taught daily prayer, which, in accordance with Jewish ritual, is quite long and takes more than a half hour in the morning. On Friday evenings the table was set, lamps lit, and I sang the welcome song for the sabbath, "*Lechi dodi*—Come, beloved, to meet the bride."

The *seder* evenings solemnly progressed toward Passover. After my grandfather's death, the seder was my responsibility, although I was only nine years old at the time. Faithfully we observed all the customs, and I sang all the Passover songs, and when at the end the door to the dark attic was hospitably left open to greet the Messiah with the words "*Boruch habe*—blessed be your coming," it always seemed quite uncanny to me that no one emerged from the darkness. With the wish "*Ischana habao w'*

Jeruschalajeim—next year in Jerusalem" I closed the prayer book and laid myself to sleep.

The children of our neighbor, baker Höpker, made friends with me. The oldest, Karl, often came from the roof of his father's home into our third-floor window. I tutored him; his sister Martha, however, a teenager with the most gorgeous blue eyes and magnificent golden blond braids, sweet-talked me until I had done her homework for her. When I got home tired from my tutoring sessions late in the evening, she was already sitting there waiting for me. It became even more convenient for her when we moved into her father's house. Not a day passed now when we weren't together. Impatiently I hurried home, and was happy to find her there, although I did not let her know that, and often even snapped at her. But she didn't let my boyish rudeness frighten her off; she noticed very well how I liked her. We lived in the Höpkers' house till the end of my student years. The hostel, as we in Mitau called the Hofhaus, stood in the back of a large courtyard, behind which lay yet another yard, where wood and chickens were kept. We had two spacious rooms on the ground floor, and a very narrow, cramped little room that couldn't be heated and was always cold in winter. That's where I slept. Through the window of this little room the young girls climbed into our place when they were having fun—Martha Höpker and her friends, Alice and Angelika E., Marie L., Anna S., and others. And I was not loath to let them interrupt my schoolwork.

The years passed. The Odyssey replaced Xenophon, Horace followed Cicero, and Livius took Caesar's place. I delighted in the harmony of Homer's verse, learned entire passages of the Odyssey and Iliad by heart, committed to memory Horace's ode: /*Odi profanum vulgus et arceo/ Favete linguis, carmina no prius/ Andita, musarum sacerdos/ Virginibus, puerisque canto*. I spent all my free time giving private lessons. The best families of the city entrusted me with their children's education. In all circles of the population I had my students, among the Germans, Jews, and Latvians. When I was in the upper grades, the pupils I had worked with were already in fifth and fourth grades. *Prima* was the name of the highest grade at the time. A number of my students later became doctors and colleagues of mine, some in this country, some in Russia and America. A couple of my earlier Latvian students played a role in the political life of Latvia. Of the Jewish population I knew the Robert Herzenberg family, the families of Rabbi Pucher and Dr. Hugo Behr, to all of whom I gave private lessons. Fate had it that of the two private tutor's positions that were offered to me in the summer of 1872, I accepted the one with the Herzenbergs, although it was financially less favorable than the one with Baron Behr in Behnen, offered to me by Inspector Dannenberg. The job of private tutor in Behnen would probably have had a definite influence on my life, and would presumably have steered it in a different direction. For good or for ill—who can judge that now? The summer of 1872 determined my whole life, for at that time I met my future wife in the person of the older Herzenberg daughter, a girl of only thirteen. Even as a very little boy I had had a relationship with the Herzenberg family; as a seven- and

eight-year-old boy I often went there as a playmate of the two little girls, Rosa and Fanny. However, scarlet fever took both in just a few days, and since that time my visits to the Herzenberg house stopped. Now these relations were renewed, and this time they would be binding for my entire life.

Finally I was a first-grader. Such a thing meant a lot in little Mitau in those days. I was known in the best families of the town, gave many private lessons, and gathered a small sum for my college years.

In the first grade I also had a duel with Theodor Ullman, later a high school teacher in Libau,
now dwelling in the land of shadows. Neither of us knew how to use the rapier. We were tricked into it. My fighting teacher was Kostja Kupffer, later town councilor in Mitau, who had a room with a special entrance in his parents' house in the main street, where I got drum lessons from him and where also the duel took place. My second was Kostja Kupffer, my opponent's was Theordor Keyserlingk; my *flicker* [possibly: trainer].was Ottomar Grosset, Ullman's Wilhelm Cruse; the referee was Alexander Grotthuss. Our heads were protected by helmets, the chest by a wide silk band; otherwise the torso was bare. Neither of us understood much about fighting, yet Ullman had the advantage because of his greater weight. Nevertheless, he got a wide slash from me, and I, on the other hand, a bloody cut across the large chest muscle. Our honor was satisfied; we

reconciled and were patched up.

Graduation came closer, and sent its forerunner far ahead. Our Coetus had the good fortune to be dismissed in June 1875 for the 100-year jubilee of the Mitau Gymnasium illustre, as it was called in earlier days, and so we elated graduates had to meet this advantage with higher duties. Mitau in the summer of 1875 stood at the center of attention in the Baltic Sea provinces. When you remember that only a few men took the initiative, you had to marvel at how much of significance was achieved in a short time. Three high school teachers, Heinrich Seesemann, Karl Dannenberg, and Heinrich Diederichs had gathered around them a group of men through whose collaboration Mitau became a place of pilgrimage in June 1875. At Heinrich Seesemann's encouragement the Trade and Industry Exhibition came to be, which was very successful and even turned a profit. Karl Dannenberg worked on the commencement address for the secular celebration of the Gymnasium on June 17, 1875:
"On the History and Statistics of the Mitau Gymnasium"; Heinrich Diederichs led the preparations for the jubilee festivities. This celebration was to be illumined by the performance of *Antigone*, which was to take place, in the original language and in Greek costumes, in a specially built Greek theater in the garden of the Gymnasium. Many months ahead of time, Diederichs began rehearsals, with the roles distributed as follows: Kreon: Hugo Dannenberg; Antigone: Leo Goertz; Haimon: Konstantin Kupffer; Ismene: Josef Kordzikowski; Teiresias: Alexander Grotthus, who was replaced by

Theodor Slevoigt; Angelos: I; Phylax: Wilhelm Druse; choir director: Ottomar Grosset; choir: twelve first-graders; nonspeaking parts (doorkeepers): the two Rust boys. In countless rehearsals we were drilled in our parts by Diederichs, till everyone knew his part in his sleep. Meanwhile, it was nearly Easter (1875) and it turned out that nobody had applied for Groskesch prize of a gold medal for a winning Latin essay. Inspector Dannenberg then demanded, on behalf of the teacher's council, that I write the essay; it was to bestow upon the festivities a greater grandeur if one of the graduates won the prize. But the request came too late; there were only a few weeks left before the beginning of our final exams, there was a lot of work left to be done to come through the exam in a worthy manner, and in addition the rehearsals for *Antigone* claimed every free minute. To my deep regret I could not accede to the repeated, flattering request. The medal was not handed out. The exams began. With the exception of mathematics, I was well prepared in the subjects, especially in German and history, and my presentation in the latter appeared to make a favorable impression on my examiners. Leo Goertz, Grotthus, and I passed the exams with an A, Goertz even with the right to 14th class.

On June 16 the performance of *Antigone* took place, after the dress rehearsal the day before had gone beautifully. The main performance was not to occur without incident. A stage had been built in the garden of the Gymnasium according to plans by Diederichs, which resembled the ancient Greek one as closely as possible. Up high was the stage

for the actors; below the altar with the choir, and in front of that the wooden floor with room for spectators stretched out through the rest of the garden. A roof Diederich wouldn't agree to under any circumstances; the Greek character of an open-air performance must be preserved. The performance was almost thwarted, for a few drops fell already and umbrellas went up, but Jupiter Pluvius was reasonable this time., At both performances only invited guests appeared. In spite of the huge rush, a ticket sale did not take place, although significant amounts of money could have been raised for whatever charitable purpose. How happy were those who possessed a ticket, and how they were envied by the less fortunate! We graduates had each received two tickets for each of the two performances; my dear mother was at both. The second ticket I had made available to the Herzenberg family. The day before the performance, old Baron Grotthus, the father of our seer Tereisias, died. Slevoigt substituted for him, but the *mise-en-scene* had to be changed a little for him. The boy was not to lead the blind Tereisias by the hand but Tereisias was to lean on the shoulder of the boy in front of him (Otto Keyserlingk), so as to be able to conveniently read the part stuck to his back. Slevoigt, who didn't know a single line of his part by heart, acquitted himself of his assignment quite ably. The effect on the spectators, though, would have been greater if the blind seer had lifted his eyes to empty space than it was now, since he had to keep his eyes lowered as he looked at the paper. When he turned the page, the first sheet fluttered to the floor, but it appeared to remain unnoticed by the public. Another incident occurred also; Cruse got stuck in his part and half of it was never recited. Luckily the

cautious choir director noticed it, and broke in with his choir, so that a disaster was averted. There was also a problem with the dialog between Kreon and Antigone, but Antigone saved the situation. How easily all these incidents could have been avoided, if only Diederichs had not come down on me like thunder and banished me from my prompter's post to a narrow space behind the wooden wall. But the public fortunately never had an inkling of all these things. They listened with awed shudders to the powerful sounds of Mendelsohn's *Antigone* overture, and the strange, harmonious sounds of the ancient language. The performance had left a gigantic impression on the audience, which had come from near and far, and even in later years the participants remembered it with great enthusiasm. It was an occasion.

Kadmon paroika kai demon Amfionos
Ouk est hopoion stant an antroon bion
Out ainesaimen oute mempsaimen pete.
Tyche gar ortoi kai tyche katarrepei
Ton entychounta kai ton dystychount ai
Kai mantis oudeis ton katestoton brotois.

Such were the first lines of my part, which in a tête-à-tête with the choir and Euridice depicted the dreadful events at the grave of Polynekis, and the deaths of Antigone and Haimon.

After the performance a banquet took place in the Schirkenhöfers' garden (in Post Street), to which the graduates were not invited. When the guests, astonished at this, expressed the wish to see us there as well, it was too late. They looked for us in vain in the whole town. The next morning, when we gathered in the auditorium for the *Festaktus* [a graduation festivity], the Greek language teacher, Czerny, came up to me and made me happy with his praising remarks and his thanks for my acting. Diederich's very silence was like praise. At the Festaktus I did the presentation in Russian for Grotthus (cf. *Die Woche in Bild* [The Week in Pictures], Riga, May 1927, photographs submitted by Dr. Brennsohn): "Gogol's Characters in the "*Toten Seelen"* [dead souls].

Now I had graduated from the Gymnasium, which I had entered full of anticipation seven and a half years earlier. In a festive mood, with a cheerful eye on the future, I strode through the streets of our little town, which for me had been the world until now. But to what profession should I devote my life? Because of my religion, the choice was limited. I would have liked to enter the Russian philological institute in Leipzig, but as a Jew I was not eligible. Law was far from my mind, and I chose medicine. Later I realized that not having my most passionate wish of that time fulfilled has been a blessing to me. Next, in response to a friendly invitation from my friend Eugen Jakoby, I went to the beach, where I spent a few beautiful weeks in the house of his parents. In the fall my plans were shaken up by the offer from Director Vogel to become a private tutor at the

home of Commander General Ullrich in Brest-Litowsk. But my negotiations with the general's wife, a cousin of Baroness Derschau of See Street, fell through, since I did not want to tie myself down for a long time.

STUDENT YEARS

In mid-August 1875 I traveled to Dorpat with Leo Goertz, Wilhelm Cruse, and Kostja Kupffer. Since we already felt halfway like students—we weren't high school pupils anymore, not yet college students, but according to the vernacular of the time *Muli* (from *mulus*, mule)—beer couldn't be lacking. With the exception of Cruse, who even then could hold his own in beer drinking, we couldn't develop a taste for it, though, but nevertheless we took turns at the railroad stations getting a few bottles of beer into our compartment. In Dorpat we parted ways; they entered a fraternity, and I joined a Jewish circle. Student life in Dorpat held great charm for me. All the students called each other *du* [were on a first-name basis] and formed a student state, to which all students had to belong, with student and honor courts. The "wild ones," who had not joined any fraternity, had to affiliate themselves with some fraternity. Whoever did not recognize the "Comment," that is, student law, was blackballed; the same for those who had done something defamatory. A blacklist was delivered to all students from time to time. You couldn't associate with those who were blackballed; neither could satisfaction be exacted from them through a duel. Forced dueling did not exist at the time. The antiduellists, the "moral ones," did not recognize the duel. It was considered fair,

however, particularly by the fraternity brothers, not to withdraw from a duel. Rapier duels were customary; rarely pistol duels for especially serious insults. Poles accepted only pistol duels. During my student years a number of promising young lives became the victims of this medieval custom. Even a rapier duel ended in death through injury of the chest artery (*arteria mammaria interna*).

As a Kurländer I affiliated myself with the Curonia and to that end I visited the Kurland pub, “the Bone,” in Compagnie Street. There I was immediately pulled over to a pretty large round table, where I had a good time. It would not have taken much persuasion at the time to win me over to the Curonia. But back in my lonely little room I had nobody I could tell my impressions to, and so this wish dissolved. I retained a friendly relationship with several members of the Curonia, though, such as with the unforgettable Adolf Katterfeld, who was murdered during the revolution in November 1895 in Irmlau-Waldheim, where he practiced as a physician. When I stood just before the Rigorosum exam, deprived of all resources, he nominated me for Curonia’s student stipend, which kept my head above water for a while.

My student years went about the same as my high school years. I worked hard at my studies and gave a lot of private lessons. Although from the second year on I received two stipends from Mitau, which together amounted to 250 rubles a year—from the Wunsch and Friedlaender memorial funds—and got free tuition at the same time, I still

could not make ends meet on this amount, particularly because I gave part of the money to my mother and grandmother. Therefore, I had to spend much time and energy on private tutoring. Yet I had some time for a social life. When I came to Dorpat, I found about fifteen Jewish students there, who appeared to stick together really well and gathered at one of the students' homes by turns. For the moment I joined this circle. Just as all Jewish life is serious, the efforts of the young Jewish students were also centered on serious things. We had founded an elementary school for poor Jewish children, and thereby contributed much to an improvement in the spiritual and mental level of the Jews of Dorpat, who because of their great poverty and ignorance lived in great darkness at that time. We students ourselves taught at the school without pay and chose from our midst a school principal. I functioned as such for several semesters. The means for the school's maintenance, such as rent, heat and operation, school supplies, and often also clothes for the children, we obtained partly by self-taxation, and partly through a subsidy of 100 rubles per year from the honorary curator we had chosen for the school, attorney Theodor Wulffius, JD, who magnanimously contributed considerable sums of his own money. When I was principal, besides Wulffius, Professor Allexander Oettingen, author of moral statistics, and jurist Professor Heinrich Mühlau also served as honorary curators.*

All three gentlemen were invited to the final exam. I had drilled the little girls so well in

biblical history that they recited their answers like clockwork. Things went just as well with the other subjects. The honorary curators were delighted and could not express their praise enough. They were hardly gone, when they sent large tureens of steaming hot chocolate and the most delicious cake from the nearest pastry shop as an expression of their satisfaction. The enthusiasm was so great that I pretty well had to give in to the wish of the children for a little dance, in which a few of the teachers participated. The seed we scattered then, fertilized by our zeal, bore good fruit. Enlarged and better financed, the school existed until the World War (1914).

Another charitable institution we created was the foundation of a Jewish student aid fund, also financed through self-taxation. The minimum contribution was 50 kopecks a month at that time. This creation also continues to exist today, significantly expanded. In my first year in Dorpat I had become friends with Josef Hamburg, who appealed to me because of his spirit, his ability, and his brilliant piano play. After one year, however, he went to Berlin, where he completed his studies and settled down as a physician. In frequent letters he tried to persuade me to follow his example. We remained friends, although separated by great distances, and our friendship endured till his death in the year 1912. The friendship of his wife and his three daughters left me with a rich legacy.

When I came to Dorpat, I rented a room with board in the home of university caretaker Wissor in Peterburg Street. The room, however, was more of a rathole. Swarms of rats

and mice chased and squealed from all holes, and on the floor of my room a truly wild hunt raged all night. Since I didn't feel at all comfortable there, I was happy to accept the offer to become roommates with my fellow student Theodor Lemonius, the son of the principal of a Petersburg gymnasium.

Christmas vacation was here, and the yearning to see my mother and grandmother again urged me to take the trip to Mitau. This journey was an event for me. The father of one of my pupils, an Estonian farmer, offered to take me to Pleskau in his sleigh. I was fascinated by the journey on ice, particularly because I made it in the company of three fellow students, whom I had invited. In the beginning everything went well; we felt very good under the linen cover of the sleigh, softly bedded down in fragrant hay. The lively little horses in front of the sleigh pulled briskly, and the sleigh shot like an arrow over the ice of the Embach. But on the wide Peipus lake, our farmer, who had covered this stretch for twenty-five years, got totally lost. We began to go the wrong way. Evening fell, a violent storm began to rage, the ice creaked and thundered and round about us lay a vast, endless expanse of snow. The little animals were now pulling reluctantly and sluggishly, fighting against the snowstorm and the sleigh. Scared, the little old farmer stopped often and looked for traces of a road. Suddenly the unharnessed horse on the side fell into the water; we had run into a crack. Fortunately, the animal managed to work himself out of it, since the other horse stood firmly on the ice. Scared to death, we continued our journey with even greater caution. Finally, after many hours of wandering

about, we saw a light. We were on an island, where a number of cottages made up a fishing village. But the fishermen, Russian Old Believers, refused to take us in. Finally, they let themselves be persuaded, however, as they recognized that we were freezing. They didn't want to give us any glasses, because those would be contaminated by "unbelievers," but this obstacle, too, was cleared up with a rich price for the glasses, and now we slurped the hot tea with pleasure, and satisfied our hunger with the barely edible black sourdough bread of the fishermen. Finally they got used to us, and one of them later led us to the right road. The rest of the night we traveled on without further adventures over the ice of the Peipus, to whose thundering and creaking we had become accustomed already, until to our great joy in the morning we caught sight of the dome of the Pleskau monastery on the Welikaja. Thus, our difficult but yet interesting drive from Dorpat to Pleskau had taken twenty-four hours. We went home the rest of the way by train.

On the trip back in January 1876 I chose the land route per mail coach through Livonia, traveling in the company of Hermann Schlocker, an older physician, on a trip full of amusing incidents. For the first time in my life, however, I contracted bronchitis, which I struggled with for several months.

In my second year at college I had Theodor Lemonius as a roommate. It was the most fun of my college years. Through Doctor Isak Feiertag, later a physician who was

universally held in high regard in Bobruisk, who had at the time just passed his Rigorosum examination, I got acquainted with the family of Julius Henningson, a man of independent means, who occupied a large dwelling in the Köhlers' house in Compagnie Street not far from city hall square, and for whom I began to work as the tutor for two boys, his own son Robert, and his nephew Eugen. The conditions were 40 rubles per year in the beginning, later only 25 rubles, besides free lunch and dinner. I had a very hard time, however, and it took the better part of my leisure time. For several hours a day I had to busy myself with the boys, one of whom did not want to learn, while the other was less than gifted.

Because of the drills with the boys, I soon understood the catechism of the Lutheran religion, with all its questions and answers, by heart. On the other hand, I found a social circle with this family and their friends and relatives, so that these moments reconciled me to my extremely difficult and physically exhausting and stressful job. I enjoyed particularly spending time with Mrs. Amalie Henningson, whose bright and lively little daughter Else attracted not only me, but also the much older university and city gymnastics teacher Paul Buro.

In the Köhlers' house I lived with Lemonius on the top floor in an apartment consisting of two rooms. The front room, our work- and drawing-room, was a huge space with five windows looking out on the Embach, from where we had a wonderful view of the city

and far out onto the land, in the direction of Carlowa. Lemonius was very gifted in music, could express his fantasies on the piano for hours, but had never actually received piano lessons .A spinet was procured and our friend Josef Hamburg (Josef Hamburg, later a practicing physician in Berlin, died 1812), chosen as the piano teacher. The huge room, however, and our music gave us the peculiar idea to organize a ball, a *piddu*. We made careful preparations, sent out invitations to all the nice housemaids and cooks in the neighborhood, and arranged for ample good food and drink. The gentlemen, besides the two of us, were Lemonius' friends from the "Estonia" fraternity, physicians Leo Wenndrich and Mischa (Michael) Sologub, jurist Victor Enmann, historian Alexander Enmann, physician Woldemar Berg, jurist Richard Raudith, pharmacist Karl Grimm, and theologian Max Lemonius.. Dancing was lively; Hamburg bounced around to his heart's content and had a great time. It was all respectable. At three o'clock in the morning the ball ended, the ladies went home, but we stayed together and exchanged funny and witty comments about the cheerful evening.

In this apartment we stayed only for the first semester of 1876, however, since the landlord, pharmacist Köhler, needed the home for himself. I decided to live alone, to be able to work undisturbed for the "half-Philosophikum" exam. We separated, but our friendship continued and has lasted through the years. In the second semester of 1876, the third of my college days, I lived on Riga Street on the Stationsberg [station's

mountain], near the Henningson family, who had gone there to be able to more conveniently supervise the construction of their house, which later belonged to Dr. Ottow, in Pepler Street. In this house I wasn't very comfortable, however, because my landlady ran a lunch business for students; and the little gold ring Martha Höpker had given me was stolen from me there. In spite of this, I worked for the exam, which I passed, except in zoology, for which I hadn't prepared. From the fourth semester on I lived in a turret room in the Nicolais' house on Alt Street by Barklay Square, where later university dean Lieven had a nice house built. In this castle I spent three semesters of undisturbed, happy solitude, worked for the second half of the Philosophikum exam, which I passed in December 1877. Since I owned a skeleton, many fellow students visited me to work on anatomy together. For my birthday present on 15/27 September 1876 I got a Turkish nightshirt, a fez, and a Turkish pipe from my mother and friends in Mitau. In a boisterous mood we dressed the skeleton in these things, and stuck the pipe in its mouth. Because it stood close to the window and could be seen from the street, and we also often sat by the open window to work and to chat, the whole neighborhood knew us. Once I received a long, anonymous letter, written in verse, which began as follows:

> Just let the poor guy alone
> who there from morn to night
> stands at the window of your little room
> dressed up to mockery and slight.

So now, at the wish of the Children from Eva's Realm, as the poem was signed., we moved the skeleton from the window farther back into the room.

My undisturbed and happy solitude was soon to come to an end. The Taube family in Mitau, whom I esteemed highly, came to me with the request to take in their son Julius, my erstwhile pupil, now a disciple [student of] in medicine, as a roommate. Since the apartment I was living in was too small for two people, I rented another apartment in Petersburg Street, where until shortly before my Rigorosum I roomed with Julius Taube, who later became an esteemed physician in Moscow, Since I now absolutely had to be alone, to be able to work for the exam, Taube moved to another apartment.

Now came months of wonderful, albeit also exhausting mental labor with the rapturous feeling of a steady increase in knowledge. To this day, I remember with delight the happy days I then spent alone with my thoughts and in the company of my books. The winter of 1880/81 was severe and long; January and February brought a frost as low as 28 degrees R. [Réaumur] and I limited my errands to visits to the nearby restaurant in Petersburg Street where I ate my dinner. Just then I was plagued by material worries. For the first time in my student years, I had to live on debt. The good-natured waitress who provided my breakfast and a scanty evening meal advanced me the money out of her own pocket. I couldn't pay off my debt until I had accepted the position of physician in Subbath. My main worry was dinner times. By subscription you got ten dinner tickets

for 3 rubels. When the tickets were all gone, you hustled some from a fellow student, and at worst you owed the waiter a few tickets. In spite of all these material difficulties I was still in good spirits and happy and worked on indefatigably. Without particular incident—with the exception of the dry pharmaceutical chemistry with Dragendorff, which kept me in Dorpat three extra weeks—I passed the Rigorosum exam for the degree of doctor of medicine, and was asked to submit my dissertation.

I should mention a matter of pedantry here, which was still common in my days: the *Klausurarbeit*, a written examination that came after the actual examination was completely finished. This written exam, a medical treatise written behind closed doors, in Latin, was a remnant of the Middle Ages, when Latin was still the language of scholars. In Dorpat, doctoral dissertations were still written in Latin till the end of 1859. The last Latin dissertation was written by Karl Julius Zepernik about *Meletemata de Cataracta*, Dorpat 1859. The first German-language dissertation was written in the beginning of the year 1860 by Riga citizen August Albanus on the theme: *Experimentelle Untersuchungen über die Beziehungen des Halsstranges des Sympathikus zur Temperatur des Kaninchenohres* [experimental examination of the relationships of the spinal cord of the sympathetic nervous system and the temperature of a rabbit's ear].

As far as our *Klausurarbeit* was concerned, what took place was the same as I spoke of

with the high school final exam in mathematics in Mitau. After every one of us had drawn a question, the appropriate *Leibfuchs* [assistant, freshman gofer] appeared, received the topic through the keyhole, and took it to two students who had been previously selected for this purpose, a physician, who was to compile the test from the textbooks, and a philologist, who was to translate it into Latin. The name of the physician who wrote down the test for me, has escaped me, but the philologist was Joseph Treu. While we were locked in, we amused ourselves as pleasantly as possible, and received the completed tests back in the same way. Now we had passed all parts of the exam.

My studies were over. Now I had to enter real life. So was the life I had led up to now not a real life? Was it only a preparation for life? I dwelled on this thought in my quiet study. “You, Thor,” I told myself, “what is your hurry? Enjoy every moment quietly, for everything you live through, activity, rest, work and relaxation, your ‘preparation’ for life—everything is ‘life.’” Like a revelation this thought suddenly came to me, and now each moment of my life appeared precious. Such considerations, however, did not withstand the bustle of life. On sad and difficult days, in the turmoil of a physician’s profession, these thoughts—children of the quiet study—passed and evaporated .

My inner man had experienced a great transformation. The faithful, fervently praying boy who strictly observed the ritual customs had become, not without heavy inner

struggles, the freer-thinking student of the upper grades. At the start of my high school years I didn't carry my books to school myself on Saturdays, and I avoided even writing on those days. When the latter later turned out to be incompatible with school attendance, I took up the pen perforce, convinced that I was committing a great wrong. I carried the books myself, too, in the beginning hidden under my shirt, but then, angry over my hypocrisy, out in the open. It went the same for me with the dietary laws. When I ate a meat dish for the first time, at the Höpkers', I had to throw up. The Sabbath rest was so sacred to the Jews that even during war they did not always put up a defense. It is said that the Romans launched the last attack on the Holy City on a sabbath day because they assumed that resistance would be minimal. The many hundreds of barely observed [also: hard-to-observe] commandments and prohibitions with which the noble core of Jewry is fenced in as though by a thick, insurmountable hedge, have saved the Jewish people from extinction during many centuries of the most cruel and unprecedented persecution and repression; they have, however, held back the development of Jewry, so that it has petrified, as it were, through two millennia. From this the Jews will not fully recover until they can shape their lives voluntarily in their ancestral land, the land of their fathers, free from the fear of assimilation. "Such a throng I'd like to see/ free people standing on free soil."

To achieve this lofty goal, the totality of Jews on the entire earth must work together. Every Jew, without exception, whatever language he speaks, whatever philosophy or

party he may belong to, must be Zionist-minded. It is absolutely incomprehensible how a person can be a Jew and not be a Zionist. The Zionist conviction by no means excludes love and loyalty toward your homeland, where you were born and raised. On the contrary, it is intimately connected with it. An example of this is given by Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, when, inspired by his burning love for his fatherland, England, in his youthful works he glorified Jewry and Zionism. Only through Zionism will the presently splintered and scattered Jewry awaken to a new life and be healed. Only, Zionism must not degenerate into chauvinism.

Although busy with studies and teaching, I did not withdraw from the society and the joy of student life. On the one hand I maintained friendly contacts with the Jewish students, with whom I was connected by common interests and suffering and the above-mentioned charitable foundations, and on the other hand I possessed a small circle of friends I had gained in living with Lemonius. Besides the already mentioned fellow students, I want to name Georg Schnering, now in Reval; Eugen Loev, later educator at the Alexander gymnasium and teacher at the Katharinen School in Petersburg; Victor Enmann, deceased on September 15, 1910 while president of the Warsaw commercial court; his brother, historian Alexander Enmann, and later assistant librarian at the library of the Academy of Science in Petersburg, Johann Salomon. The latter was very dear to us, and was held in high esteem everywhere because of his delightful piano play. He was also a frequent guest in the home of curator Saburow. When he played he forgot everything around him and woke up as if from a dream when he finished playing.

Through him I got to really know Schumann.

With alcohol I had to be careful, since both my stomach and my head reacted violently to massive amounts. But once, for Salomon's birthday, I took the bad consequences into the bargain so I could really celebrate the occasion. The result was that the next morning I found myself in bed without the slightest idea how I had gotten there. Lemonius had taken me home, up the stairs, and into bed. We didn't enjoy Salomon long. At the beginning of the Russian-Turkish war he went to the military hospital Professor Wahl was in charge of in the Danube theater of war, and there he became ill with typhoid. Back home, he died on September 17, 1877, deeply mourned by all his friends, who held a wake for him. I still remember the eerie night before his burial, which I spent keeping watch by his casket, with his mourning and moaning mother in the next room.

My family life was limited to the Henningson family and their friends and relatives. It went without saying that I participated in all festivities in the entire circle of friends and family. What I liked best was spending the evenings quietly in my room, reading an interesting book. Besides medical books, I read historical works about the Jewish and Baltic past, as well as brochures about the burning issues of the day. At that time, the lay population of western Europe had come out against animal experiments in medicine, and a fierce fight had flared up. The waves of this struggle had spread into the Baltic

states, where chief pastor Lütkens in Riga and Baron Lüdingshausen-Wolff in Mitau eagerly branded animal experiments as needless torture of animals. Then, the answer to these attacks in the form of four open letters from Alexander Schmidt, our highly deserving professor of physiology, hit like a bomb..In a sarcastic manner and in strong words he logically and convincingly explained the necessity of animal experimentation for medicine and also for all of humanity. With eyes lit up and hot cheeks I read that piece, which from that hour silenced all attacks against scientific medicine. And now Karl Schirren's "Livonian Answer," because of which he had to flee Dorpat in the dead of night. Each word hit Juri Samarin's attacks like a club. Those who know Schirren's writing style and temperament, can imagine what impression this "treasonous" forbidden book left on youthful minds. I followed politics also, in which a great change began to take place. At the end of the seventies, the new conservatism was born, which held off the development of liberal thinking for many decades.

My roommate of that time was the already noted Julius Taube, a well-brought-up, very kind and pleasant fellow student. At home he was quiet and introverted, and he didn't thaw out till company came. In general he was solid and industrious, but once a month he took off. When he got money from home that was meant for the entire month, he went out, didn't come back till the next morning and was then broke the entire month.

I have already mentioned my relationships with the students. Outside the small circle of friends of German students and a few Jewish fellow students I had made friends with, I

maintained few relationships in the student community. Occasionally I attended the sessions of the student court and admired the dashing language, the eloquence, and cleverness of the students and the student judge. With the honors court I had nothing to do, either. The *fraternitas rigensis* was considered anti-Semitic. According to statute, no Jew was allowed to bear the colors of the Rigensis. Physician Leon Bernstein from Kischinew held that honor so high that he converted to Christianity to obtain the colors. The only fraternity that had Jewish color bearers was Curonia. During my college years Curone was the son of a Jewish shoemaker from Mitau, Alexander Sander, who was highly esteemed, but died as early as June 1878 in the Danube war theater as a victim of typhoid. After I left the university, Julius Klein from Mitau became a fraternity brother. The Poles were not very popular and were feared because of their pistol duels. The only one of the Jewish students who associated with them was Boris Ssolz from Kowno, later a physician in Georgenburg. Only with Wilhelm Mieszowski, subsequently a reformed [protestant] preacher in Birsen, did I enter into a closer contact. Then again I lived with a Russian, the son of a clergyman from Wjatka, Gregor Popow, quite congenially. Pupil of a religious seminary, Popow had come to Petersburg to study medicine. During the chance visit of a student he had been arrested with him and suspected of being a revolutionary, locked up in the Peter-Paul fortress. Set free after two years in prison, he received permission to study only in Dorpat. Dorpat was then considered the stronghold of loyalty to the Emperor. He had only learned German in the fortress, indeed, from a scientific book, the physiological letters of Karl Vogt. Our studies

were the connecting link between us; bonds of friendship, which rested upon mutual respect, soon followed. He was a richly gifted human being, an enormously hard worker, and possessed amazing medical knowledge for a student, so that at his examination pathologist Professor Arthur Boettcher thought he had the then already well-known Petersburg physiologist Popow before him. He became a star of Russian science, but died as an assistant at the Oldenburg hospital in Petersburg in December 1883 of diphtheria, with which he had become infected by a sick child when he conducted a scientific experiment.

Of course, singing was something we enjoyed doing in Dorpat. Fraternity members did not sing the student songs, but the “wild ones” sang them passionately. Even in my old age they still sound in my ears. Artistically, the Estonian quartet was accomplished; it consisted of Ernst Hoerschelmann, physician in Petersburg, and later in Wesenberg (heroic tenor); Arthur Baetge, physician in Reval; William Frey (died young); and Adolf Bergmann, inspector of Annen School in Petersburg. Even now I can hear one of their songs:

> Hail, o gracious beauty,
> This song is dedicated to thee,
> To thee our tones resound
> Hail, thou gracious maiden

Hail, hail, hail, many thousand times
From the flowers that blossom there
Who, awakened from sweet rest
softly glow in morning light,
Thou art the most beautiful rose.

My relationship with the professors was good, but because of my reserve I did not get close to most of them. Professor Ludwig Stieda, our teacher of anatomy, was known for his blunt comments, and was not particularly popular. He had on occasion so annoyed his compatriots, the people from Riga, with his sharp words that they wanted to bring him a cats' serenade, but fortunately they distanced themselves from that idea. However, he was an honest, pleasant, truth-loving man, who gladly accepted needy students without regard to religion or nationality. Himself an immensely hard worker, he required the same of his students, and achieved good mnemotechnical results. He didn't know, however, how to enliven his dry subject and so it was that his students

even with the best grades in anatomy, understood basically very little of it. Stieda, who with the industry of an ant had published nearly three hundred longer and shorter scientific papers, was also interested in anthropological questions, and gave me the topic for my doctoral dissertation: an anthropology of Lithuanians.

As far as the famous chemist Karl Schmidt is concerned, countless anecdotes circulated about his great absentmindedness. He wrote chemical formulas all over the blackboard, then turned around, said “Well,” and began his lecture, of which mainly the experiments were of interest to us. His simplicity and good-heartedness were touching. During tests he showed endless tolerance and could listen to the dullest nonsense. Failing one of his exams was extremely rare.

Zoologist Professor August Flor gave his lectures in the afternoon. The few students who came to them, slept along with him. He was well-known as a scholar and was very interested in insect life. He was quite angry at a guest whom he had lodged in his guest room, which had two beds, and who had sought refuge from the bugs from one bed to the other, because he had mixed up two different insect cultures, Spanish and Russian.

Konstantin Grewingk, professor of mineralogy, descended from an expatriate Swedish family, made the smallest demands on the medical students taking his exams. Once, though, the insolence of a student who went ahead with the examination without the

slightest idea of mineralogy, and who was known as a boozer, forced from him the remark, “Your knowledge is really amazing! All you know of mineralogy is the gutter!” [play on words: *Rinnstein* = gutter or trickle stone]. [Note: This statement must rest on a mistake. The family is by no means Swedish. The personality type as well as the name clearly contradicts this.]

Arthur Oettingen’s lectures on physics were not particularly interesting to the medical students, who were poorly prepared in physics. Arthur Oettingen, the youngest of three brothers (Alexander and Georg), a white-hot idealist, his head full of the rarest utopias, together with his older brothers (Alexander and Georg) was constantly engaged in dispute and battles of words. When all three were together in some gathering, they completely dominated the situation and no one else got a word in edgewise.

Alexander Schmidt with his big, heavy head, expressive but yet bizarre features, the large bald spot, the black glasses. Of an aggressive, biting humor, smashing and clubbing his adversaries down (see the open letter to the opponents of vivisection), and a good bar patron.There I got to know his assistant, Wilhelm Ostwald, who later became a European celebrity.

In the beginning we did our preparations in a single room, the old lab on the upper floor of the anatomy section, and we were therefore quite limited and cramped in space. Soon afterward, however, the large halls of the anatomical museum were made available to us, so that we now had more than enough space and air. Among the objects owned by the museum, such as a whale skeleton and several mammoth bones, was also an Egyptian mummy. The “historically” sensitive students took a small piece of the mummy’s tissue [or: fabric] as a memento, so I doubt that there is much of it left now. On the whole we worked hard on our preparations; often muscles and nerves were cut off which were still to be prepared. When Stieda looks through the single preparations the next morning and asks angrily who has done this, the answer comes from A.W. (Alexander Wiedauer, now a practicing physician in Lodz), who was not very skilled in anatomy, “The cat has done it.” Surprised, Stieda looks at him, and replies, “Right, and when the meat is missing, the cook always says, ‘The cat has done it.’” On another occasion, Count M. (Count Theodor Medem, owner of Stockmannhof), who studied medicine as a hobby, was to demonstrate the abdominal organs. “What is that, Mr. M.?” asked Stieda, pointing at the spleen. “That’s the heart,” Th. M. answered with the greatest conviction. With this performance M. finished his medical studies. Since then we never saw him in the anatomical lab again.

Karl Schmidt, called “Pacer” because of his far-swinging step, with lively eyes in his youthful face, short hair and a grey, pointed beard spoke horribly fast; the words just

bubbled out.

Flor wore a large flaphat ([slouch hat], and had a smooth-shaven, immovable face.

I was much more attracted to the subjects I became acquainted with after the half-Philosophikum exam. Physiology by Alexander Schmidt fascinated me extraordinarily. His presentation was halting—he often stuttered—but pithy. “Blood is at the same time pantry and cesspool.” Sentences such as this and others like it remain as though forged into my memory to this day. Besides, “Alexander the smith” was surrounded by the shining halo of celebrity; he was rightfully called “blood smith,” while in the area of blood clotting he had published epochal discoveries. *Fibrinogenic* and *fibrinoplastic* substances of the blood—these expressions were coined by him. I was also very interested in Rudolf Böhme’s lectures in pharmacology, hygiene, and dietetics.

After passing the Philosophikum I became a trainee [intern] in the university clinic in January 1878. I had the good fortune of being a student of Professor Ernst Bergmann for only a short time; he had just returned from the Russian-Turkish war and shortly thereafter received a call to Würzburg, since the negotiations with Petersburg had fallen through. But I have never forgotten the short time during which Bergmann was head of the surgery clinic. With fascinating charm, surrounded by the halo of fame, with his splendid stature, he stood triumphant in the auditorium of the surgical clinic and

depicted with enchanting eloquence the successes of the then still new antiseptic in war surgery. As proof he showed us a knee joint in which a piece of material from a uniform, torn off by a bullet, had become embedded, with the wound healing without festering. After his departure the clinic seemed dull, although a man of such great conscientiousness and serious effort as Eduard Wahl became his successor. Eduard von Wahl, the prototype of an Englishman in figure, appearance, facial features and expression, apparently imperturbable, with his well-groomed sideburns gave the impression of an English lord. In remarkable contrast to the imposing figure of their father, the plump little daughters had healthy, rosy, lively faces and enjoyed great popularity; one of them had significant talent for painting. For the teaching position in surgery another lectureship existed, that occupied by Wilhelm Koch from Berlin. With his bragging and self-glorification, he obviously had no use for Professor Wahl. After the untimely death of Professor Wahl he became his successor and remained in this position until well into the Russian era. A greater contrast than those two would be hard to imagine, even externally. But especially in their nature. Wahl—large in stature, prudent, calm, reserved, with his preference for everything English, and then Koch—short, restless, loud, always pushing himself in front.

My clinic teachers were Alfred Vogel and F.A. Hoffmann. Vogel's wife, Josephine, née Hefner, an erstwhile famous opera singer, was quite interested in the musical and social life of the city, His steady expression was, "But do you know?" These two (Vogel and

Hoffmann) were opposites in everything. Vogel, from Munich, the approachable south-German, and Hoffmann the reserved Prussian. The former was an outstanding practitioner and experienced diagnostician, whose succinct lessons and sayings colored my own practice for a long time; Hoffman, in contrast, was the theorist, the great dialectician, with the subtlety of his differential diagnoses. We students could not have had better teachers than these two; they completed each other and we profited greatly in theory and practice from these twins of science. With Vogel as well as with Hoffman I had a direct, personal relationship. With great patience Vogel listened to the complaints of the students about their illnesses, which changed with the pages of Niemeyer (an outstanding textbook on internal medicine) and dismissed them comforted with the designation “medical hypochondria.” And Hoffmann. I disturbed him so many times in his domestic bliss on Techelfer Mountain, when after dinner he sat with a cup of tea and I asked him to come with me to some smoky basement dwelling for a tricky-looking case in my outpatient practice. Never have I noticed any sign in him of displeasure at the disturbance.

In 1918 I came in contact with Professor F.A. Hoffmann about having my daughter Ellen study in Germany. Hoffman, who was then dean of the medical faculty in Leipzig, willingly agreed to admit Ellen, and also to support her admission in other ways.

Obstetrics and gynecology were taught by Johannes Holst, “Long John,” a giant of a

man with the legs of a stork and long strides, who didn't hide his feelings, and with his blunt, unvarnished comments did not even restrain himself with women. Holst still lived off the fame he had acquired as a young physician in a study of early pregnancy symptoms. The clinic, however, looked desolate. We had so little to work with, that for one laboring woman there were three or four students who all had to learn on her. The assistant was Holst's nephew, Johannes Meyer, even then an able gynecologist, who had himself an assistant. Ferdinand Gräber functioned as such at the time. Besides these two another three students watched the birth, and all these people and a midwife examined—and not infrequently—the woman giving birth. When the water broke with a pop, the enormous Gräber was so startled that he crashed into the opposite wall with a scream. We shook with laughter about the giant's fright.

Gori (Georg) Oettingen, the finest mind of the three brothers, later mayor, with a slight lisp, earlier also a principal [or: university president], with a sharp and quick wit. From Georg Oettingen's memoirs: *As a principal* [university president] *in Dorpat*. "In February 1868 I was elected as a *Rektor*, as a successor to the suddenly deceased Professor Guido Samson. During that time Juri Samarin's notorious book about the 'Baltic border states' appeared and stirred up general indignation in the outer provinces. Karl Schirren, professor of history 1858–'69 wrote the widely known reply 'Livonian Answer to M. Juri Samarin.' The book caused a great sensation and people feared the most serious measures against Schirren. Schirren quietly went abroad. With my car and in the

company of a friend he left for Riga by night. I was not a little surprised to see him at my door after only a few days. ‘I forgot my comb case,’ he said to justify his return. Later Schirren left the country and occupied a chair in history in Kiel. Keyserling was the curator then. In 1870 he submitted his retirement and received it. His successor was Gervais, until then governor in Suwalki. His suspicious nature did not make a good impression. He soon changed his residence to Riga and he was a beginning (?) Russificator for Dorpat. A favorable wind for the Baltic provinces (1872) blew in with Saburow.”

From Gori (Georg) Oettingen we learned in a very practical way the small technical and therapeutic tricks of ophthalmology. When, however, he was succeeded by Eduard Raehmann, we did hear beautifully composed lectures, but diseases of the eye remained practically *terra incognita*. In the year 1880 I wanted to work on the topic given me by Raehmann, “Examination of the physiological functions of the periphery of the retina” as a submission for the gold medal, with which Raehmann was in complete agreement, then had to relinquish the project because of my shortsightedness, or so I was told. Theodor Kubli, Raehmann’s assistant at the time, had pushed his friend Butz forward for the essay instead of me.

A few more of my teachers must not remain unmentioned. Gustav Reyher took great pains to teach us clinical examination methods. Later he gave up a large practice and a

beautiful house in Domgraben, to live out his life in the middle of the vineyards by the Rhine. From Leonhard Kessler, a Moravian, who didn't decide to study medicine until his thirtieth year, we learned obstetrical phantom exercises, and last but not least, Professor Emil Rosenberg introduced us with his witty lectures into the history of development [or: evolution] and histology, and made us acquainted with the practical methods of microscopic anatomy. To this circle of teachers, who would have adorned any university in the West, I owe my education in medicine and the natural sciences. The images of all the men described are vivid in my mind, as if I sat at their feet only yesterday, listening attentively to their words. "You bring with you the images of happy days and many dear shadows rise."

Postscript: Dragendorff, the famous pharmacologist, with whom we doctors had to do "pharmaceutical chemistry," had a small head and a big mouth, which was reminiscent of cannibalism.

Bernhard Körber, guileless, naive in a childlike way, with his “section technique for newborns,”` lost without his notebook, incapable of speaking off the cuff, liked to tell of his life as a ship’s doctor on the frigate *Pallada*, and of the so-called tail parade. He was recommended by Professor Stieda for the subject of legal medicine, and had really been chosen.

Professor Wiskowatow, with the beautiful head of the Caucasian race (pure Germanic type), blond, with blue eyes, long, well-groomed blond beard, was just an extra among the professors. He was supposed to speak Russian with the students, in which with his

good-natured disposition he totally failed. The opposite of his Lohengrin type was his Italian dark-eyed and dark-haired wife. Curator Sabürow, later Minister of Information [Popular Education], was extremely popular in Dorpat. Together with his wife, Lolja, countess Sologub, the daughter of the Russian poet, he made his home a gathering place of professors, nobility, Russian aristocracy, and youthful students. Mischa Sologub, Mrs. Saburow's brother, had lived in Estonia, and belonged to the circle of friends I had gained from living with Lemonius.

The concerts in the university auditorium, which I attended whenever possible, were memorable. I never missed the rehearsals of the amateur orchestra, which consisted mainly of professors, in addition to a few professional musicians. It was amusing to see how the professors handled the individual instruments. Arthur Oettingen and historian Brückner [sic].

THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF MY MEDICAL PRACTICE IN THE COUNTRY

I had passed the exam for the degree of doctor of medicine on 12 May 1881. That is the day from which I date my professional practice as a physician. Of course I was happy to have reached the goal of my many years of work, but the joy I had felt after graduating from secondary school wouldn't come this time. The explanation was not hard to find. Way back when, I had arrived at the university, filled with great hopes, with a small, self-earned capital of 300 rubels. Now, devoid of all financial means, already having lived off debt for nearly two years, I had to give up my most ardent wish for further scientific and clinical education. Those same wretched circumstances greeted me when I returned home as a young doctor. The situation had deteriorated substantially because my mother, close to completely blind, could hardly make a living anymore. On the evening of my arrival I became ill with a violent attack of the chills, with a high fever and accompanying sweating. The next evening things were the same. It was clear that on the journey home, by mail coach through Livonia, I had contracted malaria. It was quite hot, and I had therefore traveled lightly dressed. And the infection could have been caused by mosquito bites, as we now know. For a long time I diligently took quinine, and the attacks did not come back. As a memento of those times I kept an enlarged spleen and a left-side neuralgia above the eyelid that continues nearly to this day.

Summer was here, and it drew me, as in earlier years, to the beach, which I especially

loved. For entire days I wandered around the forest, which was still untouched and did not, as today, echo with the noise of summer visitors wherever you go. For the price of fifteen rubels I rented a small room for the summer season, with a minute veranda on streetcar line 11 on Karlsbad Street, and displayed my office hours (hung out my shingle). In the whole summer I did not get to see a single patient, however. I shared the room with an artistic young man from the Lithuanian countryside, F. Goetz, who later went to Germany and became principal of a school in Hanover. I received many invitations, was greeted most cordially by mothers, and got meaningful glances from charming young girls. The summer passed in the most pleasant way. Day trips, picnics, concerts, and visits filled the delightful days of our brief summer. But the end of summer brought a disappointment. I had been mistaken about someone with whom I had remained passionately infatuated for nearly a decade, or so it seemed to me, though subsequently, this opinion of mine turned out to be in error. The emotional stress, however, left by this disillusionment, was alleviated by the pressing demands of life and of my newly beginning practice.

I returned to Mitau and after some consideration decided to accept a parish post in Subbath in Kurland, which was offered to me by the Mitau district physician, Dr. Gustav Otto, and for which my immediate predecessor there, Dr. Max Strauch, who later became a physician in Moscow, had warmly recommended me. I would have liked to write my dissertation and got more clinical education, but I had no money whatsoever,

and I had to try hard to secure a living for me and my mother, who was rapidly going blind.

For a short time I saw a star of hope that could have fulfilled my wishes in every direction, but which fizzled out because of my religion. Professor Ludwig Stieda had warmly recommended me to Dr. Gregor Brutzer, director of the mental institution Rothenberg near Riga, where an assistant's position became available because of the departure of Dr. Klöpffel. Brutzer made me the most substantial promises, let me participate in patient visits, and after a few days presented me with the decision. Dressed up with embarrassed reasons, it turned out negative. My medical career might have taken an entirely different turn if the narrow-mindedness of the time had not excluded me from clinical practice. At the time, in 1881, there were no Jewish assistants anywhere in the Baltics. In Dorpat clinics the assistant's positions were mainly occupied by fraternity brothers, and for a Jewish student or physician it was pretty hopeless to obtain such a position. The same spirit of exclusion reigned throughout the Baltic region. Only gradually were a few single physicians—such as Max Schönfeldt in Rothenberg in 1887—successful in breaking through that barrier. In Dorpat, Jewish assistants were not seen in university clinics till the nineties, when Russian professors were in charge of the clinics. Among the clinical directors who broke through this prejudice was Dr. Paul Klemm in Riga, unforgettable as a human being and as a physician.

Now I was left no other choice. I went to Subbath, to test and be tested. The journey there took so long I could almost have reached Berlin in the same amount of time. From the last railroad station, Abeli, the stretch Radziwilischki–Kalkuhnen was a carriage ride of another 10 *werst*, which I covered on an awful road in a shaking wagon belonging to a Jewish driver.

The village of Subbath consists of two parts, Old- and New-Subbath, which are connected by a small bridge across a narrow part of beautiful Subbath Lake. I arrived first in Old-Subbath, the better part of the village, with single-story houses, usually more like shacks, where the Catholic church was also located. The whole place was a miserable hole, inhabited by poor Jews, Lithuanians, Latvians, and so-called Muchobroden, a nomadic, mixed people of Latvians, Lithuanians, and Russians. Here I had to spend my life. It made my heart ache within my breast. When I drove up, the pharmacist, Alexander Otto, an older man and a confirmed bachelor with a bad complexion, a brother of Mitau's district physician Dr. G. Otto, grimaced with a bittersweet smile as he looked at me. The best thing about him was his little black dachshund, whom I soon befriended.

One evening I was invited over to Baltsensee by Baroness Marie Budberg. For the first time I found myself in an exclusively noble circle. Maybe I was very tired, perhaps a little

inhibited, for I felt slightly intoxicated, although I hadn't had a drink. Nonetheless, it seemed that my debut did not turn out too badly. I faced critical looks, mainly from ladies. There was the old mother, Baroness Korff, who subsequently always replied to my hand kiss according to Polish custom with a kiss on the forehead; then the current holder of the hereditary estate, Baroness Marie Budberg, with her three daughters, Mary, Gela, and Thekla; Furthermore there was her sister-in-law, likewise a widowed Baroness Budberg. Among the gentlemen present was Baron Leonce Stempel, the authorized representative of the estates of Walther-Wittenheim, and old Baron Korff, Marie Budberg' uncle, the administrator of the large Budberg estates of Baltensee, Garsen, and Gnitzgaln. The next morning a three-year contract was signed between Baron Leonce Stempel and Baron Sacken-Gulben on the one hand and me on the other. I received an annual salary of 1,100 rubels (without a residence and without any benefits), and for this I was to provide medical care on twelve large estates—estate owners, house personnel, and farm laborers.

After the contract signing I again felt the anxiety of days ago. It was a warning. Should I heed it? Entirely broke, my grandmother blind, my mother nearly so—could I and should I follow the wish of my heart to seek further scientific education, and—the ideal that was always before my eyes—choose an academic career?

I was to start the job on 1 September 1881. Before that, there was still a lot to take care

of. I bought surgical and obstetric instruments from Dr. G. Otto from the estate of his relative, Dr. Ernst Worms of Bauske, who had died of typhoid in the year 1878. Though not new, the instruments were of outstanding quality, manufactured by the famous Lutter factory in Paris. As a city boy, I had no idea how to dress for fall and winter in the country. So, from the same estate Dr. Otto sold me a worn sheepskin coat which was way too big for me, and which later turned out to be quite unsuitable. It still amazes me that I did not become seriously ill at the time, since in winter I came home from my trips cold through and through every time, drenched to the skin, my whole body shaking with cold, and with severely aching hands and feet. But the resilient youthful constitution overcame these complaints and ills. My stomach, however, by nature sensitive, revolted against the crude, quite dreadful fare to which I was subjected as boarder of pharmacist Otto. My long-term stomach ailments date from that time.

Unprepared in every respect I had come to the country. My fragile body could not withstand the stress of a country practice, my clothing was unsuitable, and the worst was that I did not understand a word of the local tongue, whether Latvian or Lithuanian. I did not understand one word of what the sick people told me, as though they spoke Chinese. All I could do was put them on the examination table and examine them carefully from head to foot. Then I'd give them the prescription with precisely formulated instructions, which the pharmacist had to translate for them. That the practice was unsatisfactory to me under those circumstances is understandable. I sounded like

mockery to me when my patients thanked me for my good diagnoses and successful treatment. On the estates the ladies of the manor served as my interpreters. Every estate had a well-stocked home pharmacy, and the ladies were often better informed about the medications than I. In the beginning of my practice it seemed to me that I didn't understand anything about medicine at all, but I didn't lose heart, and I did not fall into the pessimism of a Weressa Jew [Wikenti Weressa was the author of *Confessions of a Physician at a Dead End*, or *Confessions of a Dead-end Physician*].

Gradually, as I learned some Latvian and could take a medical history, and as the clinical picture began to become discernible to my mental vision, my certainty and satisfaction increased also. I was comforted by the thought that all young physicians who were not fortunate enough to become further clinically educated, gradually achieved sound knowledge and ability through hundredfold experience and diligent observation. I also felt very unprepared for obstetrics. If I felt that uncomfortable about it, though I had applied myself so sincerely during my student years, I asked myself how many a colleague might be faring, whom I knew to have entered practice with totally insufficient knowledge.

I was quite annoyed at an army surgeon who in an extraordinarily brazen manner conducted a general practice in neighboring Oknist, a Lithuanian village now belonging to Latvia, and who was very much in demand. My business didn't come close. Days

went by when I did not get to see a single patient. The village itself with its poor population offered only a small and not very lucrative practice, which I conducted either free of charge or at a maximum of 30 kopecks per house call—which already constituted a raise in rates that had been introduced by my predecessor, Max Strauch. Then again there were times when I was on the road from early morning till late at night, day after day, mostly in uncomfortable vehicles, traveling on good roads, I must say, in Kurland, but on the most terrible country roads [*Knüppelwegen* = elevated passageways or trails through swampy areas, reinforced by branches and logs] in neighboring Lithuania, from estate to estate, and from servants to servants. In both cases, during the inactivity at home and especially on the endless, difficult trips, I was tormented and consumed by boredom. In the beginning, as long as the weather was good, I rejoiced in the sight of the beautiful landscapes, so richly varied, which that region, the Kurish highlands, offered me.

A land of lovely hills, lakes strewn with mineral aggregates, the autumn forest, captivating with its multitude of color nuances, the beautiful view of the fertile land from the heights, a friendly little church in the distance peeking out from its green surroundings, a farmhouse beckoning hospitably—all this was of great interest to me, a city dweller. When, however, the bad weather began, when the black, impenetrable night came early, when traveling for hours and hours through bottomless, sodden streets was possible only at a walking pace, with the accompanying music of the

splashing of horses' hooves in the water and mud of the street, sitting on the shaky wagon with hands and feet aching with cold, then I thought I could not bear it anymore, and cursed the moment that I had come here. But my youthful courage won out, time and again, I found humor in every situation, and I shook with laughter when the coachman from Prohden through a careless turn of the sled dumped both of us in the soft snow. But often it turned out different.

Once on a trip to Gulben, an estate of Baron Sacken's, during a snowless frost on hard-frozen soil, the horse bolted and against the pulling back of the reins broke the iron pins that connected the front wheels with the wagon. I was hurled violently onto the ground from the high vehicle, suffered a contusion of the inner organs, and hurt so badly that I remained lying motionless on the country road for a long time. The coachman, too, was injured, but recovered sooner and went on his way to catch the horse that had taken off with the front wheels. I had great difficulty making it the rest of the way to the estate. The consequences of this contusion were with me for a considerable time. Another time—it was during the snowmelt of early spring—I had left Subbath in the morning and had successfully crossed the little stream bordering the village, though it was still covered with ice. When, however, I returned home late in the evening, the brook had shed its ice cover and the little stream had meanwhile become a raging, wide river. What to do? Not a person in sight anywhere. Go back, and spend the night at some estate? No, I was too tired for that, and it was also raining buckets. My driver then

suggested that we cross the stream on horseback. No sooner said than done. We unharnessed the horse, I mounted it, with the coachman behind me, and thus the clever animal swam with us across the stream.

In the first days of my residence in Subbath, on a windless, mild September morning, I was picked up by a Lithuanian for his remote farm. A little tense and full of interest I began my first doctor's visit in strange surroundings, to complete strangers whose language I did not know, led by a man with whom I could not exchange a word. I rode for hours through silent forests, across a large lake, which we crossed in a barge, again through woods, mountains, and valleys, till we finally reached the outlying farm. And then that long, seemingly endless road back again.

On this my first house call, from which I didn't return till late at night, the thought came to me that it would be easy to attack me and rob me of my few coins. But I was told that in that area, still so dangerous then, a doctor was supposed to be safe—no one would harm him. And so, with full confidence therein, I traveled, without any weapon whatsoever, to the most remote areas to people completely unknown to me, and even undertook trips alone during the night, without a coachman. Once I returned with my young wife at one o'clock at night from a visit to Gotthard Lysander in Prohden . When I turned from the road to Prohden into the country road near the windmill, suddenly, as though they had sprung from the earth, two men stood on either side of the wagon and

laid their hands on the reins. “*Doktor jedet*,” (doctor traveling) I cried out in my anxiety, and as if by a magic formula both men stepped back silently and let us pass.

In the dreariness of life in Subbath it was a refreshing change to me to stay at the estates, where I was invigorated by the association with cultured and charming people. In Assern lived Mrs. Von Walther-Wittenheim, a most intelligent, though in money matters a quite particular lady, whose judgment was greatly valued. There in Assern stood a huge, magnificent, two-story ballroom, with a railing for the musicians, which the late owner, Captain von Walther-Wittenheim had constructed onto the old estate building. To my knowledge, the ballroom was never used during my three-year stay in that area. The captain had rendered a great service through the maintenance and improvement of the country roads within the boundaries of his large estate. You drove there as on a parquet floor. At the time, every innkeeper had to maintain a specific section of the road. In neighboring Lithuania, where this institution did not exist, the roads were in the most miserable condition, tormenting people and animals. I was reminded of the ballroom in Assern when I was called to an inn during my practice in Mitau. When I drove up, the landlord met me barefooted, which is not surprising in the country. His sick wife lay in a moderately large, well-lit room. The interior was in the usual country style. After my examination I was shown into the adjoining room. How great was my amazement when I found myself in a high, gigantic ballroom, which was flooded with light through a series of windows. There was no furniture in the room

besides a few chairs and a table, so that it looked uninviting. The room had not been added on, but, as the host told me, constructed according to the original plans for the house which he had had built a few years before. Nowhere else have I seen such a luxurious space on any farm or inn. They lived in the Mitau district in comfortable, often quite cushy conditions. When a grown daughter, who had been to school in Mitau, was in the house, I saw upholstered furniture and a piano in this parlor as well.

But in the less prosperous Subbath parish servants were also in fairly good shape, and owned, with exceptions of course, comfortable, roomy dwellings. Laborers on the large estates also lived in adequate conditions; the rich landowners had put up new houses for the workers, which were satisfactory from a hygienic standpoint and had sufficient air and light. The laborers also had time to care for the piece of land that had been allotted to their use. Each of them had a cow and a couple of pigs, poultry, and so forth. They were well dressed and appeared to be quite content with their lot. In contrast, on some isolated smaller estates that did not have the money to build new buildings, things often looked pretty bad in the workers' homes. Little cottages, more like shacks, with a few narrow, humble rooms, insufficiently lit by small windows, where often eight or nine persons lived together, made a mockery of all laws of hygiene. When illness struck in such families, which was not at all rare, they often took a lingering, often malignant course in spite of the farmers' strong constitution. In such places I found thick, stinking air, so that once, impulsive as I was at the time, I broke a windowpane in spite of the

freezing weather just to be able to get some fresh air to the typhoid patient who was lying there.

The son-in-law of Mrs. Von Walther-Wittheim, Baron Leonce Stempel, the authorized representative [possibly: administrator] of the Walther-Wittenheim hereditary properties, lived at Sussey, the other large Walther estate, He was an amiable host, and an outstanding pianist. I usually stayed for the night at Sussey, which was 18 *werst* from Subbath, and enjoyed the compositions of Richard Wagner, which Stempel interpreted masterfully. His wife was a wise, serious, charming lady. The house was adorned by his niece, Baroness Alice Brunnow, in whom beauty, charm, and cheerfulness competed with one another.

Very soon I felt at home in Baltensee, thanks to the hospitality and the genuine kindness of Baroness Marie Budberg, who had her dowager's estate there. She was a practical, sensible, and straightforward lady, and thanks to her demonstrated confidence in me I was able to overcome the difficulties of my practice more easily. In that still so conservative time she was so unbiased that she repeatedly stressed to me that when it came to her child's happiness, social rank and religious differences were not take into account . . .

. . . But I have got ahead of myself. Since besides my work in the practice I still pursued

a scientific goal in order to fulfill my life completely, I was pressed to find and develop a topic for my dissertation. To that end I traveled to Dorpat at Christmas 1881/82. It was a long train ride, first north via Dünaburg, Pleskau, and Gatschina (near Petersburg) and from there southwest to Dorpat. I had two topics in mind that I could work on in the country, one biostatistical and one anthropological. For the first topic I made contact with Dr. Bernhard Körber, professor of [state] pharmacology and legal medicine, who had himself worked on such themes when he was a country doctor. He had not done much in science, but he was a conscientious and energetic teacher, who took reasonable pains with us and taught us the technique of legal autopsy well. Great hilarity was caused by the title of his book *Section technique for newborn children*. He had composed his lectures from the textbooks, and was quite helpless without his notebook. Once we had a fun time. Körber came into the auditorium, sat down at the lectern, and groped in his briefcase for his notebook. But, oh no, it was not there. More and more nervous and agitated, he kept searching in his briefcase. Finally, when we started getting amused, he shouted, “Gentlemen, I have forgotten my notebook, I am going to get it.” After nearly fifteen minutes he was back, and calmly began his lecture, which he read faithfully from his notebook. As a ship’s doctor on board the frigate *Pallada* he had sailed around the world, and he couldn’t stop telling us about it. He described graphically his examination of the sailors for sexually transmitted diseases, which he then listed in order. A classmate of Professor Ludwig Stieda, he had been nominated by him for the professorate, after Dr. Weisch from Kalische had turned it

down. As a young country doctor in northern Livonia he had done some biostatistical work. He lent me the manuscript he had written at the time as a guide. From Professor Stieda I obtained as my topic “anthropology of Lithuanians.” So now I was spoiled for choice.

With the biostatistical topic things went against me from the start, since on the trip back, between the railroad stations of Pleskau and Dünaburg my luggage as well as Körber’s manuscript were stolen. I had fallen into a deep sleep I couldn’t shake off, although I was nonetheless aware of people coming and going. I was probably drugged with some narcotic. When I had finally rid myself of the drugged sleepiness, I noticed to my great consternation that my suitcase was missing from the net. I didn’t regret the certainly painful loss of my clothes and underwear as much as the loss of Körber’s manuscript and my well-filled notebook, which were irreplaceable. I arrived in Illuxt sad, but I did not give up. In order to develop a biostatistical topic I had to obtain access to the church records of various religious sects. The Catholic vicar in Illuxt, whom I got to know as a charming, enlightened clergyman, gave me a letter of recommendation to the Catholic priest in Subbath, whom I also knew as a patient. Nonetheless, he still kept me from looking through the church records under all sorts of pretexts.

The Jewish *Metrikbuch* [Here a religious vital registry], which the rabbi made available to me without hesitation, yielded great results. For every 100 female births there were

125 to 130, in some years even 140 male births, while the normal ratio is 100–106. The explanation of this rare surplus of boys among the Jews of Subbath very soon became clear upon closer research.

Registration of boys by the rabbi was completed at the time of circumcision (*circumcisio*), whereas the registration of girls was often neglected. Registration of children's deaths was also often omitted, so that the registries, from which the draft lists were taken, still showed names of persons who had long since died, as early as in infancy. The results of these carelessly kept registries, led to a conviction within government institutions that the Jews were dodging the draft in great numbers. Because in the small towns and villages the Jewish registries were similarly inaccurate, the circumstance ensued that indeed for the nation as a whole, Jews served in the army in numbers that did not correspond to their population percentages , because others were enlisted to take the place of those who had not been registered as deceased.

The church registries of Lutheran pastor Letz were also kindly made available to me. I realized, however, that my work would just show the imperfection of statistical gaps, and I therefore gave up on it. Many years later, during my practice in Mitau, I tackled biostatistics again, which effort was supported by the material from Pastor Gustav Sesemann and the Lutheran consistory.

Now I turned to Professor Stieda's anthropological theme, without the slightest idea of how many difficulties and dangers that would entail. I began to study Tobinard and Broca, that is, I struggled through them, page by page, dictionary in hand, because I knew little French. Equipped wit a measuring tape, a yardstick, for body length, a calliper, and Broca's measuring instrument for head sizing, I began my research. On to the Lithuanians who came to my office. Their eyes widened when, after they had told me their complaints of a stomach ailment and I had examined them, I very carefully measured body length, the diameter of the head, width and length of the nose, mouth, arms, legs, fingers, toes, and so forth. They were especially impressed when I measured the distance between the outstretched arms, sideways, the so-called wingspan. Gradually, the following legend about me spread among the Lithuanians: I was supposed to be an agent of the Russian government in behalf of the Turkish sultan, and it was my assignment to search out and register the men as soldiers for the sultan's army, the women and girls, however, for his harem, and the outstretched arms at the end represented the oath with which I bound them. The immediate result of this rumor was that the Lithuanians disappeared from my clientele, and I suffered a painful financial loss. It gets better yet. Professor Rudolf Virchow, who conducted anthropological research with children in East Prussia, a far more culturally advanced area [than Latvia], likewise reports funny and serious episodes in connection with his anthropological research, stemming from the superstitions and credulity of the country folk in that area.

I now searched out the Lithuanians in their villages and estates. On these trips I was accompanied by young Apsahn, the son of the parish midwife, who was an apprentice at the Subbath pharmacy. On these scientific excursions he carried my measuring instruments, and at my dictation filled out the forms that recorded measurements. In the beginning I still had some success in the villages, but soon their fear of me was so great that I had only to show myself in a village to scare everybody off and find all doors locked. It is amazing, since I ventured into the villages unprotected, that they didn't kill me, or at least beat me up. On the other hand, my hunt for Lithuanians heated up the more they avoided me.

On the estates I had better luck. By virtue of the authority of the estate owners, I often managed at the first try—especially in remote places, where my bad reputation had not yet penetrated—to measure a number of Lithuanians. Often we had some funny scenes. So it was on the estate of Countess Ledochowska. After the servants in the buildings, fortunately, were measured, I went to the farm laborers, accompanied by the countess, and my assistant. But what a sight awaited us: men, women, children, some forty or fifty people, rapidly left their homes, made a break for it across the field and into the nearby forest, only to disappear therein.

The next occasion didn't end in such an amusing manner, however. I had joined Baron

Leonce Stempel and his nephew, Ernst von Walther-Wittenheim, on the trip to the Walther estate Krewna in Kowna, to measure Lithuanians. Right after our arrival, in the late afternoon, I measured the entire house staff, about ten persons. Happy at the result I had achieved, I was awakened from sleep early the next morning, however, by a lot of noise and loud voices. The whole house staff, led by the procurator [manager of the estate, reeve] had told arendator [one who farms the rents or revenues] Stern that they were quitting their jobs. The reeve had thrown the keys to him and shouted that they weren't going to let themselves be sold, and had then left the house with threats, with all the maids. The arendator was desperate, and I was terribly embarrassed to have put him in such an unpleasant position. But I couldn't undo what was done. In the course of the morning Baron Stempel and his nephew and his arendator rode into the forest to see a new planting of saplings. I stayed behind all alone in the empty house, classifying the anthropological data I had obtained the night before. I was so absorbed in my work that I forgot everything around me. Suddenly I heard a sound in the adjoining hall and saw the giant reeve, massive as a tree trunk. I can still see him before me, this big man with the black hair and beard, his face twisted in rage, menacing fists raised against me. I recognized the danger of my position—alone at the mercy of the fanatically superstitious man. But I kept my wits about me, and faced him in the hall, with nothing as a weapon but my fearlessness. Suddenly I spotted the pistol case of Baron Stempel on the piano. The next moment I had the pistol in my hand. That changed the picture. The reeve began to withdraw and left the room and the house scolding and shouting. I

was saved at least from a beating [abuse].

Another encounter with Lithuanians, in Rakischni, was even more colorful. In the above-named little town lived an architect by the name of Werner, brought there by Count Przedzecki, the owner of Rakischni, who, on the count's orders, had built a Catholic church and a mausoleum. I had cured him of a serious rheumatic fever, and since then we had associated with one another. He kept inviting me to visit him in Rakischni, where he wanted to support my anthropological research to the best of his ability. On a beautiful autumn day I set out with my assistant. When we arrived in the little town at dusk, I realized that the recruiting committee was already in session. I hurried over there, since I hoped to find a rich harvest of recruits. Although the military physician in attendance was sympathetic, it was already too late. I now drove toward architect Werner's, who welcomed me with great hospitality, and presented his entire household staff and other Lithuanians from the neighborhood to be measured.

I had high expectations of the following days, when a Catholic religious celebration was to take place. For this occasion thirty Catholic clergymen and many ordinary people were expected. Early in the morning I paid a formal visit to the local Catholic priest, informed him of my desires, and found him to be an amiable, cultured man, who had already heard about my work, and promised to recruit support for me among his colleagues. Next, he invited me to join them for the meal in such a hospitable manner

that I could not resist his friendly urging. About thirty well-fed clergymen took their places around a table loaded to the breaking point with food and drink, and generated an appetite the likes of which I had never seen. Untold courses of the tastiest dishes of fowl, wild game, and other meats, puddings and sweet dishes, fruit, liquor, and wines were brought in by numerous agile servants and disappeared without a trace after diligent chewing by God's warriors. Impatiently I awaited the end of the abundant meal, so I could finally start my measuring work. But the pickings were lean. The clergymen, sluggish after the rich meal, would allow only their heads to be measured. So as not to lose any more valuable time, I went back to Werner's house nearby, where meanwhile my assistant had used offers of money to lure people for measuring. Not only were the large rooms of the house crammed with Lithuanians, but they also stood in dense groups in front of the house on the street and pushed on into the house. I sat at the table with my assistant in the last room, and waited for things to come.

It was clear that the mob had adopted a hostile attitude, and that there could be no question of measuring. Their posture got more and more threatening, and the people in back pushed them closer and closer to the table. The situation became dubious when they answered my request to either let themselves be measured or else leave the house with clamoring and abusive shouts. We had no time to lose. I whispered to Apsahn to get a police officer over there right away, at all costs. I remained alone and appeared to be calmly working on my papers. For a while everything remained quiet,

but they started to howl and push closer, hedging me in on all sides. I found myself defenseless against a riled-up mob. As yet no one had laid a hand on me, but the next moment could decide between life and death. At the critical moment the policeman arrived, and delivered me from the fanatically agitated people who had invaded the place. I didn't stay in Rakischni much longer. When the mob had gone, we set out on the way home. It was already getting dark. We could not clearly distinguish objects anymore. We weren't far from the little town yet when shots flashed and banged and whistled by my head. I raised my revolver, which I had been carrying with me recently on my trips. But in the darkness no one was to be seen. The horse, startled by the shot, took off at a fast trot and quickly took us out of the frightening environment.

That was pretty well the last adventure with the Lithuanians. I put an end to the measuring and began to prepare the material.

The monotony of my life in Subbath was pleasantly interrupted in July 1882 by the visit from three well-known academics, Professors Ludwig Stieda from Dorpat, Adalbert Bezzenberger from Königsberg, and pastor Dr. August Bielenstein from Doblen[z], who were traveling through the eastern provinces for studies in archaeology and linguistics. Professor Stieda, with whom I kept up a correspondence because of my anthropological work, had announced this visit well ahead of time. Together with the pharmacist and his two visiting sisters I prepared for my guests. Whatever could be

rustled up in this poor hole in the ground in the way of delicatessen, we served to the guests, who felt really well at my house after the long, exhausting journey.

Pastor Bielenstein, who was then already collecting the building blocks for his comprehensive work *Boundaries of the Latvian Tribes*, kept his notebook at the ready; Professor Stieda spiced up the meal with his humor and his good stories. Really cute was his answer to the nosy question as to the purpose of their trip from the Jewish coachman who had brought them from the railroad: “We deal in old things.” Professor Bezzenberger, who had originally taken a lively part in the conversation, gradually became quiet, and beckoned to me to follow him. Because of exhaustion he had become ill of a nervous gastric problem. After I had made him comfortable in my small room, the rest of us went on our way under the guidance of parochial schoolteacher [or: teacher at a convent or monastery school] Gerkau, to check out a mountain location near Subbath (Pilskaln), which was also called Galgenberg [gallows mountain], because in earlier times criminals were hanged there. Pastor Bielenstein measured it in all directions, and carefully wrote down all the measurements in his notebook.

The winter of 1881/82 was so mild that I could travel by sled only a few times the whole winter. At the end of January 1882 the sunshine was so warm that manure bugs [formal name?] flew around the streets of Subbath. On March 8 we had a temperature of 10 degrees Réaumur in the shade and the first thunderstorm. The summer of 1882 was

extraordinarily hot. From a mostly cloudless sky he sun beat down on me on my trips, making me dizzy, and I often staggered when I left the vehicle. And at the time the number of trips was endless, for in Subbath and the entire area raged an epidemic of typhoid.

In the fall the most important event of my life took place, my engagement. Up to a short time before, nothing had been as far from my mind as marriage and matrimony. Matchmakers could not be discouraged from making the arduous journey to me in Subbath, but I laughed at them and went my own way. But fate led me to Mitau for the wedding of the sister of one of my college friends. There I met her again, whom I hadn't seen since August 1881. In the many hours we spent together, all the misunderstandings that had driven us apart at the time were resolved, and I returned to Subbath engaged.

My patients were kindly lenient about my interrupting my practice for a few days each month to visit my bride in Mitau. On the other hand, obstacles were put in the way of my trips that I would never have thought of . . .

. . . In December 1882 I traveled to Dorpat to complete my doctoral dissertation and obtain my doctorate. I left as my substitute a young doctor, Paul Zelinsky, with whom I had collaborated in Dorpat. I had already prepared the anthropological material in

Subbath. Now I had to revise and edit my work, compare it to other, similar works, and gather historical as well as anthropological source material. To that end I spent the better part of the day in the university library, where I studied the sources and made excerpts. With the intensive work methods I used at the time, I managed to construct the entire work in not quite six weeks, and see it before me in print. It was divided into three parts. The first contained a historical synopsis from ethnographic and linguistic works about Lithuanians. In the second part I depicted the physical proportions of this people. The third part featured a comparative anthropology of Lithuanians with the cognate Latvians, and further with Livonians and Estonians, the three nationalities that had been studied by other researchers. Now the work flowed right out of my pen. When, during my hours-long walks around my fortunately very spacious room (in a hotel next to the town hall) I had worked out my topic in my head, I'd sit down at the desk and write the entire night without interruption, till that section was completed, without having to correct anything. The work was done as if in one fell swoop.

The very famous book printer Laakmann in Dorpat did the printing in the shortest time imaginable, and on 31 January 1883 my festive promotion took place. Dr. Hermann Emminghaus, psychiatry; Dr. Bernhard Körber, legal medicine; and Dr. Ludwig Stieda, anatomy, served as regular opponents. I experienced the joy of receiving high praise from the opposition committee. From among the listeners, too, came opponents, against whom I valiantly defended and whose attacks I repulsed. Then the acting rector,

Professor Alexander Schmidt, who stood behind me at an elevated lectern, turned to the regular opponents with the question whether I was to be esteemed worthy to be awarded the degree of doctor. They rose from their seats with a “Yes.”

“I hereby solemnly appoint you a doctor of medicine,” the rector now addressed me, “and I expect from you that throughout your life you will show yourself worthy of this honor.” He read the Hippocratic oath to me; I held up two fingers of my right hand and said at the end, “I promise.” The festivities were over; the rector and the opponents congratulated me, and then my friends and acquaintances surrounded me with good wishes. My fellow Jewish students, who had even joined a club, accompanied me to my hotel, where they had organized a festive club dinner for me as their first *Philistine*. Hilarious and serious speeches were given, and then I had champagne brought in and when the noble wine sparkled in the glasses, I cheered the new Jewish club and our alma mater of Dorpat, which united us all. In the evening a student theater of our new club was held in my honor, which was quite successful, and which amused me greatly. I was yanked out of this festive fun and into the gravity of my medical work domain by a telegram from Baltensee, where after the birth of her first child, Baroness Budberg had become seriously ill with puerperal fever. Now followed weeks of heavy responsibility and great concern for me. At the wishes of young Leo Budberg I stayed entirely on the estate, to be on hand at all times to attend to his wife, who hovered between life and

death. The young wife lived. I am reminded, however, of this time by an old-German mug of Bohemian glass with a dedication by Leo Budberg,

A few months later, on 12 May 1883, our wedding took place in Mitau. Old Herzenberg had the notion that he owed it to his social standing to give a grand wedding, whereas a quiet wedding in a small family circle and a trip home at the earliest opportunity would have suited us better, Thus, our wedding took place in the most magnificent formal room in the Herzenberg home, the old palace of the old Duke Moritz von Sachsen, in the presence of numerous guests. I rejoiced over the happiness of my mother and grandmother, who had lived to see this day. Full of emotion I put the gold ring on my bride's finger with the ancient formula, "With this ring you are consecrated to me according to the law of Moses and of Israel." At that moment the sun, which had been hidden by the clouds the entire day, broke through and flooded the entire festive scene with her glorious light [*sun* in German is a feminine noun]. In the mood I was in at that time, I took it as a symbol.

We traveled back to Subbath on May 16, the coronation day of Emperor Alexander III, who was the creator of all the misfortune of present-day Russia. In response to a welcoming invitation from Dr. Johnas, the Illuxt district physician, we chose the way through Dünaburg. As a result, however, of the long detour and our long stay at Dr. Johnas', we didn't get to Subbath till two in the morning, so that we missed the festive

reception of the small town's inhabitants , with music and fireworks, which had been arranged by Nikolai Gerkan, the parochial school teacher. We had hardly rested for a few hours when I had to start out, at 5 a.m., on a house call with pastor Letz's wife, who had struggled with chronic illness for a long time. This first house call after our wedding was followed by an endless series of trips, so that I could devote myself but little to my young wife at home. During my absence she had only our servants and the uncultured people in her surroundings to rely upon, listening credulously to their gruesome tales of murder, assault, and robbery. When I set out on a house call, she imagined that I was going out to meet certain death, and clung to me weeping fearfully, so that with a heavy heart I had to tear myself away from her. When I got back, I found her in tears, her entire body trembling with nerves. I was terribly sorry for her, but her fearfulness hurt me, too, and made it hard for me to conduct my practice.

At the time I was indeed extraordinarily busy, and the distances I covered in the course of a month, according to my notes of those days, were quite significant. In quiet times about 300 *werst* per month, but when things got livelier, some 1,000 *werst* per month. On the average, I did 6,000 *werst* per year, or in the three years of my country practice 18,000 *werst*.

My little wife had her troubles, too, in running the household, since the girl we had hired as a cook admitted to our horror that she knew nothing about cooking. In spite of all

these difficulties, my wife worked herself into the household arts so quickly, thanks to her energy and conscientiousness, that our neighbors, who came to visit us, and Pastor Letz on Sundays, could not admire my little wife's cooking enough. Often, though, things went wrong, especially in the beginning, when many a dinner failed. When we were alone, it didn't matter, but once we were both embarrassed to death when young Leo Budberg and his wife were visiting us, and were offered, instead of coffee, a murky mash, which they bravely drank down. In other household matters, my wife tried everything, but it just didn't work. The goose suffocated, the chickens laid eggs without shells. Finally she abandoned her efforts, since she had no help at all from our maid.

Time passed; the beautiful, delightful summer of 1883, blooming season of our young married life, went by in no time. Fall approached with its harvest, with its golden fruit. My young wife's first steps after awakening were to the garden, where she stood under the plum tree, and shook it so that the big, beautiful plums were scattered. What she managed to digest in fruit in those days was amazing. After the plums came apples, pears, to say nothing of berries. All by herself, in fall and winter, she emptied a huge chest of the most delicious apples, which I had placed on the veranda in the autumn. Our house and the large garden were situated on the high bank of the blue Subbath lake; the garden was also my wife's only place to go for a walk. She didn't like to venture onto the dusty street, which was so dirty in autumn.

The year 1883 ended uneventfully for us. February 1884, however, brought the birth of our oldest child, a boy, whom we named Edgar. I wasn't fond of the ancient ritual of circumcision (*circumcisio*), which does have some hygienic advantages, but I allowed it to be done. The boy

thrived on his mother's milk and grew big and strong. In June we took our child to Dubbeln at the Riga beach, to spend the summer with parents. There something happened that influenced my life tragically. I became seriously ill with appendicitis. Not completely recovered for lack of rest, I wound up with years of chronic inflammation, with lasting pain, complaints, and frequent setbacks—I noted thirteen in the course of two years. The appendectomy, that is, the surgical removal of the diseased appendix, was as yet completely unknown. Only gradually did the conviction take hold that the concept of *typhlitis stercovalis* should be abandoned and that the cause of appendicitis, or the inflammation of the small sac attached to the intestine, should be sought in the vermiform appendix itself. In April 1887 Morton performed the first operation of the vermiform appendix, after the indications were established, and the operation did not become generally known and popular until the nineties. Thanks to the collaboration between anatomic pathologists (Aschoff, Sitsen), internists (Dieulafoy, Sahli), and surgeons (Roux, Sonnenburg, among others), the nature of the disease has been ascertained and treatment has become essentially surgical. The operation became so popular that it became at times a fad, and ladies had their appendixes "preventatively" removed, without ever having had an appendix problem.

It was clear that I could no longer practice in the country. Moreover, something happened that totally changed our family situation—the sudden death of my father-in-law in July of that same summer. At the end of August 1884 I traveled to Subbath to dissolve our household and say goodbye to my patients. Three years of my young life I had spent in this remote corner of Kurland. I had certainly gained rich experience because of the huge amount of disease material, and thanks to having had to rely exclusively on myself, I had also achieved great confidence. I had become acquainted with relationships and social circles that would probably have remained unknown to me otherwise. But the feeling of anxiety that had come over me when I took over the position, had been the right hunch. I could have spent these three years in a mentally and scientifically much more useful manner, and I left Subbath physically sick.

Yet the parting from the people I had heretofore worked with had been difficult. For I left friends behind, who did not like to leave me, either. I had participated in the fortunes of that area with all my might, and with lively interest. There was no community function in the parish which I wasn't draw into. In private circles we discussed the burning questions of the day. At the time the whole country was interested in the senate reform of Manassein [physician, social worker, professor] and the eventual introduction of the *semstwo* [a system of representation that included cities, rural areas, and nobility] in the Baltic provinces, especially in Kurland, which was at the time supported by a part—though small—of the nobility. In frequent conversations the advantages and

disadvantages of land management were debated, whereby the opposition prevailed. Count Hugo Keyserlingk, who was then the land representative, and who advocated in favor of *semstwo*, had to resign his post.

I have already mentioned some of the families with whom I kept up an active association, such as the Budbergs and the Stempels. My nearest neighbor was Gotthard von Lysander from Prohden[z]. Since his property was only 3½ *werst* from Subbath, I saw him at my place often. He liked to get away, because with eight children in the house it often got a little lively for him. He was a witty conversationalist, with often biting remarks. His wife, born a Sacken, a real housewife and mother, was the daughter of the previous owner of Lowieden, about whose earthiness and uncleanliness quite incredible stories made the rounds.

Pastor Friedrich Letz, married to the foster daughter of pharmacist Krause from Riga, was an approachable, charming man with simple manners, with whom you could have a very pleasant chat. In the country I had finally been initiated into the mysteries of the Préference game, so that I could eventually help out, since before this the only card games I had known were “Black Man” and “Sixty-six.” Whereas others were patient with my beginner’s knowledge of Préference, the old Mrs. Krause, wife of the pharmacist, and foster mother of the pastor’s wife, could get really furious at me when I did not understand her hints, and ruined her game.

During the census of 1883, which, as we know, was not successful because of the lack of education and the superstition of the rural population, Pastor Letz had spoken out against this opposition. “The Emperor has ordered it. Do you think the Emperor is a fool when he orders something like this?” The farmers turned the thing around, and said, “Pastor Letz called the Emperor a fool.” That rumor also reached the authorities, to whom Letz later had to explain himself.
Among the nobility I had many friends. I did not seek out nobles; they came to me and called me to them.

In Garsen lived the uncle of Leo von Budberg, who was then a minor and owner of the hereditary estate, Baron Korff, general administrator of the Budberg estates of Garsen, Baltensee, and Gritzgaln. He was an old gentleman, always noisy and grumbling, with his gentle, somewhat prejudiced wife, who had been born a von Gohr, and with his two daughters and three sons, who were all grown. The family, particularly the young folks, were very nice and pleasant, and you’d probably have liked to spend time at their place if you hadn’t worried about a big outburst from the old gentleman.

A year later the young owner of the estate, Leo Budberg, returned to Kurland as the youngest married man in Kurland—he was just 21 years old—with his young wife, an Englishwoman whom he had met in East Prussia, and they moved into the new, stately manor in Garsen, which heretofore had been the home of the Korff family, who now

moved to the old estate manor. The first weeks already saw a few sharp exchanges between uncle and nephew, as could have been foreseen, which led the old gentleman to resign his position and move from the area.

I visited the other estates as a physician only. At Gulben lived Baron Sacken, in a second marriage to Fräulein [Miss] Walther, daughter of Frau Ascher [Mrs. Ascher]. With them were two adorable girls from his first marriage to a Ropp, who were being raised as Catholics, like their mother, which did not sit well with their stepmother, a strict Lutheran. Their uncles, the young Barons Ropp, one of whom became the later so often mentioned Bishop Ropp of Warsaw, often were at my place in Subbath.

I came merely as a physician, too, to Anzinischeck, where lived a gentleman from Hertz, the administrator of Rubinen and Poduway, estates of Count Plater-Syberg. The same for Schlossberg near Illuxt, residence of old Countess Pater-Syberg, née Ropp.

My practice in neighboring Lithuania took me to the estates of Polish tycoons and to the small landowners, and to Autosowo [sp], which belonged to Countess Ledochowska; to Abely, Mr. Von Romer's property, to a Mr. von Koziello, and many others. I visited the estate of a Mr. Toparski, who must have been to school with Pljuschkin from Gogol's *Dead Souls*—his rooms were that dirty and messy. His desk was a dumping place of the most divergent things, which belonged only in the trash can: cigarette and cigar

butts, ashes, uncovered glasses of juice, filled with wasps and flies, dirty paper, smudged, torn-up newspapers, dusty books with torn covers, food leftovers, a mousetrap. The whole room was full of myriads of flies and other insects that flew around with monstrous swishing and buzzing at the slightest movement, with Mrs. Von Toparski himself the symbol of dirt. I relished the thought of having Pljuschkin himself before me in the flesh.

And now my house calls to the farmers in Kurland and neighboring Lithuania, to the Jews in the small Lithuanian towns. When I went to a rich Jewish merchant, who could afford to pay ten or fifteen rubels to have a doctor come from distances of 40 to 50 *werst*, the street in the small town was crammed with Jewish inhabitants who all wanted to see the doctor and get his opinion about their sick. In a sick person's house they also stood man to man, and I had difficulty in getting them out of the room. After I finished the consultation I was then called to house after house, patient after patient, having to help and advise everywhere. Usually these trips took two days. Since as a country doctor you can't pick and choose your practice and you have to intervene wherever there is a need, particularly at a time when doctors were scarce in the country, I was not only an internist, an obstetrician, and a surgeon, but also dentist, and often even—at urgent request–a veterinarian.

After my departure from Subbath I found myself in an uneasy frame of mind. My illness, the chronic appendicitis, was a great burden. At the advice of a physician friend I spent a few weeks at the spa of Dr. Chr. Schröder in Sassenhof, then took a journey to Libau to investigate and find out if this place would be suitable for me to settle down in. There, however, after a short, quick economic boom, business came to a halt. Whole streets had empty shops, the harbor was dead, so that in my often depressed state of mind of that time, it was not difficult for my fellow student from college, Ottomar Gronet, who practiced in Libau, to scare me off.

I decided straightaway to stay in Mitau because of my lingering sickly condition. For months I wore compresses on my body day and night, till the skin was waterlogged, disintegrating, and painful, and this sensitivity spread from there over my entire body. Since I planned to devote myself to a general practice, I traveled to Berlin to fill in the gaps in my knowledge. I entered the university as a student and became acquainted with the famous Rudolph Virchow, who was then dean of the medical school and who could be called the second father of medicine. In the country I had found out how badly I still needed to learn obstetric technique. I moved into a room in the Artillerie Street across from the University Women's Clinic, which was led by the unforgettable Professor Karl Schröder. He inspired me with his classical lectures. I still see him before me, a man of medium height, with a strong, stocky build and light blond hair. His two assistants, Georg Winter and Stratz, who have both carved out beautiful careers, called

me in on every birth in the clinic, and Winter took me along on his polyclinical [general] practice, too. Winter, with his lively dark eyes, impressed with his extraordinary obstetric skill. Schröder, who had an enormous practice at the time, was picked up from the clinic every day in his luxurious carriage with its two magnificent horses. His lectures were clear and logical, his language captivating, his presentation of the diagnosis and therapy gripping and comprehensive. It was therefore no wonder that he inspired me so. Personally he was extremely kind to me, and recommended to his chief physician, Hofmeyer, and his assistants that they make the clinic data accessible to me. A few years later, on February 7, 1887, he died, just 49 years old, of a brain abscess, a sacrifice to his profession.

At the same time I visited Professor Eduard Henoch's children's clinic in the university hospital; he came from a Jewish family and was a nephew of the famous neurologist Professor Romberg. At the time, in the fall of 1884 he was already 64 years old and reminded me of my dear old teacher, Professor Alfred Vogel in Dorpat. The same pleasant nature, the same teaching style, which was especially practically oriented, characterized this prominent clinician. The few months of my stay in Berlin passed with harmonious, satisfying work, and I even conceived the idea of participating in several practical courses, when my life's misfortune once again yanked me off my chosen path. I suffered another serious attack of appendicitis. Winter, who treated me, took the matter very seriously and prevailed upon me to consult with authorities in Berlin.

Professor Hermann Senator, whose pronunciation indicated that in his youth, at his parents' home in Gnesen and Posen, he must have spoken jargon [possibly *a dialect*], made a very trustworthy impression. He was in his fiftieth year at the time, and in his professional and scientific prime. As chief physician he was the director of internal medicine of the Augusta hospital, and was also the supervising physician at the university hospital. He looked serious, and advised me to go to Wiesbaden for immediate spa treatment. Since it was difficult for me to tear myself away from the work I had learned to love in Berlin, I wanted to hear the opinion of the other experts they had mentioned. Professor Frerichs, who was known worldwide, whom I now consulted, disappointed me. He examined me sitting on his chair, while I stood up. He may already have been sick at that time, for a few months later, on 14 March 1885, he died, only 66 years old, of a stroke. Professor Ernst Bergmann, who greeted me in the friendliest manner as his former student in Dorpat and as his countryman, could not give me any comfort either. At the first examination he took my inflamed, thickened, and swollen large intestine (*Colon ascendens*) for a nephropathy. Therefore I decided, willing or unwilling, to go for the spa treatment at Wiesbaden after Senator had examined me a second time and strongly advised the treatment.

The four-week spa treatment in Wiesbaden that followed in December 1884 and January 1885 recalls the saddest moments of my life. Alone with the constant pain in my body and in my right leg, and constantly reminded of my ailing condition by recurring

relapses, I spent the better part of the time in bed. I couldn't stay out of bed because the room was so cold, even though this institution was a combined hotel and spa, with pipes bringing the water from the hot springs into this hotel. Once a day the iron stove was lit, which radiated real warmth for one half hour, and froze to an icy cold the remaining twenty-three hours. I found my only comfort and entertainment in reading. I saw little of the beauty of Wiesbaden and its environs, I didn't know a living soul, and did not connect with anyone, and even the beautiful daily concerts in the Kurhaus [a resort building] did not cheer me up.

It was a liberation of sorts to leave Wiesbaden and via Berlin, where I spent a few days with my friend, Dr. Hamburg, return to Mitau

MY LIFE IN MITAU 1885-1907

Life flows by without stopping, so that as you stand there in the middle of life and its motions, you see no breaks. Seen later, though, from a bird's eye view, individual stretches of life appear more clearly defined. It is as if you have finished the first volume of a book and are now starting on the second.

With the move to Mitau I started the second period of my life, which lasted fully 22 years, (1885-1907). On 17/29 April 1885 I started my practice there in the Herzenberg house at number 4, Catholic Street. Shortly after my settling there I began to take an interest in orthopedics. Next, in the late summer of 1886, my wife and I traveled to lovely Kösen in Thüringen, to find in the quiet and solitude of the forest some easing of the grief over the loss of our oldest child. There we spent a few pleasant and stimulating weeks in the company of Rabbi A.M. Goldschmidt of Leipzig, and his spirited wife Henriette Goldschmidt, who had made a name for herself in Germany in the area of nursery schools, and of philosopher Moritz Brasch. We lived in a cozy vine-covered home there, formerly owned by Berthold Auerbach, of whom there are still many reminders in Kösen. We floated on the Saale in a gondola, and sang "On the light [sandy] beaches of the Saale stand castles proud and bold," climbed Saaleck and the Rudelsburg, visited the boarding school Schulpforta, where so many Balts, such as Bielenstein, had obtained their education, and made little trips through Kösen's

immediate and more distant surroundings. We also went to Weimar and devoutly relished the memory of those kings of poets, Schiller and Goethe.

In the second half of September we traveled to Berlin and took part in a convention of naturalists, which offered me much that was new and exciting. Among others I met the famous Richard Volkmann, one of the most brilliant surgeons of the second half of the 19th century, whom I visited a few years later in Halle. Under the name “Leander” he is also known as the author of the marvelous “Dreams of French Fireplaces.” Young Wilhelm Schulthess of Züich, later professor of orthopedics there, demonstrated a cleverly constructed new instrument for the measuring and recording of scoliosis, which was greatly praised by Volkmann. As a result it was purchased by various orthopedic clinics. When a few years later I visited the Berlin polyclinic [general clinic], this large measuring tool sat unused on the side, and was completely forgotten. At the general meetings we heard interesting lectures. Rudolf Virchow gave a historical survey of naturalist conventions and the development of the new natural science [biology]. George Schweinfurth talks about Europe’s tasks and prospects in tropical Africa. The great botanist Ferdinand Cohn of Breslau gave an animated lecture “About the Questions of Life.” Of all the events, the artists’ festival, where scenes of ancient Greece were shown, left a lasting memory.

Then we returned to Leipzig, where I wanted to occupy myself for a good long while with studies in orthopedics. I visited the orthopedic institute of professor Dr. Schildbach,

who has written a good monograph about scoliosis, which retains its practical value to this day. At the same time I sat in on lectures in the Leipzig university orthopedic clinic, conducted by lector Dr. Kölliker, son of the famous anatomist Rudolf Kölliker of Würzburg. I had many discussions about Baltic matters and conditions with Professor Rudolf Kölliker, who was just then in Leipzig for a visit.

The young teacher then still enjoyed a full head of hair, though nowadays, as a professor and privy councilor, he has lost it to the last hair, and he exhibited a winning kindliness. Old Schildbach, too, with his still young (second) wife were caring and considerate towards us. Orthopedics was still in its infancy at the time. Scoliosis was the beginning and the end of it. It was therefore not surprising that in the large, well-known institution of Schildbach's only scoliosis was treated. Children from every continent were there, even from Australia. For therapy the "stretch bed" was still in favor, which Schildbach used even at night. He had further devised useful and energetic exercises, which are still used today. On the horizon two new stars were already beginning to shine, Adolf Lorenz in Vienna, and Albert Hoffa in Würzburg, both of whom would change and renew all of orthopedics. Lorenz had hit the mark with his *Pathology and Therapy of Abnormal Lateral Spine Curvature*. Hoffa wanted to get away from Würzburg to a larger professional circle, which he found, though much later (1902) in Berlin, as successor to Professor Julius Wolffs.

At the end of 1886 we returned to Mitau, where I now devoted my self completely to my practice, which soon flourished. My activities as a practicing physician and orthopedist complemented each other and within a few years made me the busiest doctor in Mitau. In my waiting room I saw “all of Kurland.” I was called for consultations to the estates of Kurland and even to Riga. There was hardly a house in Mitau I didn’t enter as a physician, from the most miserable basement dwellings to the luxurious rulers’ rooms in castles. During my time in Mitau I was perfecting and completing my medical knowledge and skills. On frequent study trips to Berlin, Vienna, Halle, Würzburg, Heidelberg, Frankfurt on the Main, Petersburg, and Moscow I became familiar with the most significant orthopedic clinics and clinics of other disciplines. Yet I have always sadly regretted that I was not permitted to work as a clinical assistant. My popularity in Mitau grew from year to year. My medical and social status became established accordingly. I was a member of scholarly societies and social clubs, and participated in all intellectual and social affairs in town. As an active member of the choir and the “Philharmonic Society” I became familiar, under the guidance of the artistic music director Röttgers, with the immortal compositions of Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, and Mendelssohn, among others. In the same way I fostered my relations with the Jewish community, which was primarily interested in charity work. The intellectual activity in this community was still not much developed, although they had as outstanding a rabbi as Salomen Pucher. They didn’t understand him, and let him, struggling with financial problems, leave Mitau

for Riga. After his departure the Jewish community seemed like orphaned to me, and I had lost the only person in Jewish society with whom I could exchange thoughts.

Like the nobility in the country, I became more closely acquainted with the intellectuals in the city, whom I learned to respect for their education, their competence, and their conscientiousness. Among the literati I encountered a great fervor for Germany, which was nurtured and furthered by the Russification of the Baltics. Out there in the Empire they did not know the ardent love of the Balts for Germany and everything German. They coolly referred to them als “German-Russians” and had no understanding for the feelings of this “long-rejected
segment of the population.” The Balts in this respect resembled the Greek artist who had fallen hopelessly and passionately in love with the cold stone of the marble statue of a woman, which he had created. When on festive occasions the thrilling song “German words I Hear Once More” was intoned, it was not only the young, but also the mature and old men who sang it with great solemnity and with such enthusiasm that it sounded like nothing less than a pledge to preserve the German language and the essence of Germany—“Land of Liberty, Land of Songs, Hail to Thee with Heart and Hand.”

Just as Mitau was outwardly, as portrayed in the first part of this record, provincial [narrow-minded] and parochial, there was as yet little life in the scientific community. In

the medical society, which had been founded as early as 1839, older men prevailed among the members. After the *status epidemicus* had been discussed, they told medical and other anecdotes, until finally Dr. Gustav Otto, who acted as president for many years, closed the session with these words: “Gentlemen, since no medical matters are before us, I close the meeting.” As other, younger colleagues joined, things got a little livelier in the society. I started the roundtable with a lecture on scoliosis, later followed by lectures by other young colleagues and me.

My appointment, supported by medical inspector Mulert, in General Care at the college hospital in place of the deceased Dr. Stephany, was thwarted by the machinations of a bureaucrat, Tomaschewski, who played cards and drank with Governor Paschtschenko, in favor of Dr. Jensen.

How little support existed at that time for scientific interests that went beyond everyday concerns, was evident in the opposition to and rejection of my proposal to found a library for the medical society . In the same way they failed to respond to my proposal to hold “Kurland medical days,” after the example of the sister provinces. Not until much later, after I had already left Mitau, did my call for action of that time translate to reality.

There was only moderate attendance at the Kurland Society for Literature and Art . Besides the members of its leadership: Brüggen, president; Diedrichs, secretary; Otto,

treasurer; and Däring, conservator, only two or three people showed up, who all fit comfortably around the table that stood in the middle of the hall. Within this small circle some interesting documents were presented; very often old Dr. Karl Bluhm filled in the gaps in the program. To honor him, in 1900 at the occasion of his sixtieth year of membership the society had a medal coined with a respectful dedication. After the seventy-fifth jubilee of the society interest picked up, and so did the attendance at the sessions.

Thus my life in Mitau was filled with intensive medical work and intellectual activities. I had also won many friendships, which made my life beautiful and have continued to the present.

The enjoyment, however, of this fully satisfying work was spoiled by chronic infirmity. For nearly two decades I was plagued night and day and kept awake at night by serious digestive problems, perhaps as a result of deformation caused by my frequent appendicitis attacks, perhaps because of a duodenal ulcer. The toxins produced by decomposition in the digestive tract led to extreme general complaints and constitutional abnormalities. My colleagues, to whom I turned for advice, took my condition for neurasthenia. It is therefore clear that their advice could not be of any use to me. I knew colleagues who with a dismissive gesture and an ironic smile imperiously declared, “That guy is a real nerve case [a neurasthenic],” and stuck to their diagnosis till to their

surprise the “neurasthenic” in question died of a completely different disease. Many doctors are too quick to make a careless diagnosis of “nerves” and “neurasthenia.” Many cases that have been seen as nervousness have turned out to be serious illnesses. The word *nervous* is ambiguous and meaningless. In future textbooks the whole field of neurasthenia should be significantly limited. Dreyfus tried to prove that nervous dyspepsia is a mental illness, but *never* an illness of the stomach. The well-known clinician Krehl has treated a number of cases described in Dreyfus’s paper, which showed clear indications of stomach ulcers. “That gives food for thought,” says Crämer in his pertinent short report on “nervous stomach ailments.”

My complaints and my weakness had meanwhile got so much worse that I seriously entertained the thought—I was in my forties at the time— of giving up my practice. Coincidence took me to Petersburg, however, where relatives advised me to see Dr. Kernig, who was then the chief physician of the women’s department of Obuchow hospital for internal medicine. After a careful, almost pedantic [meticulous] examination, as was his style, he found an atony [lack of physiological tone] and a significant dilatation of the stomach, as well as a beginning diabetes. It still took a long time before the meticulous diet he prescribed, and which mutatis mutandis [with the necessary changes being made] I need to keep following to this day, gave me relief. But life became bearable again, and I could once again devote myself with a new love to my practice and my customary activities.

My biographical-medical-historical work came in the last five years of my life in Mitau. School superintendent Diederichs encouraged me to bring Otto's work about the status of medicine in Kurland up to date. I had been able to work on this project only at long intervals. For weeks—yes, months—on end the archives of the Kurland medical authority, which medical inspector Woicechowski had most generously let me borrow to take home, lay untouched, because my practice and my infirmity quite often disturbed the work I had begun.

It was quite different with my second medical-historical work, *Doctors of Livonia*, which I had to start from scratch. That cast its spell over me for another two years. I worked on it with passion, and for me nothing else existed at the time, like a lover with his beloved. I pored over it, without interruption, from morning till night. Tables and chairs in my little room were covered with countless books and notebooks so that patients entering the office—for I worked also during office hours—could hardly find a place to sit. Every disturbance bothered me; I'd even rather see the patients go than come. The hours of glorious work I spent in the solitude of the Livonian government archives, to which I had been given undisturbed and unlimited access through the vice governor! The bliss of that time, which lifted me above my illness and many an injustice of life, remains the source of my sweetest memories to this day.

So two decades of my practice in Mitau had gone by and my body, weakened by the above illnesses, could hardly hold up any more against the exertions and performance required by the practice. It became more and more imperative that I take it easier if I was going to keep supporting my family. Furthermore, social relationships in Mitau had changed completely since the revolution of 1905 and 1906. Opinions and perceptions had formed which in little Mitau, where everybody knew everybody, I found disturbing. For all these reasons I left Mitau, where I had turned fifty-three years old, and where I had practiced for twenty-two years and made a secure life, and moved to Riga. In 1906 I almost became a physician in free Switzerland. In the fall of 1905, September to the end of October, I was in Davos, where I became acquainted with the sanatorium for diseases of the lungs, and was a daily visitor to the outpatient practice of Dr. Karl Spengler. A student of Robert Koch's, he had persisted, undeterred by the failures of the tuberculin treatment—considered above criticism—in using it without interruption. It is thanks to him that the use of tuberculin, though in a much milder form than he used at the time, has been revalidated and has had success. His patients were extraordinarily numerous, and doctors from all over, lured here by his reputation, could also be found in his clinic. From him I received the invitation, in the spring of 1906, to work for him as assistant and colleague. His letter caused a complete commotion inside me, but a variety of reasons kept me from accepting the flattering offer, not the least of which was the requirement by the Swiss government to take, besides the Abiturium, also the Swiss high school graduation exam.

The medical congress at Reval from August 17 to 20, 1902 and the trip to Helsingfors that followed it are among my most pleasant memories.. All first- and second-class tickets had been sold. My hope of being able to travel quietly and comfortably in first class was not fulfilled thanks to all the stops. I had to share the compartment with a Riga resident, merchant Erhardt, Dr. Theodor Schwartz, and still others, who came and went, and got on and off the train. In Dorpat a gentleman of impressive height got in, who sat next to me and soon started to snore in competition with Erhardt. At the Dom in Reval he introduced himself to me, Baron Engelhardt. He regretted having disturbed my sleep with his dreadful snoring. I indeed left the compartment, after a sleepless night, quite wiped out, sat down in one of those rickety coaches, and rode to the address of Baroness Maydell, Breitstrasse 45, where I was to stay. What the room lacked in comfort, the hostess made up in kindness. Besides me, the following stayed there: Dr. Apping from Wolmar; Dr. Wolferz Jr. with his young wife, who had been born an Erhardt, from Riga; Dr Keuchel from Boldera, with his wife; Dr. Dohrmann from Preekuln; and Dr. Treu from Riga. All of these people got together for morning coffee. Dohrmann, though, who usually after a night of drinking didn’t get in till six in the morning, was then still snoring in his room. Frau Dr. Keuchel was generally liked: tall of stature, voluptuous, pregnant, she had developed a wonderful appetite. She got out at nearly every station to build up her body. The young wife of Dr. Wolferz looked a little anemic and sickly, and was downright monosyllabic. Our hostess, still relatively young,

made a nice impression. Like all ladies of her circle, she could converse pleasantly on all subjects.

The first day of the congress passed as usual; after the opening of the congress by Dr. Greiffenhagen came a series of welcoming speeches by representatives of medical societies and clubs. Colleague Umbia, chief physician of the city, a typical Estonian, greeted the congress in Russian and expressed his regret that the city could not host the guests. Dr. Greiffenhagen, also speaking in Russian, regretted that because of lack of time, the congress could not accept the “friendly invitation.” The battle between Germans and Estonians was raging even then, and was noticeable in the cool greetings and the chilly answers. Medical inspector Malinowski brought a greeting from the governor, which was promptly answered in Russian by Greiffenhagen. Of the general lectures I was most interested in the philosophical one by Professor Dehio, about the vitalistic and the mechanical world view in medicine, whereby at the end he concluded that medicine cannot do without vitalistic methods. All sessions were held in the Adel’s Club, Breitstrasse, where all ate together. The food was so bad, however, and the prices so high, that many preferred to eat somewhere else. The afternoon of August 17 brought the presentations about the main subject, the scientific importance of alcohol. All speakers came to the conclusion that alcohol was a poison, and was to be avoided, and particularly, that it should be seen as a national poison—the scientific and the statistical proof substantiate this. Other speakers, especially Professor Dehio, admitted

this, but were of the opinion that it was not harmful wen enjoyed rarely and in small amounts—“hygienically admissible amounts.” The discussion of these questions was later continued in private conversations, in the evenings in the Reval Club, and the next day in our boarding house with morning coffee, where we avidly debated pro and con, and little Baroness Maydell took part in the debates. Then we were off to the Adel’s Club, to the alcohol debate, which became extraordinarily animated. Professor Dehio’s hypothesis came under sharp attack, but he defended himself with great obstinacy. Dr. Apping of Weimar, with whom we had already had a heated discussion the evening before and at morning coffee, and who had taken an adversary position toward the “weakly” stand of the temperance advocates, emerged also in the scientific debate, and wanted to be selected for the committee that would edit the wording for publication. The format chosen indeed corresponded to Professor Dehio’s view, and looked, of course, vague and colorless. The supporters of abstinence (Apping, Kügelgen, Otto Stender) had not been able to get through to the others. They had a tough row to hoe against the many friends of alcohol, several of whom stood up for alcohol not so much for scientific reasons, but with force, like Dr. Wolfgang Hunnius-Reval. A few of the remarks were downright weak. Dr. Raphael from Mitau stood up, for instance, and uttered—with the whole auditorium in suspense as they waited to hear his words of wisdom—the great words: “Why should we give up our pleasure?” He said it, looked around the circle triumphantly, and sat down with dignity. Dr Kügelgen-Seewald spoke very well for abstinence, and Dehio for temperance. The discussion was so heated that Dr.

Greiffenhagen had to warn us at the end that we still had a long program to work through.

The weather was wonderful, and lured me outside. I could not withstand this temptation, and used the recess to take a tour of the city in a carriage. I visited the most beautiful sections—the wall of the old fortress with its picturesque towers; the harbor, so lively with merchant ships, and Russian warships tied to its docks; and the glorious surroundings of Reval. It was hot and muggy, and the sun was fierce. The bad springs of the carriage and the potholes in the pavement were made up for by the delightful weather and the grand location of Reval. It is indeed marvelous, this working together of air, water, boulders, and the picturesque arrangement of churches and houses. From the sea, Reval offered an impressive, unique view, which could boldly take on a comparison with other European seaside cities. From among the many forms of churches and houses rises steep and direct the cathedral (*Glint* [= flickering, sparkling; possibly the name or nickname of the cathedral?]) with its buildings and churches. Who does not know it, the towering Olai Church (455 feet) with its magnificent tower. It surpasses the highest point of the cathedral, though it is located in the valley. Inside it offers many interesting things; it surely is the Westminster Abbey of Estonia. All famous men of this country, as well as important historical events, are represented through coats of arms and banners. The numerous banners give this church a particular *Gëräge* [neither in hard copy nor in online dictionaries; furthermore, German does not use the

umlaut on the *e*. Possibly *character*, *cachet*]. The Nikolai Church with its tombstone monuments of famous men and women and the dance of death [*danse macabre*] painting also leaves a lasting impression.

THE END

The time that now followed, till the present (1907–1934), I can consider the third era of my life, which still goes on. My children, who have witnessed it, and still do, know it well enough, so that I don't have to go into it any further. In Riga, an intensive organizational and educational work opportunity developed for me, as I instituted a course of instruction for massage, physiotherapy, and nurses' training. Although my work completely absorbed me, it was not as strenuous physically as my work in Mitau, since I could work at home. Thus the years passed in a pleasantly alternating schedule of city work and beach practice in the summer until in July 1914 the world war broke out (cf. last page). Like the plans of thousands, mine were disrupted also. I had had plans to found a sanatorium for bone tuberculosis at the Riga beach, and had hoped to move toward their realization as early as September 1914. After the war and its aftermath ended, my financial means had dwindled to nothing. However, what weighed more heavily was the fact that I had lost most of my resilience, so that I was no longer in a position to resume my former plans. I had to tighten my belt.

Now I have reached the age of which the psalmist says "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow" [Psalms 90:10]. In this sense my life, too, was a

happy one, and I would begin a second, one that was purified by the experiences of the first. A merciful fate has preserved in me the love and courage for work. I see from many signs that my days, my years certainly, are numbered. I quietly face my end; we are subject to the same grand laws of life and death as all organic and inorganic structures of the universe, as the earth itself. “According to grand eternal, iron laws we must end the circle of our existence.”

I see mankind’s happiness in the removal of all strife and contention, especially of religious and national hate. The ancient Jewish welcome, “*Salem alekem*—peace be unto thee,” must become the deepest inner conviction of mankind. All humanity must feel as one; *humanity must rank above nationality*. I see man’s progress in a free, unhampered development of the individual, regulated only by laws of ethics.

I lived in a great and tumultuous era. I have lived and suffered through the greatest war of all times. In my homeland unbelievable changes have taken place before my very eyes. Europe has been shaken up in the worst way, which it has not yet overcome. Three of its largest monarchies have fallen. One has been succeeded by chaos; the other nation, which will yet one day absorb the rest of the Austrian monarchy, battles mightily, but bravely, for its existence. Both nations will blossom anew and expand, but only on the foundation of *true* freedom.

What fifty years ago seemed a utopia has become reality. Man has conquered the air, and the depths of the sea no longer frighten him. We hear voices across the entire globe, carried by unseen waves. Soon we will also see the faces of the people we talk with across the oceans. Through spectrum analysis the unity of the universe has been established, and the secret of the world's creation will perhaps be revealed to the meditative mind. In medicine the greatest miracles have taken place. Things doctors hardly dared dream of less than fifty years ago, have become standard practice. With certainty and confidence surgeons and obstetricians now approach the most serious operations, whose outcome in earlier times would have been left to the capriciousness of a cruel fate. Anesthesia and asepsis now afford the possibility to open all body cavities nearly without danger, and carry out operations on the most essential organs. With mysterious rays the physician illuminates the dark depths of the human body, and Röntgen's name has been immortalized for all time. The nature of mankind's scourge, tuberculosis, has been identified, and science has taken up a successful battle against Koch's bacillus. Unimaginable prospects are opening up for the human mind in all areas of knowledge. The imagination can hardly paint a picture of the future. May these great successes serve only the happiness and the peace of humanity, and may the hatchet of war be buried for all time.

To live in these great times was my good fortune. Just as the sun does not always shine in anyone's life, mine has often been darkened by heavy clouds. But the late afternoon

sun of my life has broken through the clouds and shines radiantly through my days and lights up my hushed soul. May it also warm and illuminate with its soft light the evening of my life, and may the sunset be harmonious.

On a summer day in 1910 Utotschkin demonstrated in Edinburg on the Riga beach the first attempt at flying in an airplane. Flying was quite primitive; he covered barely 100 kilometers in his modest flight.

On 8/21 August 1814, at the beginning of the world war, a total solar eclipse occurred, which we were able to see. Tens of thousands of people watched the amazing phenomenon from open places. I watched the eclipse from both of our balconies. Twilight fell, then complete darkness. The darkness was so intense that as I hurried through the room to the front balcony I bumped hard and very painfully against one of the appliances. From the front balcony the southern sky looked quite strange. It was tinted a golden yellow, as if lit by a very beautiful red evening sky, while in the zenith and to the north the stars were visible.

Beach. Edinburg, 29 July 1912

MORNING STILLNESS

Rising early from my bed
onto the balcony I go out
hailed by morning sunshine
forest scent wafting about.

Morning stillness, profound peace,
Only in the woods a rustling—
The day's unrest, the day's cares
only too soon bustling.

Now sounds are heard
from the house and from far away
Overpowering peace
As they proclaim the start of day.*

Morning stillness, morning peace
That tune the heart to devotion
Morning peace, morning zest
Comes and lingers in my breast.

* i.e., the day’s work