

Hanfs. 1922

INTRODUCTION

ERNST HANFSTAENGL was a man with two countries. His mother came from a well-known New England family, the Sedgwick's, and two of his ancestors were Civil War generals, one of whom helped carry Lincoln's coffin. In Germany two generations of Hanfstaengls had served as privy counsellors to the dukes of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and were connoisseurs and patrons of the arts. The family owned an art-publishing house in Munich well known for its excellent reproductions.

Hanfstaengl had been brought up in an atmosphere of art and music and was himself an accomplished pianist. I have spent many hours in his Munich home listening to him play the piano with verve, his six-foot-four frame hunched over the piano, making him look like an impish bear. His nickname was Putzi (little fellow).

Adolf Hitler too had been enthralled by Putzi's music, and made him one of his closest associates in 1922. After hearing Hitler speak at a beer hall, Hanfstaengl had been fascinated by his control of the audience. "People," he wrote, "were sitting breathlessly, who had long since forgotten to reach for their beer mugs and instead were drinking in the speaker's every word." Nearby a young woman was staring at Hitler: "As though in some devotional ecstasy, she had ceased to be herself and was completely under the spell of Hitler's despotic faith in Germany's future greatness."

On the spur of the moment Putzi introduced himself. "About ninety-five percent of what you said I can set my name to, and five percent - we will have to talk about that." What he particularly objected to was Hitler's blatant anti-Semitism.

Like so many others in Germany, Hanfstaengl imagined he could control Hitler. He loaned the Führer a thousand dollars, interest free, which enabled Hitler to purchase two American rotary presses and turn his weekly Nazi newspaper into a daily. Putzi also became his foreign Press secretary.

Hitler soon became a fixture in the Hanfstaengl apartment. He fell in love with Helene Hanfstaengl and played games with her two-year-old son, Egon. He also became fascinated with Hanfstaengl's music. "Hitler dragged me around from house to house as his resident musician, and had me sit down at the piano to perform." On one occasion

Putzi began playing Harvard's football marches and explained how cheerleaders and marching bands would stir up the crowd to almost hysterical mass shouting. When Hitler's interest quickened, he demonstrated on the piano how the buoyant American beat could be injected into German marches, and Hitler started parading up and down like a drum major. "This is what I need for the movement!" he exclaimed. Hanfstaengl wrote several marches in this style for the S.A. band, but his most significant contribution was the transference of Harvard's "Fight! Fight! Fight!" to "Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil!"

Hitler became even closer to the Hanfstaengls after he fled from the disastrous Beer Hall Putsch and sought refuge in their country home. Here he was captured and sent to prison; and one of the first places he visited after his release was the Hanfstaengls' new home across the Isar River. It was here the Führer came on Christmas Eve to regain his composure. First he asked Putzi to play the *Liebestod* and then he romped with Egon, marching up and down like a soldier, showing the child how to carry his little sabre and imitating the sound of an artillery barrage. Later, when alone with Helene, he put his head in her lap and said, "If only I had someone to take care of me!" But he could never marry, he told her, because his life was dedicated to his country. "I thought he was acting like a little boy – not a lover – and perhaps he was," recalled Helene. "It would have been awful if someone had come in. He was taking a chance, he really was. That was the end of it and I passed it off as if it had simply not happened."

Hanfstaengl remained as Hitler's Press secretary for years. Like many of those who had helped put Hitler in power, he thought he could stem Hitler's excesses. But by 1936 Martin Bormann's influence over the Führer had gained dominance, and Putzi was reduced to a minor role. For some time the Führer had been annoyed because Hanfstaengl called him "Herr Hitler" instead of "Mein Führer" and talked to him like an equal.

Hanfstaengl knew he was in danger and told Egon, now fifteen, "Things are not well. We all believed in the movement, didn't we? I am still trying to believe in it." But he had found corruption everywhere, and war was coming with England and America. "The country is in a foul state internally. I ascribe that mainly to the blackguards who are sitting firmly entrenched behind official desks in Berlin and elsewhere. But Hitler refuses to hear me." And it looked as though the Führer himself had become corrupt.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION

IN THE YEARS following World War Two, as key figures of the Nazi era dropped out of the picture, firsthand accounts of that period were lost to history. It quickly became impossible to reconstruct from eye-witnesses the astonishing story of the twenty years between the two wars that brought Hitler to power and the Western world very nearly to its knees.

Those seeking to analyse the motive force of these two decades would be surprised to discover how many members of Hitler's immediate entourage survived the war years. Most of them were seedy relics, uncomfortable ghosts in dirty raincoats, haunting this or that Munich suburb: Emil Maurice, an early intimate and his first chauffeur; Hermann Esser, one of the few Party orators who could hold his own with his master; Heinrich Hoffmann, crony-photographer; Sepp Dietrich, bodyguard and later S.S. general – even one-armed Max Amann, who published *Mein Kampf* and the *Völkischer Beobachter*. In retrospect, they were all minor figures, with neither the insight nor the perception to give a coherent account of the political genius and monster in whose wake they had their being. But one survivor of the years that brought Hitler from obscurity to power was of a very different calibre – Dr. Ernst F. Sedgwick ("Putzi") Hanfstaengl.

Hanfstaengl was a representative of that dwindling human species – a character. His appearance alone singled him out in any crowd. He was a towering six-foot-four, the thick hair on his enormous head barely speckled with grey even into his seventies. The twinkling eyes above the bold nose and prognathous jaw reflected the endless stream of humorous comment and brazen *boutades* that composed his conversational fireworks. His huge hands could rend a piano in the direct tradition of the Lisztian romantics, and there were few men who dared question his judgement in matters of pictorial art. Of mixed German-American parentage and upbringing, what somehow came through was pure Celt. As he looked back on the bitterness of a life that had included nearly ten years of exile, the mobile face could assume the air of an avenging Druid.

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respectability to his Nazi Party and when he could no longer stand my public criticism of the excesses of his new Germany he hounded me out of the country with the Gestapo on my heels.

There have been scores of books about Hitler and his era. The public records of his régime were produced at the Nuremberg trial or have appeared since in official American and British publications. I cannot hope and would not even try to compete with this massive documentation of his public career. What seems to me to be still missing is an account of the man, particularly of the development of his character during precisely those years that I knew him so well.

When I met him in the early 'twenties he was a minor provincial political agitator, a frustrated ex-serviceman, awkward in a blue serge suit. He looked like a suburban hairdresser on his day off. His chief claim to notice was his golden voice and transcendent powers as an orator on the platform of one of his Party meetings. Even then, he was so little regarded that the sparse reports in the press did not even spell his name aright.

By the time of the Roehm Putsch in 1934, not long before I broke with him, he had become a murderer, the power-hungry daemonic monster the world knew and feared. Doubtless the facets of his character which permitted this development were always present. A man's temperament does not change. But the final product was the result of a combination of circumstances, environment, too many bad and ignorant advisers and, above all, personal, intimate frustrations of the most abysmal sort. The story I have to tell, from close association and observation, is of a man who was impotent, in the medical sense of the term. The abounding nervous energy which found no normal release sought compensation first in the subjection of his entourage, then of his country, then of Europe and would have imposed itself on the world if he had not been stopped. In the sexual no-man's-land in which he lived, he only once nearly found the woman, and never even the man, who might have brought him relief.

It took me many years to plumb the depths of his personal problem. The normal human being reacts only slowly to the abnormal, and even then tries to convince himself that a return to normality is possible. Hitler was all of a piece. His political conceptions were

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HARVARD'S GIFT TO HITLER

23

warped and foolhardy. Again the normal person assumes that argument, example and evidence will produce an approximation to orthodox thinking. These were my twin misconceptions. I remained in Hitler's vicinity because I was convinced that his natural genius must bring him to the top. In that, at least, I was right. But when he got there his faults were magnified, not diminished. It was the experience of power which finally corrupted him. What happened thereafter was only the natural consequence of what had gone before, and that is the story I propose to tell.

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One vicarious connexion with the Nazi hierarchy goes back to my schooldays. My form master at the Royal Bavarian *Wilhelms-gymnasium* before the turn of the century was none other than Heinrich Himmler's father. The grandfather had been a gendarme in some village on Lake Constance, but the father had risen in the world and had been at one time tutor to Prince Heinrich of Bavaria. As a result he became a terrible snob, favouring the young titled members of his class and bearing down contemptuously on the commoners, although many of us came from well-to-do and prominent families. The son was much younger than I was and I remember him only as a pallid, moon-faced brat whom I used to see occasionally when delivering extra work at his father's house in the Sternstrasse. He went to the same school in the end and I remember hearing from other old boys that he had a particularly unpleasant reputation as a sneak, always running to his father and other teachers with tales about his fellows. But by that time I was far away studying at Harvard.

I am in fact half American. My mother was born a Sedgwick-Heine. My maternal grandmother came from the well-known New England family and was a cousin of the General John Sedgwick who fell at Spotsylvania Court House in the Civil War and whose statue stands at West Point. My grandfather was another Civil War general, William Heine, who was on General Dix's staff in the Army of the Potomac. Trained as an architect, he had fled his native Dresden after the Liberal revolution of 1848, helped to decorate the Opéra in Paris and then emigrated to the States. There he became a

well-known illustrator and accompanied Admiral Perry as official artist on the expedition to Japan. In the funeral cortège of Abraham Lincoln, he was one of the generals who carried the coffin.

My mother, who died in 1945 at the age of eighty-six, could still remember the scene clearly, and had equally vivid recollections of seeing Wagner and Liszt at her father's family home back in Dresden, where she first met Edgar Hanfstaengl, my father. He was one of the most spectacularly handsome men of his age and had been, I fear, the direct cause of the broken engagement between King Ludwig II of Bavaria and his beautiful cousin Sophie Charlotte, Duchess of Bavaria, who later became Duchess of Alençon by her marriage to a grandson of Louis-Philippe.

I do not want to insist unduly on these personal details, but my family background played a determining part in my relations with Hitler. The Hanfstaengls were substantial folk. For three generations they were privy councillors to the Dukes of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and well known as connoisseurs and patrons of the arts. The family enterprise my grandfather founded was, and remains to this day, one of the pioneers in the art reproduction field. My Hanfstaengl grandfather's photographs of three German Kaisers, Moltke and Roon, Ibsen, Liszt, Wagner and Clara Schumann set the standards of their time. My father kept open house at the villa he built in the Liebigstrasse, at that time on the outskirts of Munich. Few names in the artistic world failed to grace the guest book over the years, Lilli Lehmann and Arthur Nikisch, Wilhelm Busch, Sarasate, Richard Strauss, Felix Weingartner and Wilhelm Backhaus. My parents were friends of Fritjof Nansen and Mark Twain. The atmosphere was almost ostentatiously international. My mother had decorated part of the house in shades of green because it was the favourite colour of Queen Victoria, whose signed portrait, dedicated to my father on some occasion, looked at us from its heavy silver frame. Conversation was heavily interlarded with French expressions. Guests sat on the *chaise-longue* behind the *paravent*, with closed *rouleaux* and the ladies suffered from *migraine*. The *teint* was treated with *parfum* and friends had a *rendez-vous* for a *tête-à-tête* in the *foyer* of the opera. My family was Bismarckian monarchist, needless to say with a personal aversion to Wilhelm II.

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HARVARD'S GIFT TO HITLER

25

At the same time, there was great enthusiasm for social and technical progress. The Liberal tradition of 1848 was strong. We even had our own bathroom, at a time when the Prince Regent went to the newly renovated Four Seasons Hotel once a week for his scrub. The great argument of capitalism versus socialism already waxed hot and the great prophet of a new relationship between employer and worker was Friedrich Naumann with his national-social ideas. I can remember when I was no older than thirteen becoming a regular reader of his weekly magazine *Die Hilfe* and his advocacy of a social monarchy on a Christian Socialist basis remained my strongest political trait. As I was to learn from bitter experience, it was not the sort of National-Socialism Hitler had in mind.

That was the atmosphere into which I was born in (1887), which these days is at least three worlds away. It also saw the inception of my infant nickname of 'Putzi' which I have had to suffer in impotent annoyance ever since. At the age of two I caught diphtheria, at a time when serums and child surgery were little trusted. My life was only saved by an old retainer, a peasant woman who fed me untiringly from a spoon, crooning: 'Putzi, eat this now Putzi.' In Bavarian country speech 'Putzi' means little fellow, and although I am now seventy and still six-foot-four the name has stuck.

I had three governesses, of whom my favourite was Bella Farmer, a roses and cream English beauty who came from Hartlepoons and had been found for my father during one of his visits to England by the wife of the great Victorian painter Alma-Tadema. She had gone through a list of applicants for my mother and picked out the prettiest one. Even so the most lasting influence of my boyhood was Sergeant-Major Streit. He was a splendid man, the son of a forester in Kissingen. He had grown his impressive moustachios in the Bavarian Royal Guard and my father employed him on the recommendation of a friend, General von Euler, to put a bit of stuffing into a quartet of sons in danger of getting spoilt by too many artistically-minded adults. He came in every Sunday afternoon to teach us military drill and had us marching up and down the lawn like Frederick the Great's *Lange Kerls*. I believe my unfortunate sister, Erna, was even included in these manœuvres.

Streit used to put on an act of bawling us out like a lot of clumsy

and politics, and the ex-President came out with the phrase which has stuck with me ever since: "Hanfstaengl, your business is to pick out the best pictures, but remember that in politics the choice is that of the lesser evil."

The Hanfstaengl representation was a delightful combination of business and pleasure. The famous names who visited me were legion: Pierpont Morgan, Toscanini, Henry Ford, Caruso, Santos Dumont, Charlie Chaplin, Paderewski, and the daughter of President Wilson. When war broke out, I cannot say that I was surprised. Years before, an old Harvard friend of mine from New Orleans named Freddie Moore, who had lived much of his life in Constantinople, had told me: "Mind you, Hanfy, the next war will not start on the Franco-German frontier but in the Balkans", and now, with the shots at Sarajevo, his prophecy had come true.

There was little doubt where American sympathies would fall in the long run, but I tried to keep the German flag flying as best I could. I used to get the bands from the German ships blockaded in New York harbour to come and play for our colony in the Hanfstaengl establishment. When a hostile crowd gathered as they were playing the *Wacht am Rhein*, I switched them quickly to the *Blue Danube*. But in a population which came to regard dachshund dogs as fifth columnists this was only short-term evasive action. I had my shop-windows stove in once and thereafter found discretion the better part of valour. When America finally joined the Allied side I was fortunate in having Senator Elihu Root, who had been Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of State, as my lawyer. In exchange for my promise to indulge in no anti-American activities, I was not interned. "I would blow you all up if I could, but one measly little bridge is not enough to change the fortunes of war," I told him. And so they let me be, although my freedom of movement was eventually restricted to Central Park. This did not prevent the Custodian of Enemy Property from taking over the assets of the Hanfstaengl firm in the final months of the war. They were worth half a million dollars and were sold at auction for about \$8,000. However, immediately after the Armistice, I was permitted to set up a little business of my own which I called The Academy Art Shop, just opposite Carnegie Hall, and this kept me going for the next three years.

News from Germany seized power in Munich meaning it has taken some form of popular was by no means of the dissolution of was married. My only daughter emigrated from Berlin I really felt it was meant to sell out to Friedrich Denks, in July 1921 on the German front for ten years issued by the Swiss German interests. Hitler's life.

I found a German city workers, followed the new republic, yearned for the old Munich could not and the peeling facade the station to meet brother, Edgar, at the Seasons Hotel was there was none to coffee to qualify for each pot. Fortunately bought a small farm the Alps, so that even so, Mother would take advantage of it on the black market.

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HARVARD'S GIFT TO HITLER

33

we went out and took a tram to the Kindkeller beer-hall, where it was taking place. I could get little out of Rosenberg beyond the fact that he was a Balt and totally ignorant of the world outside Central Europe.

The Kindkeller, which was a big L-shaped hall, was crammed full with a very mixed audience. There seemed to be a lot of people of the concierge or small shopkeeper class, a sprinkling of the former officer and minor civil servant type, a tremendous number of young people, and the rest artisans, with a high proportion of the spectators in Bavarian national costume. Rosenberg and I pushed our way through to the press table, which was on the right side of the platform.

I looked round the hall and could see no one in the audience or on the platform I knew. "Where is Hitler?" I asked a middle-aged journalist next to me. "See those three over there? The short man is Max Amann, the one with the spectacles is Anton Drexler, and the other is Hitler." In his heavy boots, dark suit and leather waistcoat, semi-stiff white collar and odd little moustache, he really did not look very impressive—like a waiter in a railway-station restaurant. However, when Drexler introduced him to a roar of applause, Hitler straightened up and walked past the press table with a swift, controlled step, the unmistakable soldier in mufti.

The atmosphere in the hall was electric. Apparently this was his first public appearance after serving a short prison-sentence for breaking up a meeting addressed by a Bavarian separatist named Ballerstedt, so he had to be reasonably careful what he said in case the police should arrest him again as a disturber of the peace. Perhaps this is what gave such a brilliant quality to his speech, which for innuendo and irony I have never heard matched, even by him. No one who judges his capacity as a speaker from the performances of his later years can have any true insight into his gifts. As time went on he became drunk with his own oratory before vast crowds and his voice lost its former character through the intervention of microphone and loud-speaker. In his early years he had a command of voice, phrase and effect which has never been equalled, and on this evening he was at his best.

I cannot have been more than eight feet away and watched him

Hays. 1922

local, personal note, acting as a further impetus to the enthusiasm of the malt-minded Munichers. It was hard to decide whether Hitler drank to give the audience a chance to applaud, or whether they applauded to give him a chance to drink.

"That was Ulrich Graf who handed up the beer," my neighbour said. "He's Hitler's bodyguard and follows him wherever he goes. There is a price on Hitler's head in some of the other States, you know." I looked at Graf and saw that after taking the mug back, his right hand returned to the bulging pocket of his coat. From the firm way in which he kept his hand there, his eyes fixed on the front rows, I knew he was holding a revolver.

The audience responded with a final outburst of frenzied cheering, hand-clapping, and a cannonade of table-pounding. It sounded like the demoniacal rattle of thousands of hailstones rebounding on the surface of a gigantic drum. It had been a masterly performance. I had really been impressed beyond measure by Hitler. In spite of his provincial manner, he had seemed to have a much wider horizon than the normal German politician one met. With his incredible gifts as an orator he was clearly going to go far, and from what I had seen of his entourage there seemed no one likely to bring home to him the picture of the outside world he manifestly lacked, and in this I felt I might be able to help. He seemed to have no conception of the part America had played in winning the war and viewed European problems from a narrow, continental standpoint. Here, at least, I felt I could put him right.

That was for the future. He was standing on the platform recovering from his bravura exhibition. I walked over to introduce myself. Naïve and yet forceful, obliging and yet uncompromising, he stood, face and hair soaked in perspiration, his semi-stiff collar, fastened with a square imitation-gold safety-pin, melted to nothing. While talking he dabbed his face with what had once been a handkerchief, glancing worriedly at the many open exits through which came the draughts of a cold November night.

"Herr Hitler, my name is Hanfstaengl," I said. "Captain Truman-Smith asked me to give you his best wishes." "Ah, yes, the big American," he answered. "He begged me to come here and listen to you, and I can only say I have been most impressed," I went

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HARVARD'S GIFT TO HITLER

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on. "I agree with 95 per cent of what you said and would very much like to talk to you about the rest some time."

"Why, yes, of course," Hitler said. "I am sure we shall not have to quarrel about the odd five per cent." He made a very pleasant impression, modest and friendly. So we shook hands again and I went home. That night I could not go to sleep for a long time. My mind still raced with the impressions of the evening. Where all our conservative politicians and speakers were failing abysmally to establish any contact with the ordinary people, this self-made man, Hitler, was clearly succeeding in presenting a non-Communist programme to exactly those people whose support we needed. On the other hand, I had not liked the look of those immediate supporters I had seen. Rosenberg and the people round him seemed to me distinctly dubious types. Then an aphorism of Nietzsche floated into my mind and provided consolation: "The first followers of a movement do not prove anything against it."

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from one of the boxes. As far as I remember, the first wife of Olaf Gulbransson, the famous artist and *Simplicissimus* cartoonist, and Frau von Kaulbach, the widow of the well-known painter, were in the party. Afterwards we went up and I introduced the ladies to Hitler. He was delighted with my wife, who was blonde and beautiful and American. He accepted very readily when she said how pleased we would be if he would come to coffee or dinner at the flat. Soon he was visiting us frequently, pleasant and unassuming in his little blue serge suit. He was respectful, even diffident and very careful to adhere to the forms of address still *de rigueur* in Germany between people of lower rank when speaking to those of better education, title, or academic attainment. The only striking things about him were an extraordinary luminous quality in his blue eyes and his sensitive hands, plus, of course, very definite gifts of expression in conversation.

He had a winning way with him, the sort of spontaneity that attracts children, and Egon became devoted to him. I remember just before one visit the child had knocked his knee against the leg of a hideous pseudo-Renaissance chair which formed part of the furniture. It was carved in the form of a lion, with its tongue sticking out, rather like one of the gargoyles on Notre-Dame. It was a sharp crack and Egon began to bawl. Hitler was announced and came into the room just as I was trying to pacify the boy by slapping the lion and saying, "There, we'll teach him to bite you," or something to that effect. Hitler came right over and slapped the lion on the other leg just to keep it in order as well. And, of course, Egon beamed. It became a regular play between them. Every time Hitler came he would slap the lion and say to the boy, "Now, has he been behaving himself?"

Stories are sometimes told that we were the people who taught Hitler table-manners. That is not so. He was not as uncouth as that. But he did have some curious tastes. He had the most incredible sweet tooth of any man I have ever met and could never be given enough of his favourite Austrian cakes heaped with whipped cream. At one meal I thought I would treat him to a bottle of Prince Metternich's best Gewürtztraminer. I was called out of the room to the telephone and as I came back caught him putting a heaping

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spoonful of castor-sugar in the glass. I pretended I had not seen and he drank the concoction with evident relish.

He was a voracious reader and positively stormed the historical library I was building up. He could not read enough about Frederick the Great and the French Revolution, historical parallels out of which he was trying to distil a policy for Germany's difficulties. For years the great Frederick was his hero and he never tired of quoting examples of the king's success in building up Prussia in the face of overwhelming odds. This did not seem to me a particularly pernicious obsession, as Frederick had always been a man who knew where to stop. The trouble was that when Hitler came to power he transferred his historical allegiance to Napoleon, who did not know where to stop, a fault which eventually involved Hitler in equal disaster.

His other politico-military master was Clausewitz, whom he could quote by the yard, and this was another source of his undoing. Neither he nor any of his entourage—and it must be remembered that substantially the same fellow-conspirators of the 1920's took over the leadership of Germany in the 1930's—acquired any conception of the strength of the salt-water powers. They thought on purely continental lines. To them international power politics were based on the limitations inherent in land warfare, and in my decade of struggle to influence the workings of Hitler's mind I never really succeeded in bringing home the importance of America as an integral factor in European politics.

My first attempt to wean him away from his dangerous harping on the need for a *revanche* against France as a means of restoring Germany's position in the world, came during one of his very early visits. We were sitting together after lunch when he asked quite modestly, "Well, Herr Hanfstaengl, and how do you see the world situation and its effect on Germany?" And then he let me talk for seven or eight minutes, listening with great attention and never attempting to interrupt. It was, I fear, an attitude he was gradually to lose over the course of his rise to power.

"Well, now," I said, "you have just fought in the war. We very nearly won in 1917 when Russia collapsed. Why, then, did we finally lose it?" "Because the Americans came in," he said. "If you

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D.T.

42

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

talk, I warned Hitler of the dangers of Rosenberg's racial and religious diatribes. I am a Protestant myself, but I knew the deeply ingrained Catholic sense of Bavaria and told Hitler he would make no headway as long as he continued to offend it. He always professed to see the strength of my arguments, but there was never any way of telling whether he was going to act on them or not.

I was so convinced that the extraordinary force of Hitler's oratory must make him a political power to be reckoned with, that I considered it even more necessary to bring him into contact with people of some position and standing. I introduced him to William Bayard Hale, who had been a classmate of President Wilson at Princeton and for years the chief European correspondent of the Hearst newspapers. He had more or less retired and had chosen to live the rest of his life in Munich. He was a very wise and intelligent observer of affairs and I often brought him together with Hitler in the Hotel Bayrischer Hof, where he was living. There was also a German-American artist of considerable talents, Wilhelm Funk, who had a lavishly equipped studio furnished with exquisite Renaissance furniture and tapestries and something of a *salon* which included people like Prince Henckel-Donnersmarck and a number of national-minded wealthier business men. But when they made veiled suggestions about a political alliance, Hitler shied away. "I know these people," he told me, "their own meetings are empty and they want me to come along and fill the hall for them and then split the proceeds. We National-Socialists have our own programme and they can join up with us if they like, but I will not come in as a subordinate ally."

I also brought him together with the family of Fritz-August von Kaulbach, who had been a member of a very distinguished family of artists in Bavaria, hoping that their civilized minds and manners might have some influence on Hitler through their common interest in the arts. At some period Hitler had also come to know the Bruckmanns, who were big publishers in Munich, and included Houston Stewart Chamberlain among their authors. Our two families knew each other well, and Elsa Bruckmann, a former Princess Cantacuzène, who was a considerably older woman, made something of a protégé of Hitler. Significantly he was impressed by her family title

& listen as if you are the world's
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D.T.

TRISTAN

and they shared a pain when I found that she had made a point of never entertained Nietzsche, never understand their

This civilized society had a touch of naïveté. family, who made their frequently. They invited private suite and he really had been *en grande tenue* jacket. "I felt quite embarrassed." "The servants were all waiting before the meal you can even regulate dominating woman who a long time she was correcting her daughter Lotte to requirements of society convinced him of the necessity of shirts and patent leather him that no leader of circumstances of the things. So he hardly ever patent leather shoes with

By this time I had the National Socialist hands were to some extent gave should be kept as after I had started going Amann, who at that weekly newspaper, the *Thierschstrasse*. It was a flashy figure I had great show of trying to ing the Party and state families. He whipped

D.T. Haufs.

TRISTAN IN THE THIERSCHSTRASSE

43

and they shared a passion for Wagner and Bayreuth. However, when I found that she had also extended her patronage to Rosenberg I made a point of never going to her *salon*. For a family which had entertained Nietzsche, Rainer Maria Rilke and Spengler I could never understand their being taken in by such a charlatan.

This civilized society was quite new to Hitler and his reactions had a touch of *naïveté*. He had also been introduced to the Bechstein family, who made their famous pianos in Berlin, but visited Munich frequently. They invited him to dinner at their *de luxe* hotel in a private suite and he reported on it to me wide-eyed. Frau Bechstein had been *en grande toilette* and her husband had worn a dinner jacket. "I felt quite embarrassed in my blue suit," Hitler told me. "The servants were all in livery and we drank nothing but champagne before the meal. And you should have seen the bathroom, you can even regulate the heat of the water." Frau Bechstein was a dominating woman who developed a motherly interest in Hitler. For a long time she was convinced that she was going to be able to marry her daughter Lotte to him and tried first to adapt his clothes to the requirements of society. Apparently during that evening she convinced him of the necessity of acquiring a dinner jacket and starched shirts and patent leather shoes. I was appalled at this and warned him that no leader of a working-class movement could dare in the circumstances of the time in Germany to be seen around in such things. So he hardly ever appeared in it, but did take a fancy to the patent leather shoes which for a time he wore on every occasion.

By this time I had decided that I would in a quiet way support the National Socialist Party. As a member of the family firm my hands were to some extent bound and I felt that any assistance I gave should be kept as much in the background as possible. Not long after I had started going to Hitler's meetings I called on Max Amann, who at that time was the business manager of the Party's weekly newspaper, the *Völkische Beobachter*, in his shabby offices in the Thierschstrasse. The first person I saw there, to my discomfort, was a flashy figure I had noticed at the first meeting, who put on a great show of trying to persuade me of the necessity of openly joining the Party and starting a campaign among the leading Munich families. He whipped out a gold pencil and, pushing a membership

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application form before me, began to force matters. He urged me to subscribe a dollar a month, a small fortune in Germany at the inflated rate of exchange, out of the proceeds of the art shop I had liquidated in New York. I felt I was being forced into a position which he planned to exploit and managed to stall him off until Amann came out from his inner office.

He was a rough fellow who had been Hitler's sergeant-major during the war, but he saw my point immediately and further endeared himself to me by voicing the gravest suspicions about the fellow who had accosted me when I entered. The affairs of the Party seemed surrounded by this air of conspiracy and intrigue. Hitler himself lived a shadowy existence and it was very difficult to keep track of his movements. He had the Bohemian habits of a man who had grown up with no real roots. He was hopelessly unpunctual and incapable of keeping to any sort of schedule. He walked around leading a fierce Alsatian named 'Wolf' and always carried a whip with a loaded handle. Ulrich Graf, his bodyguard, followed him everywhere. He would drop in after breakfast at Amann's office and then usually call in at the *Beobachter* office round the corner in the Schellingstrasse, and talk away with anyone who was fortunate enough to find him there.

He never stopped talking all day, committed nothing to paper, issued no directives and was the despair of his staff. He would make appointments and never be there, or would be discovered somewhere looking at second-hand motor-cars. Cars were an obsession with him. He had great plans, by no means so ill-conceived, for motorizing the embryo S.A., which kept order at his meetings and marched in demonstrations. He felt this would give them a head start on the police, who still went round on foot. But first he needed a car for himself to get round to meetings more quickly. He picked up one vehicle which looked like a dismantled horse-cab without a top, but soon exchanged this for a Selve car, with funds he had drummed up in a mysterious way from someone. It was a rattling monster and each end looked as if it was going different ways, but he seemed to think it conferred additional dignity on him and from that time on I do not think I ever saw him take a tram or bus again.

Once or twice a week he used to call in on a little stationer named

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Quirin Diestl, who had a shop near the Regina Hotel. Frau Diestl was a great admirer of his and always served particularly good black coffee and cakes. Diestl himself was a little rowdy with red hair and a red moustache, cut *à la* Hitler. He looked rather like a chipmunk. He knew all the latest local gossip and slanderous stories and was always ready to start a brawl with hecklers at the Party meetings.

Hitler's intimates were nearly all modest people. As I got to know him I started attending the Monday evening *Stammtisch* at the Café Neumaier, an old-fashioned coffee-house on the corner of the Petersplatz and the Viktualien Markt. The long, irregular room, with built-in benches and panelled walls, had space for a hundred people or so. Here he was in the habit of meeting his oldest adherents, many of them middle-aged married couples, who came to have their frugal supper, part of which they brought with them. Hitler would speak *en famille* and try out the technique and effect of his newest ideas.

Gradually I got to know quite a number of the inner circle. Anton Drexler, the original founder of the Party, was there most evenings, but by this time he was only its honorary president and had been pushed more or less to one side. A blacksmith by trade, he had a trade union background and although it was he who had thought up the original idea of appealing to the workers with a patriotic programme, he disapproved strongly of the street fighting and violence which was slowly becoming a factor in the Party's activities and wanted it built up as a working-class movement in an orderly fashion. Another old hand was Christian Weber; he was a horse-dealer, a big burly fellow who also went round with a whip and enjoyed knocking Communists about. At that time he was by no means the brute he later became and was terribly flattered when I had him to the flat for coffee. He had an oddly intuitive sense of the bottomless pit of Hitler's mind and foresaw many of the things people like myself fought to avoid. All he really wanted out of life was a secured position of some small dignity. The third most prominent member was Dietrich Eckart, to whom I took a distinct liking. He was a man of education, a poet, whose German version of Peer Gynt remains the standard translation. He was very Bavarian and looked like an old walrus, and his handsome income from book

1921 Haufs.

royalties helped fill the Party coffers. He it was who had first taken Hitler under his wing in the Party, although he was already beginning to regret it.

Other regulars included Hermann Esser, the ex-Communist and *enfant terrible* of the Party, its best speaker after Hitler; Gottfried Feder, an unsuccessful engineer, who had become a financial crank and was advocating the liquidation of Germany's war debts by national bankruptcy; he was also a man of some education and his family had acted as advisers to the Otto of Bavaria who had become the first king of Greece. Then there was a slightly mysterious man named Lieutenant Klintzsch, who was one of the stormtrooper leaders and had been and probably still was a member of the Organization Consul, which had been associated with Captain Ehrhardt in the abortive Kapp Putsch in Berlin in 1920 and had a hand in the murders of Erzberger and Rathenau. The minor characters included Haugg, Hitler's driver for a short period and Emil Maurice, the former clock-maker who succeeded him and, of course, Amann and Ulrich Graf. Other faithful but not particularly effective supporters included a couple named Lauböck—the man was quite a high railway official at the East Station; Oskar Koerner, a merchant, and a fur merchant named Wutz whose wife had been trained as a soprano.

None of these people knew me and at first felt it incumbent on them to be somewhat distant. Was this tall man with his slight German-American accent really a Hanfstaengl of Munich or was he an impostor like so many others who sought Hitler's company? But when some of my former comrades in the *Wilhelmsgymnasium*, the University and the Foot Guards greeted me, confidence grew. This slow process rather pleased me. It proved their caution as well as a certain dignity. The first person to evince any real cordiality was Ulrich Graf, whose exquisite sturdy head had all the quality of a Hans Memling portrait. He was a minor employee in the city council and an honest, decent fellow.

I also gained the confidence of old Singer, who was the Party treasurer and turned up at the coffee-house sometimes. He used to organize the collections at the meetings and stuff the takings in a small tin trunk, which he then used to hump home under his arm.

I went back with almost valueless, carefully counting his wife had long : most Munich hou was warmed by a other rooms in my the Party grow.

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Hanfs. 1921

TRISTAN IN THE THIERSCHSTRASSE

47

I went back with him once and watched him empty the pile of dirty, almost valueless, bank-notes on to his dining-room table and start carefully counting and sorting them. There was no supervision and his wife had long since retired to the warmth of the bedroom. As in most Munich houses during this desperate winter, only one room was warmed by a small stove. I can still feel the damp chill of the other rooms in my bones today. Out of such modest beginnings did the Party grow.

After these coffee-house sessions Hitler would put on his long black coat and black slouch hat, which made him look like an absolute desperado, and with Weber, Amann, Klintzsch and Graf, all well armed, walk back to the Thierschstrasse, where he had a tiny flat at number 41. I took to joining the group and as confidence in me grew, Hitler allowed me to call at his flat during the day.

He lived there like a down-at-heels clerk. He had one room and the use of a quite large entrance-hall as a sub-tenant of a woman named Reichert. It was all modest in the extreme and he remained there for years, although it became part of an act to show how he identified himself with the workers and have-nots of this world. The room itself was tiny. I doubt if it was nine feet wide. The bed was too wide for its corner and the head of it projected over the single narrow window. The floor was covered with cheap, worn linoleum with a couple of threadbare rugs, and on the wall opposite the bed there was a makeshift bookshelf, apart from a chair and rough table the only other piece of furniture in the room. The building is still standing and the flat intact, more or less as I remember it. On the outside wall, incongruously enough, in a little alcove in the stucco, there is still a weather-beaten china Madonna.

Hitler used to walk around in carpet slippers, frequently with no collar to his shirt and wearing braces. There were quite a lot of illustrations and drawings hanging on the wall, and the books were an indicative mixture. I made a list of them at the time which I still have. The upper shelves were those he liked to refer to in front of visitors. They included a history of the Great War by Hermann Stegemann, and Ludendorff's book on the same subject; German histories by Einhardt and Treitschke; Spamer's illustrated encyclopaedia, a work dating from the nineteenth century; Clausewitz'

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1923

D.T.

48

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

TRIST

Vom Kriege and the history of Frederick the Great by Kugler, a biography of Wagner by Houston Stewart Chamberlain and a potted world history by Maximilian Yorck von Wartenburg. The respectable volumes also included a tome called *Geographical Character Pictures* by Grube, a collection of heroic myths by Schwab and the war memoirs of Sven Hedin.

These were the books which formed Hitler's opinions and knowledge for the years to come. But perhaps more interesting was the bottom shelf, where in an abrupt descent from Mars to Venus, editions of a semi-pornographic nature lay discreetly shrouded in Edgar Wallace thrillers. Three of these well-thumbed volumes consisted of the curious studies of Eduard Fuchs—the *History of Erotic Art* and an *Illustrated History of Morals*.

Frau Reichert found him an ideal tenant. "He is such a nice man," she used to say, "but he has the most extraordinary moods. Sometimes weeks go by when he seems to be sulking and does not say a word to us. He looks through us as if we were not there. He always pays his rent punctually in advance, but he is a real Bohemian type." She said this sort of thing to other people and malicious opponents later suggested that Hitler came from Bohemia and that the Braunau where he was born was in fact the one near Sadowa. In later years, when this came to Hindenburg's ears, it was the reason for the old Field Marshal coining his contemptuous phrase about 'this Bohemian corporal'. He even talked about it to Hitler who said 'but no, I was born at Braunau on the Inn' and the old man thought he had been tricked by Hitler's detractors and became more friendly to him as a result.

No one could get Hitler to talk about his early years. I used to try to lead him on by saying how much I had enjoyed Vienna and drinking wine in the Grinzing hills and so on, but he would shut up like a clam. One morning when I came in rather unexpectedly, a big lump of a boy stood at the open kitchen door. He turned out to be Hitler's nephew, the son of his half-sister who had married a man named Raubal and still lived in Vienna. He was an ill-favoured lad and Hitler was somewhat displeased that I had seen him.

The Thierschstrasse flat was also where I first played the piano for Hitler. There was no room for a piano in my own place in the

Gentzstrasse, but in standing up against having a certain amount of time were very few time man in the police to come along and to issued in connexion coming up that might time that the Party authorities, although violent campaign that at the beginning of 1

Be that as it may witness in the frequency before these sessions something to calm him terribly out of tune listening in a chair, started the prelude Hitler's meat. He kept whistle every note completely in tune. He stretched his arms as if he were excellent feel for the conductor. This music crashed through the gone, and raring to go

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* It was crucial that he not expose his weakness so easily.

D. T. Hanf.

1923

TRISTAN IN THE THIERSCHSTRASSE

49

Gentzstrasse, but in his hall there was a rickety little upright model standing up against the wall. This was at a time when Hitler was having a certain amount of trouble with the police, in fact there were very few times when he was not. There was a special branch man in the police headquarters who was a secret Nazi and used to come along and tell him whether there were any warrants being issued in connexion with his political activities or what cases were coming up that might affect him. There was also a suggestion at the time that the Party was getting funds from the French occupation authorities, although this is impossible to believe in view of the violent campaign they carried on after the occupation of the Ruhr at the beginning of 1923.

Be that as it may, Hitler had to appear from time to time as a witness in the frequent political trials and he was always strung up before these sessions. He knew I was a pianist and asked me to play something to calm him. I was a bit out of practice and the piano was terribly out of tune; but I played a Bach fugue, to which he sat listening in a chair, nodding his head in vague disinterest. Then I started the prelude to the *Meistersinger*. This was it. This was Hitler's meat. He knew the thing absolutely by heart and could whistle every note of it in a curious penetrating vibrato, but completely in tune. He started to march up and down the hall, waving his arms as if he was conducting an orchestra. He really had an excellent feel for the spirit of music, certainly as good as many a conductor. This music affected him physically and by the time I had crashed through the finale he was in splendid spirits, all his worries gone, and raring to get to grips with the public prosecutor.

I am a very fair pianist and I had good teachers, but being of a somewhat vehement turn of mind, I play with what a number of people would consider over-elaborate emphasis, with plenty of Lisztian *florituri* and a fine romantic swing. This was just what Hitler liked. Probably one of the main reasons why he kept me near him for so many years, even when we began to differ radically over policies, was this particular gift I apparently possessed of playing the music he liked in exactly the orchestral style he preferred. The effect with the little upright piano and the linoleum floor was to produce the ringing tones of a Steinway in Carnegie Hall.

D.T.

Hans.

After that we had innumerable sessions together. He had no time for Bach and not much more for Mozart. There were not enough climaxes in the music for his turbulent nature. He would listen to Schumann and Chopin and liked certain pieces of Richard Strauss. Over the course of time I taught him to appreciate the Italian operas, but in the end it always had to be Wagner, *Meistersinger*, *Tristan and Isolde* and *Lohengrin*. I must have played them hundreds of times and he never grew tired of them. He had a genuine knowledge and appreciation of Wagner's music, and this he had picked up somewhere, probably in his Vienna days, long before I knew him. The seed may even have been sown in Linz, where at the beginning of the century there was a pupil of Liszt named Göllerich, who was the local orchestral conductor and a Wagner enthusiast, but wherever it was, it had become part of Hitler's being. I came to see that there was a direct parallel between the construction of the *Meistersinger* prelude and that of his speeches. The whole interweaving of *leitmotifs*, of embellishments, of counter-point and musical contrasts and argument, were exactly mirrored in the pattern of his speeches, which were symphonic in construction and ended in a great climax, like the blare of Wagner's trombones.

I was almost the only person who crossed the lines of his groups of acquaintances. Normally he kept them all in watertight compartments and never told them where he had been or where he was going or took any of them with him. Sometimes he asked me to accompany him to the Lauböcks for tea and had me sit down at their piano. I think it rather tickled his fancy to be able to produce someone with this accomplishment. Lauböck was a very loyal follower and as nationalist fervour in Bavaria increased kept a quantity of arms and ammunition hidden in his railway yards for the Nazis. He was always perfectly polite to me, but belonged to a sober group in the Party which resented the manner in which Hitler had taken to a person so different from themselves and considered it positively dangerous to the cause to have him frequenting the houses of my friends. Gottfried Feder even brought out a pamphlet which accused Hitler of preferring 'the company of beautiful women' to his obligations as the head of a working-class Party. This was a direct reference to my sister Erna, and particularly to my wife, for whom Hitler had

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It was on another his photographer friend marches I had picked business about cheer deliberate whipping the thousands of spectators Harvard, rah, rah, rah sort of thing. I played own *Falalah*, to show tunes, and gave them American brass-band enthusiasm. "That is movement, marvellous a drum majorette. All same thing. I even in course of the years, in shirt columns as they the day he took over Heil! but that is the of the blame.

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TRISTAN IN THE THIERSCHSTRASSE

51

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developed one of his theoretical passions, a tendency which will loom large and tragic in this story.

It was on another occasion, at the house of Heinrich Hoffmann, his photographer friend, that I started playing some of the football marches I had picked up at Harvard. I explained to Hitler all the business about cheer leaders and marches, counter-marches and deliberate whipping up of hysterical enthusiasm. I told him about the thousands of spectators being made to roar 'Harvard, Harvard, Harvard, rah, rah, rah!' in unison and of the hypnotic effect of this sort of thing. I played him some of the Sousa marches and then my own *Falarah*, to show how it could be done by adapting German tunes, and gave them all that buoyant beat so characteristic of American brass-band music. I had Hitler fairly shouting with enthusiasm. "That is it, Hanfstaengl, that is what we need for the movement, marvellous," and he pranced up and down the room like a drum majorette. After that he had the S.A. band practising the same thing. I even wrote a dozen marches or so myself over the course of the years, including the one that was played by the brown-shirt columns as they marched through the Brandenburger Tor on the day he took over power. Rah, rah, rah! became *Sieg Heil, Sieg Heil!* but that is the origin of it and I suppose I must take my share of the blame.

One thing that became borne in on me very early was the absence of a vital factor in Hitler's existence. He had no normal sex life. I have said that he developed an infatuation for my wife, which expressed itself in flowers and hand-kissings and an adoring look in his eyes. She was probably the first good-looking woman of good family he had ever met, but somehow one never felt with him that the attraction was physical. It was part of his extraordinary gift for self-dramatization, part of hidden complexes and a constitutional insufficiency which may have been congenital and may have resulted from a syphilitic infection during his youth in Vienna.

At this early period the details were unknown to me and one could only sense that something was wrong. Here was this man with a volcanic store of nervous energy, with no apparent outlet except his almost medium-like performances on a speaker's platform. Most of his women friends and acquaintances were the mother-type, Frau

Haug. 1923 D.T.

Bruckmann and Frau Bechstein. There was another woman in her sixties I met, named Carola Hoffmann, who was a retired school-teacher and had a little house in the Munich suburb of Solln, which he and his cronies used to use as a sort of sub-headquarters, where the good lady mothered Hitler and fed him with cakes.

We used to think at one time that Jenny Haug, his driver's sister, was his girl friend. She had a nice figure and big eyes and looked like a shopgirl, which indeed she was. She was a niece, or at least a relation, of Oskar Koerner and was an employee in his toy shop near the Viktualien Markt. Frau Anna Drexler, to whom I used to talk about it, said that Jenny and Adolf met at the house of a little jeweller named Joseph Fuess in the Corneliusstrasse, but that the girl had a youthful crush on Hitler which he in no way reciprocated. She even used to carry around a little pistol in an armpit holster as his voluntary extra bodyguard. When he had dinner with us in the Gentzstrasse he would go out on the balcony as the evening drew on and watch for his car to arrive. Jenny would often be sitting in the back seat waiting for him. They would drive off together, but I knew he was only going to a café to stay up talking half the night. A bit of petting may have gone on, but that, it became clear to me over the course of time, was all Hitler was capable of. My wife summed him up very quickly: "Putzi," she said, "I tell you he is a neuter."

One evening as we were walking home from the Café Neumaier, Hitler signalled to the others that he wanted to go ahead with me alone. I had been feeding him with ideas and items of news culled from the foreign press and had been agreeably surprised to find them cropping up in his speeches. The man was open to influence and I felt encouraged to continue exerting all I could. "Herr Hanfstaengl," he said, "you must not feel disappointed if I limit myself in these evening talks to comparatively simple subjects. Political agitation must be primitive. That is the trouble with all the other parties. They have become too professorial, too academic. The ordinary man in the street cannot follow and, sooner or later, falls a victim to the slap-bang methods of Communist propaganda."

I agreed wholeheartedly and told him that one of the things which had most impressed me with the conviction of his eventual success

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TRISTAN IN THE THIERSCHSTRASSE

53

was his ability to speak in homely terms, with a real punch behind his words. I told him, and it was not all that far-fetched a comparison, given the totally different conditions in the two countries, that he reminded me of Theodore Roosevelt. The former President had a vigour and courage, a vitality and familiarity with all manner of men, with a style of action and utterance which, being so direct, had endeared him to the plain folks. "People in Munich say that all you and your Party stand for is tumult and shouting, brutality and violence," I went on. "It may console you to know that all those things were said about Roosevelt, but he did not listen and carried the country with him." I told him of the effective use in American political life of telling catch-phrases and explained how this was buttressed by snappy headlines in the newspapers, putting ideas over with a phonetic, alliterative impact.

"You are absolutely right," Hitler replied. "But how can I hammer my ideas into the German people without a Press. The newspapers ignore me utterly. How can I follow up my successes as a speaker with our miserable four-page *Völkische Beobachter* once a week? We'll get nowhere until it appears as a daily." He told me of the great plans they had for this if only they could find the funds.

It must have been that evening that I decided to render more substantial help. About this time I received one of the instalments due to me for surrendering my share in the Academy Art Shop in New York to my partner. It was about \$1,500, but that represented an absolute fortune when converted into depreciated marks. Apparently there were two American rotary presses for sale, and if their purchase could be financed it meant that the *Beobachter* could come out as a daily in a full size format. I learnt that a thousand of my dollars would make up the required sum, incredible as it may seem, and one morning I went down and handed it over to Amann in greenbacks, on the understanding that it should be an interest-free loan. He and Hitler were beside themselves. "Such generosity. Hanfstaengl, we shall never forget this. Wonderful." I was as pleased as they, as I felt that with its transformation from a shrill pamphlet to a daily, my influence might serve to increase its appeal and broaden its outlook. I got a *Simplicissimus* cartoonist named

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Hanfs. 1923

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CHAPTER III

ONE SIDE TO A STATUE

*Begging expeditions—Hitler escapes a Communist patrol—
From bombs to women boxers—Hitler's fixation with Leda
and the Swan—His faux pas as an art expert—Diamonds and
a fedora hat—The plans for Czechoslovakia—Hitler's gifts as a
mimic—Poison on his birthday—Orator in excelsis—Goering,
Hess and Haushofer.*

THE PARTY was permanently short of funds. In fact the conversion of the *Beobachter* into a daily, for all its propaganda value, had only made the financial situation worse in other respects and Hitler was always on the look-out for other sources to tap. He seemed to think that I would be useful with my connexions, but however interested and encouraging my friends were, they did not choose to dip into their pockets. I simply have no clear idea where the Party revenues came from. There is little doubt that, in its early stages, the German army command in Bavaria had provided subsidies for an organization which gave every promise of fighting the Communists, but by 1923 I suspect this source was drying up, as the Nazis were becoming too independent. Most of the subscriptions were private. There was a Frau von Seidlitz who had helped over the printing presses and two Finnish ladies living in Munich who subsidized what they assumed was an anti-Bolshevist crusade, probably under the influence of Rosenberg. Dietrich Eckart picked up a lot of the bills himself. He had a substantial income from his book royalties. Some of the national-minded Bavarian industrialists were doubtless prodded into giving a cheque from time to time, but it was all hand-to-mouth stuff and there were always debts awaiting payment and nothing to meet them with.

Hitler seemed to think that I would give an air of respectability to his begging expeditions and we went on several trips round Munich and its environs visiting prominent citizens. One journey I recall was

to Bernried, on the Starnberg Lake, to see a retired consul-general of private means named Scharrer, who was married to a member of the Busch family from St. Louis. They had a colossal *nouveau-riche* establishment full of white peacocks, borzois and tame swans, but we got no change out of them, at least not on that occasion. As the situation was getting serious Hitler determined to try his luck in Berlin. There was a business man there named Emil Gansser, of the firm of Siemens & Halske. He was often in Munich and was an admirer of Hitler, and a friend, I think, of Dietrich Eckart. He was an imposing figure, in spite of his broad Swabian dialect; he wore stiff white collars and starched shirts, was always dressed in a black coat and striped trousers and was an educated man of some substance. He had promised to try and interest his acquaintances in Berlin and Hitler had determined to see if the personal touch would produce results.

Rather to my surprise he asked me to accompany him and we drove off one morning, it must have been about the beginning of April, with Emil Maurice at the wheel of the ramshackle Selve. Fritz Lauböck, a callow youth of about eighteen, made up the party. At that time Hitler had some idea of making him his secretary. We took the Leipzig road, which leads through Saxony, where the Government at that time was more or less in the hands of the Communists. Hitler was taking a considerable risk in travelling this way, as an order was out for his arrest there as a nationalist agitator and there was even a price on his head. A few months before they had arrested Ehrhardt, the Organization Consul leader, who had been down on the Tegern Lake to see his former Kapp Putsch conspirator General Lüttwitz and had also been in touch with Hitler over plans for the campaign against the French in the Ruhr.

We were just coming up to Delitzsch, travelling fairly fast round a curve, when we saw the road was blocked by a unit of Communist militia. I don't think any of us said anything, there was no time. But I saw Hitler tense and his hand take a firm grip on his heavy whip, as we came to a stop. I had a sudden inspiration. "Leave it to me," I muttered as the militia came up and asked to see our identity documents. I got out of the car and produced the impressive Swiss passport on which I had travelled back from the States. "I am Mr.

Hanfstaengl," I said I could muster. "I : visiting the Leipzig chauffeur and the o associate." It worke made no attempt to us on in surly fashion

Hitler fairly babbled that off well. They "life." How true this faced a stiff prison s 1923 which culminated out quite di notoriety on which h forgot the incident. of the spot he would remember? That was I think he resented h when garbled account biographies, my name.

We got to Berlin at the Adlon Hotel. I saw my friends see me - it was one of the Nazis as secret as on the subject. I said hospice behind the St dropped off after mal not the faintest idea think he even told M. the extraordinary person. It was only later that I for him by Ohnesorge in the fullness of time Government.

Gansser lived some difficulty finding

Hans. 1923

Hanfstaengl," I said, in the most atrocious German-American accent I could muster. "I am a paper manufacturer and printer and I am visiting the Leipzig Fair. This is my valet," pointing to Hitler, "my chauffeur and the other gentleman is the son of a German business associate." It worked. My papers were written in English and they made no attempt to look at the documents of the others, but waved us on in surly fashion. I jumped in and we tore off.

Hitler fairly babbled his thanks: "Hanfstaengl, you really carried that off well. They would have had my head. You have saved my life." How true this was I do not know. He would certainly have faced a stiff prison sentence and had he been in gaol the events of 1923 which culminated in the Feldherrnhalle Putsch might have turned out quite differently. He might never have acquired the notoriety on which his future rise to power was based. But he never forgot the incident. In later years whenever we drove within miles of the spot he would turn round and say: "Hanfstaengl, do you remember? That was a nasty situation you got me out of." Even so, I think he resented having been called my valet, even as a ruse, and when garbled accounts of this incident were given in the later Nazi biographies, my name was never mentioned in connexion with it.

We got to Berlin and drove through the Brandenburger Tor past the Adlon Hotel. I suddenly thought, heavens what happens if any of my friends see me in this company, especially Kommer or Pallenberg—it was one of their haunts. I was still keeping my support for the Nazis as secret as possible and could not afford any social uproar on the subject. I said that I would spend the night at an Evangelical hospice behind the State Theatre in the Unter den Linden, so I was dropped off after making arrangements to meet the next day. I had not the faintest idea where Hitler was staying and in fact I do not think he even told Maurice until the last moment. It was typical of the extraordinary personal security arrangements he took all his life. It was only later that I learnt that accommodation had been arranged for him by Ohnesorge, a senior post office official whom he knew and in the fullness of time appointed Postmaster-General in the Nazi Government.

Gansser lived somewhere out in the suburb of Steglitz and we had some difficulty finding the house. He came and opened the door very

1923 Hanfs. D.T.

Hanfs.

58

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

carefully himself and, to my astonishment, I found that behind his staid exterior he was a crackpot inventor. There were tubes and retorts and presses all over the place and the bathroom looked like a scene out of *Faust*. He was apparently making some new form of bomb no bigger than a tennis ball which would blow up a house. He was an engaging and in fact harmless character and took a great fancy to me. I found out later that he was always telling Hitler what a good influence I was. He and Hitler disappeared together for a while and then we set off in another vehicle, which our host had organized, although he did not accompany us. It was a closed van, again part of Hitler's mania for secrecy. We drove all over Berlin and Hitler would get out leaving my six-foot-four curled up inside like a grasshopper. What on earth use to him I was I do not know, as he never told me who he had seen or what the result was. Perhaps I just kept up his spirits.

I did not get the impression that the canvassing was very successful and Hitler had plenty of time to spare. On the Sunday morning after we arrived, we arranged to meet at the war museum. Hitler had promised to show young Lauböck round Berlin and this is where he probably felt most at home. We foregathered, not at the entrance, but somewhat secretly up on the first floor, by the glass cabinet which contained the last uniform of Frederick the Great, who was, with Marshal Blücher, Hitler's historical idol at the time.

Hitler must have been in the museum before, as he knew all the guide-book facts by heart and this mute evidence of past Prussian military glory was clearly balm to his nostalgia. He spouted endless facts and details about the guns and uniforms, maps and impedimenta with which the place was filled, but I remember chiefly his morbid fascination with the sculptured embellishments on the cornices and keystones in the courtyard. These were a series of heads of dying warriors by Schlüter: "I can tell you, Hanfstaengl, when you have seen war from the front lines as long as I did, you are lost in admiration for Schlüter's genius. He was unquestionably the greatest artist of his time. Even Michelangelo did nothing better or more true to life." I could not help being impressed by what Hitler said. I had this sense of insufficiency at not being able to take part in the war myself. There was still a very strong tinge of the ex-

servicemen's association compensation.

Looking back at an interesting insight of death in the Schlüter cult and the satisfaction of warriors—the Emperor William I, destined walked out to the monuments by Rast Blücher, on foot. I had not been depicted a cavalry charge. I all. "Ach, Hanfstaengl, make? They all look figure of the rider." to power abolished an act which his regret.

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ONE SIDE TO A STATUE

59

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Looking back at the visit now, some of Hitler's reactions provided an interesting insight into his character. There was this idealization of death in the Schlüter masks, his Frederick the Great and Blücher cult and the satisfaction he found in the more than life-sized statues of warriors—the élite, like the giant grenadiers of Frederick William I, destined to sacrifice themselves on the battlefield. As we walked out to the Unter den Linden again, we went past the two monuments by Rauch of Frederick the Great, on horseback and Blücher, on foot. I remarked how strange it was that the old Marshal had not been depicted at his most typical—mounted at the head of a cavalry charge. This did not appeal to Hitler's infantry mind at all. "Ach, Hanfstaengl," he said, "what difference would a horse make? They all look at same and only spoil concentration on the figure of the rider." Hitler was allergic to horses, and when he came to power abolished all the cavalry divisions in the German Army, an act which his generals in the Russian campaign were bitterly to regret. D.T.

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I tried to get Hitler to fall in with a trick I had learnt from the well-known artist and etcher Luigi Kasimir, whom I had met as a student in Vienna and then accompanied on a tour through Italy. Kasimir always maintained that you could only appreciate the success of a sculptor's work if you walked right round a statue, viewing it from all angles. Although I was now talking on my own subject, Hitler preferred not to comply. He declared that the best effect could only be gained by standing within the range of vision of the figure depicted in the statue, and when I insisted, said that the traffic on the Unter den Linden made my circular tour impossible. He repeated his first argument when we went over to look at the monument to William I by Begas, which is, from the artistic point of view, one of the best equestrian statues in the world. I realize now that in this, as in so many other circumstances, Hitler only recognized or was interested in one aspect of a problem. He would never admit that there were two sides to a question—or to a statue.

Our next stop was the national gallery. This at least was my home ground and I was about to lead him to a dozen of the best

D.T. How he feared and hated horses.
Then tell us much about him.

1923 Hays.

pictures and talk about their style and place in history when Hitler took charge again. He simply could not bear not to dominate any situation in which he found himself, but in this case his mania for always being right led him astray. "The first thing is for young Fritzl to get a general impression," he said—*einen Ueberblick*—it was a favourite word of his and highly indicative of his mental processes. He liked to get a superficial view of a whole situation in his mind before dealing with the details of its parts. We swept past the Dutch and Italian primitives like a patrol of Bersaglieri. There was a slight slowing of the pace in front of Leonardo da Vinci's *Flora*, but we only came to a stop opposite Rembrandt's *Man in a Golden Helmet*:

"There you have something unique," Hitler pontificated. "Look at that heroic, soldier-like expression. It proves that Rembrandt, in spite of the many pictures he painted in Amsterdam's Jewish quarter, was at heart a true Aryan and German!" Here was just the way not to teach young Lauböck about art, but worse was to come. With barely a glance at the superb Berlin Vermeers, we galloped in search of Hitler's other artistic hero, Michelangelo. The Berlin museum had no originals of this master, only a marble statue of the young John the Baptist which is ascribed to him, probably erroneously. Hitler came to a halt in front of this lightly poised, almost feminine figure and proclaimed, for Lauböck's benefit: "Michelangelo—that is the most monumental, the most eternal figure in the history of human art," all the time looking round somewhat desperately for better examples of his work. "What have they done with the casts they used to have in this room? Stay here a moment and I will go and find them."

With this he disappeared, leaving me to put young Lauböck right about the one example in front of us, telling him that Michelangelo could only really be studied in Florence and Rome. Hitler did not come back, so we went after him. We found him lost in concentration in front of Correggio's *Leda and the Swan*. He pulled himself together as we arrived, and although it was the sensuous portrayal of the two central figures which had fascinated him, read us a hasty lecture about the wonderful play of light on the bathing nymphs in the background. Over the course of time I discovered that the subject of this picture was almost an obsession with him. In later years this,

almost the most of gold medal for an at one of the Nazi.

We quick-marched Italian Baroque to sudden halt in front of what florid and thunderstruck, especially Hitler had cast a Michelangelo still name of the artist overlooked the other. "There you are, I end to his genius, back and look at whether he ever fo

That afternoon, to Hitler that we; Luna Park. We left of the main attraction to appeal to him, so I suppose, quite diversified trunks and tap. It was all put to keep his face exposed about boxing being and not the right until the show was duelling with sabre. I could see he was women boxers are Hitler was taking g

We had a coup d'état top of a long terror someone with a caricature of him. We had practically no

Hay's. 1923

ONE SIDE TO A STATUE

61

almost the most obscene of classical subjects, was sure to obtain a gold medal for any modern German artist who used it as his subject at one of the Nazi exhibitions.

We quick-marched again and were just passing through the Italian Baroque room on the way to the exit when Hitler came to a sudden halt in front of Caravaggio's *Matthew the Apostle*, a somewhat florid and not particularly successful composition. I was thunderstruck, especially as it was the first Christian subject at which Hitler had cast a glance. Then I understood. With his hunger for Michelangelo still unsatisfied, Hitler had misread the plaque. The name of the artist started with Michelangelo all right, but he had overlooked the other two words, which read Amerighi - Caravaggio. "There you are, Fritzl," said Hitler triumphantly. "There was no end to his genius. There is no time now but we shall have to come back and look at it again." I often wondered whether he did and whether he ever found out his mistake.

That afternoon, as there seemed nothing better to do, I suggested to Hitler that we go and spend a couple of hours at the fun fair in Luna Park. We looked around the side-shows and found that one of the main attractions was a group of women boxers. This seemed to appeal to him, so in we went and watched several matches. It was, I suppose, quite daring stuff for its day, with the women in abbreviated trunks and vests, mincing around and landing the occasional tap. It was all pure circus, but Hitler was rivetted. He managed to keep his face expressionless and made a few superior comments about boxing being a very fine thing, that this was only a put-up job and not the right thing for women and so on. But we had to stay until the show was over. "Well, at least it was better than this duelling with sabres that goes on in Germany," Hitler remarked, but I could see he was keeping a very tight rein on himself. After all women boxers are not the highest form of aesthetic spectacle and Hitler was taking good care not to show how much he had enjoyed it.

We had a couple of beers and were admiring the sunset from the top of a long terrace of steps, more or less on our way out, when someone with a camera recognized Hitler and tried to take a photograph of him. Who it was I do not know to this day, as the Nazis had practically no organization in Berlin at all. It may have been

Haus. 1923

someone who had seen him in Munich. Hitler was horrified. Perhaps he had a bad conscience about the women boxers. He went straight up to the man and said he must surrender his film, that he could not possibly allow a picture of himself taken in Luna Park to appear, that he would be ruined, that it would cause a tremendous scandal and more in the same vein. The argument went on for an hour and more, with Hitler reaching ever greater heights of hyperbole, how this would be the final blow to the German Freedom Movement, like a man possessed. In the end the other poor fellow, who had really meant no harm, but merely wanted a good picture as a souvenir, gave in and promised that he would not develop the film, to which indeed he kept, as it certainly never appeared anywhere. If it had become known that Hitler was in Berlin it might have had quite serious results, as Karl Severing, the Prussian Minister of the Interior, was a declared enemy of the N.S.D.A.P. and had, I believe, also issued an order for Hitler's arrest.

During the second or third evening in Berlin Hitler took me along to dinner with the Bechsteins. They had one of those hideous great houses built in the 1870's, somewhere in the centre of the city. It was all very pretentious in the manner of the Berlin *haute bourgeoisie*, but fortunately the daughter Lotte was not there, so I was spared being involved in Frau Bechstein's domestic plot. We talked about politics, the Party and the future, but our hosts shied away whenever the question of money came up. No, times were difficult, there were so many obligations and Herr Hitler must understand. This did not prevent Frau Bechstein sitting there with diamonds as big as cherries strung round her neck and wrist, so I ventured a social solecism and suggested that if only she could raise money on them it would keep the Party going for months. I was to learn later that she did just that with some of her jewellery, although Hitler never mentioned the fact. All we got as we were ushered out was a hat. As we came into the cloakroom he could not find the broad-brimmed black gangster affair in which he normally went round. In its place there hung a very expensive greyish-yellow fedora. "It is one of my husband's," said Frau Bechstein, "and he would like you to accept it as a present." Hitler took it and thanked his hostess profusely. At least

Haus.

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It had been a fruit again the next morning Saxony and finally station in Bayreuth, had been introduced Dietrich Eckart, but so I suggested the festival theatre, which

The place was all who let us in, and then set for the *Flying Dutchman* been left standing which had never been used ideal moment for a had been devised by did much work at produced. He had done Weber's *Freischütz* and Wagner. There is quite they produced *Rien* Hitler drank in all then walked all round the Wagner had used as and staff still hung pleased to have impr from which to try and

I had been increased Gentzstrasse flat, as a my information about him again returning Continental terms. On lunch. I can remember just before crossing the We had ham and chocolate about the journey and

Haus. 1923

ONE SIDE TO A STATUE

63

it looked better than the other one and did not emphasize the pallor of his face to the same extent.

It had been a fruitless enough trip and Hitler was pleased to leave again the next morning for Munich. We took a long detour to avoid Saxony and finally spent the night at the Post Hotel opposite the station in Bayreuth, where Hitler signed himself in as an author. He had been introduced to Siegfried and Winifred Wagner, I think by Dietrich Eckart, but they were not at their home on this occasion, so I suggested the next morning that we should go and look at the festival theatre, which he had never seen.

The place was all locked up, but I managed to find a caretaker who let us in, and there, lo and behold, in the dim light the stage was set for the *Flying Dutchman*. It was the same scenery which had been left standing when war broke out in August 1914. The theatre had never been used since and nothing had been touched. It was an ideal moment for a little family history, as the original stage setting had been devised by my great-grandfather, Ferdinand Heine, who did much work at the Dresden Opera House, where it was first produced. He had designed the scenery for the first performance of Weber's *Freischütz* and later became an older friend and patron of Wagner. There is quite a collection of Wagner letters to him and they produced *Rienzi* together as well as the *Flying Dutchman*. Hitler drank in all these details and was impressed and moved. We walked all round the theatre, finally stopping in the room which Wagner had used as a study, where his instructions to the artists and staff still hung on the wall. Hitler was entranced and I was pleased to have impressed him, as I felt it gave me a broader base from which to try and influence his political ideas.

I had been increasingly uneasy since our first serious talk in the Gentsstrasse flat, as although he had seemed to take in quite a lot of my information about America, the subsequent weeks had found him again returning to his old ideas of political strategy in purely Continental terms. On the last lap to Munich we stopped for a picnic lunch. I can remember the spot exactly. We drove up into a wood just before crossing the Danube and sat watching the river sweep by. We had ham and cheese sandwiches and bottles of beer. He talked about the journey and then mentioned the monument outside Leipzig

Haus. D.T.

64

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

we had seen on the way up, which commemorates the Battle of the Nations against Napoleon in 1813.

"The most important thing in the next war will be to make sure that we control the grain and food supplies of western Russia," Hitler said. I was appalled. Rosenberg and company had been at him again. Rosenberg, who spoke Russian better than he did German, wielded tremendous influence on Hitler and his associates when it came to propagating this anti-Bolshevist, anti-Russian line. Anyone who could claim to be a Russian expert was able to sing this sort of song in the Party all day long and Rosenberg was the most adept at it. Behind their arguments lay the desire to return to their lost lands in the Baltic countries.

P.T. I tried to turn Hitler's thoughts into less fanciful channels. "It is no good," I told him. "Even if you overrun western Russia it will not help in the long run. You can have all the wheat in the world, but you need more than that to fight wars. The country to reckon with is America, and not only do they have more wheat than you can ever capture, but more iron and more steel and more coal and more clear blue sky and more people. If you have them on the other side you will lose any future war before you start it." He half grunted and stopped short, but I could sense that the argument had not really sunk in.

Soon he was off on another tack, complaining about the roads over which we had just travelled. In all conscience they had been bad enough, most of them dirt and flint tracks, with the Bavarian highways even worse than the Prussian. "Look at the way we have to travel round Czechoslovakia to get to eastern Germany," he said. "The whole thing is a nonsense. Half the people on the other side of the border are Germans anyway and it is all wrong to have this alien government placed across our lines of communication." Then dropping his voice: "What is more, we shall have to get those Skoda works in Pilsen under German control one of these days." And this mind you was in early 1923. I only regarded this line of thought as a possibly curable aberration in those days, but it shows the extraordinary tenacity of his ideas. I was probably entirely wrong in supposing that they could ever be influenced, but in many respects he was still malleable and I looked on his false conceptions as something that

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We got up and in the surrounding little pleasure in and hills evoked dweller and only filled with the pla buildings or draw message for him. at Berchtesgaden approach to a ho mountain scenery thoughts. The soli height, and the fi and plan political

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ONE SIDE TO A STATUE

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might be successfully combated. "Mind you get hold of that Pilsen beer too," I had joked. He had come out of his reverie and laughed.

We got up and drove the last few miles home. There was nothing in the surroundings to detain him. He had little eye for, and took little pleasure in, the beauties of nature as such. Trees and streams, and hills evoked no positive response. He was essentially a town dweller and only felt at home in the market place. His mind was filled with the plans of a frustrated architect. He liked to sketch new buildings or draw vast urban vistas, but the country-side had no message for him. He was already spending a certain amount of time at Berchtesgaden, which he subsequently made into his nearest approach to a home, but although he would sit brooding over the mountain scenery, it was really only the solitude that fed his thoughts. The solitude and the sense of power that came from the height, and the fact that he was able without interruption to plot and plan political moves with his cronies.

For all that he was an entertaining travelling companion. He would sit whistling or humming passages from the Wagner operas, which kept us both amused for many an hour. In all the years I knew him, however, I never heard him whistle a popular tune. He was also a gifted mimic with a sharp sense of the ridiculous. He could imitate Gansser's Swabian accent to a nicety, but his star turn was a sort of symposium of the type of patriotic orator then very common in Germany and by no means extinct since—the politically conscious, semi-professorial figure with a Wotan-like beard. Hitler's nationalism was practical and direct, but they would boom away about Siegfried's sword being drawn out of its scabbard and lightning playing round the German eagle and so forth. He could invent this mock rhodomontade *ad infinitum* and be very funny about it. He also knew by heart the greater part of a dreadful poem which some admirer had written in his honour. This poetaster had looked up in the rhyming dictionary all the German words which end in 'tler', of which there are several score, and had produced an endless series of ill-scanning couplets. When he was in a good mood Hitler would repeat this with embellishments of his own and have us in tears of laughter. His other party pieces included imitating Amann in a rage with some importunate bill collector, or that little red-haired horror

the weakness and decadence
of America.

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Quirin Diestl insulting a political opponent. He could also imitate market women and children superbly. Some people might say that a gift for mimicry is the sign of an undeveloped personality. In his case it was an example of the extraordinary *rapport* he could establish with the minds and emotions of others. It was a trait which Hitler kept for as long as I knew him.

A day or two after our return Hitler celebrated his birthday, on April 20. I went along during the morning to congratulate him and found him alone, although the grubby little flat was stacked from floor to ceiling with flowers and cakes. Yet Hitler was in one of his curious wary moods and had not touched a single one of them. There they were, with swastikas and eagles in whipped cream all over them, looking like the bakers' pavilion at a village fair. It was not much to my taste, I am a beer and sausages man myself, but even my mouth watered. "Well, Herr Hitler," I said, "now you can really have a feast."—"I am not at all sure they are not all poisoned," he replied. "But they are all from your friends and admirers," I told him. "Yes, I know," he replied. "But this house belongs to a Jew and these days you can drip slow poison down the walls and kill your enemies. I never eat here normally."

"Herr Hitler, you've been reading too many of those Edgar Wallace thrillers," I answered, but nothing would persuade him, and I literally had to take a taste myself before he would touch them. Then he started to brighten up, as I had come along to pander to another of his superstitions—astrology. I had looked up the dates and found out that he not only shared the same birthday with such redoubtable Putsch-makers as the Pole, Albert Korfanty, who had led the third insurrection in Upper Silesia in 1921, and Napoleon III, but that it was the same date on which Cromwell had dissolved Parliament. Hitler had always had a romantic obsession with Cromwell and this delighted him. "Ah, Cromwell," he said, "that's my man. He and Henry VIII are the only two positive figures in English history."

It seemed a good moment to bring up something which had been worrying me ever since I had met him, and that was his stupid little moustache. There had been a time during the war when he let it grow, but the first time I saw him it was already clipped back to the

ridiculous little smug his nose. I called on Brandt to bear witness or at most be clipped much more dignified quite unmoved. "Do time goes on people it was to become as I

In fact he was not decently, soberly and impress on his exterior, and this he knew a *Sprachmensch* and overcome all obstacles and he never really had not talk forcibly, res hold a large audience rise in his confidence doctor had not at the the Nazis were native Brockhaus encyclopedia and a *Times* newspaper in connexion with Eh

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ONE SIDE TO A STATUE

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In fact he was not vain about his appearance. He was always decently, soberly and unostentatiously dressed and did not expect to impress on his exterior alone. His appeal lay in his power as an orator, and this he knew and played on for all he was worth. He was a *Sprachmensch* and believed in the power of the spoken word to overcome all obstacles. He even judged others by the same standards, and he never really had confidence in the ability of anyone who could not talk forcibly, reserving his special approval for those who could hold a large audience. This is one of the basic reasons for the final rise in his confidence of Goebbels, although the diabolical little doctor had not at this time appeared on the scene. Not that any of the Nazis were national figures in 1923. The spring edition of the Brockhaus encyclopaedia referred to Hitler vaguely as Georg Hitler and a *Times* newspaper dispatch in which he had been referred to in connexion with Ehrhardt spelt his name as Hintler.

I had by this time been to a number of his public speeches and was beginning to understand the pattern of their appeal. The first secret lay in his choice of words. Every generation develops its own vocabulary of catchwords and phrases, and these date their thoughts and utterances. My own father talked like a contemporary of Bismarck, the people of my own age bore the stamp of Wilhelm II, but Hitler had caught the casual camaraderie of the trenches, and without stooping to slang, except for special effects, managed to talk like a neighbour of his audience. In describing the difficulties of the housewife without enough money to buy the food her family needed in the Viktualien Markt he would produce just the phrases she would have used herself to describe her difficulties, if she had been able to formulate them. Where other national orators gave the painful impression of talking down to their audience, he had this priceless gift

of expressing exactly their own thoughts. He also had the good sense, or instinct, to appeal to the women in his audience, who were after all the new political factor in the 1920's. Many a time I have seen him face a hall plentifully sprinkled with opponents ready to heckle and interject, and in his search for the first body of support, make a remark about food shortages or domestic difficulties or the sound instinct of his women listeners which would produce the first bravos. And time and again these came from women. That would break the ice.

By now I was numbered among his immediate supporters, sitting behind him on the platform. Time and again I noticed that during the first part of his speeches he stood with his knees braced back, rigid and immobile, until he provided the first sounding shot which brought a response. Every speech he gave had a past, a present and a future. Each appeared to be a complete historical survey of the situation and although his gift of phrase and argument was infinite in its variety, one sentence always reoccurred at an early stage: "When we ask ourselves today what is happening in the world, we are obliged to cast our minds back to. . . ." That was the sign that he had his audience under control and, taking the events leading up to the collapse of the Kaiser's Germany, he would build up the whole pyramid of the current situation according to his own lights.

The gestures which had so impressed me the first evening I saw him were as varied and flexible as his arguments. They were not, as in other speakers, stereotyped movements to find some employment for his hands, but an integral part of his method of exposition. The most striking, in contrast to the dull slamming of the fist into the palm of the other hand of so many orators, was a soaring upward movement of the arm, which seemed to leave infinite possibilities piercing the air. It had something of the quality of a really great orchestral conductor who instead of just hammering out the downward beat, suggests the existence of hidden rhythms and meaning with the upward flick of his baton.

To continue the musical metaphor, the first two-thirds of Hitler's speeches were in march time, growing increasingly quicker and leading up to the last third which was primarily rhapsodic. Knowing

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Hitler suffered speeches. In the end It took him between foolscap sheets, about fifteen or twenty

1923 Hays.

ONE SIDE TO A STATUE

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that a continuous presentation by one speaker would be boring, he would impersonate in a masterful way an imaginary opponent, often interrupting himself with a counter-argument and then returning to his original line of thought after completely annihilating his supposed adversary. There was a curious tinge to the finale. It was gradually being borne in on me that Hitler was a narcissus type for whom the crowd represented a substitute medium for the woman he did not seem able to find. Speaking for him represented the satisfaction of some depletion urge, and to me this made the phenomenon of his oratory more intelligible. The last eight to ten minutes of a speech resembled an orgasm of words.

I hope it will not appear too blasphemous when I say that he had learnt a lot from the Bible. He was to all intents and purposes an atheist by the time I got to know him, although he still paid lip-service to religious beliefs and certainly acknowledged them as the basis for the thinking of others. His pattern of looking into the past and then repeating the basis of his beliefs four times over derived directly from the New Testament, and no one can say it was not a proven method. His political arguments were based on what I came to call the system of the horizontal figure of eight. He would move out to the right, expend his criticism and curve round to the left for approval. He would continue on to reverse the process and come back dead centre to end up with *Deutschland über alles* to a roar of joint applause. He would attack the former ruling classes for their surrender of the nation, their class prejudices and feudal economic system to applause from the Left-Wingers, and then riddle those who were prepared to decry the true traditions of German greatness to the applause of the Right-Wingers. By the time he had finished he had everyone agreeing with everything that he had said. It was an art no one else in Germany possessed and my absolute conviction that it must in due course lead him to the top of the political pile only confirmed my intention of staying as near to him as I could.

Hitler suffered no one in the room when he was working on his speeches. In the early years he did not dictate them as he did later. It took him between four and six hours to block one out on large foolscap sheets, about ten or twelve in number, with, in the end, only fifteen or twenty words on each as a cue. When the hour of the

meeting approached he used to walk up and down the room as though rehearsing in his mind the various phrases of his argument. During this time the telephone would keep ringing, with Christian Weber, Amann or Hermann Esser on the line, to tell Hitler how things were going in the hall. He would ask how many people there were, what their mood was or whether much opposition was to be expected. He would give continuous directions concerning the handling of the audience while they were waiting for him and, half an hour after the meeting had started, would call for his overcoat, whip and hat and go out to the car preceded by his bodyguard and chauffeur. On the platform he used to place his sheets of notes on a table at his left and, as he had finished with each one, pass it over to a table on his right. Each page would suffice for ten or fifteen minutes of his speech.

When he had finished the band used to play the national anthem. Hitler would salute to right and left and leave while the music was being played. He had usually reached his car before the singing was over. This sudden withdrawal had a number of advantages. In addition to facilitating his exit unmolested to the car, it prevented the exultation of the crowd from petering out, saved him from unwelcome interviews and left intact the apotheosis picture the public had received from the end of his speech. He once said to me: "Most speakers make the great mistake of hanging around after their speech is over. This only leads to anticlimax, as argument and discussion can completely undo hours of oratorical labour."

Where he had me, and in the course of time millions of others, completely confused is that he did not give vital words the same meaning as we did. When I talked of National-Socialism I meant it in the old Friedrich Naumann sense, a fusion of all that was best in the traditional and socialist elements of the community. Hitler was not thinking along the lines of a patriotic confederation of this sort at all. We all knew, but overlooked the deeper implications of the fact, that the first flowering of his personality had been as a soldier. The man speaking up on the platform was not only a superb orator, but also a former army instructor who had succeeded in winning the minds of fellow-servicemen tainted by the November revolution. When he talked of National-Socialism what he really meant was

military-Socialism line or, in civilian line his mind took was always there. secretive to a degree what not to say intentions. But thirty years.

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Haus. 1923

ONE SIDE TO A STATUE

71

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I had by this time taken to dropping in frequently at the *Völkische Beobachter* offices, usually with a clip of foreign newspapers excerpts in the hope of getting them to pay some attention to events in the outside world. I had little success. Instead of making an effort to deal constructively with the affairs of the League of Nations, for example, all Rosenberg wanted were articles and news items dealing with his particular anti-Bolshevist, anti-clerical or anti-Semitic prejudices. However, I did get to know two more Hitler lieutenants, Hess and Goering. I soon found the latter more entertaining company than anyone else in the entourage. He had made his way to Bavaria after the post-war collapse of Germany, as the safest haven for those with nationalist sentiments. Goering was not the intellectual type, but he had entered Munich University and attended a series of lectures by the well-known historian Karl Alexander von Müller, on the subject of the German war of liberation against Napoleon. Hess had attended the same course and they had both gravitated to Hitler for the same reason which had attracted me, after hearing one of his speeches.

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Hess was installed as a sort of administrative aide-de-camp to Hitler, and Goering was engaged in building up and endeavouring to bring under his control the embryo S.A. Hess was a moody introvert, jealously suspicious of anyone who approached Hitler too closely. He came of quite a decent family and his uncle had done his military service in the same guard artillery regiment, under the Prince Regent Luitpold, in which my brother had been killed as an officer in the war. But even this did not provide a point of contact and he was as morose and aloof with me as with everybody else. In later years, he endeared himself to me slightly more by asking me to play Beethoven during one of my piano sessions. He had been to

*Bien-Heilchen und Rucksack speditour
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HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

Hans. 1923 school in Bad Godesberg, near Bonn, Beethoven's birthplace, and had developed a liking for the master's music.

Goering was a complete *condottiere*, the pure soldier of fortune, who saw in the Nazi Party a possible outlet for his vitality and vanity. Nevertheless, he had a jovial, extrovert manner and I found myself very much at home with him. Before long we were on 'thou' terms and that was probably as much due to our wives as anything. Karin Goering, who had an Irish mother, came of a substantial Swedish family and was at least a lady, a woman of charm and education, and she and my wife Helene saw a lot of each other. Goering had a certain humorous contempt for the little squad of Bavarians round Hitler, whom he regarded as a bunch of beer-swillers and rucksack-carriers with a limited, provincial horizon. In his over-loud way he at least brought a whiff of the great outside world with him, and his war record with its *pour le mérite* had given him a much wider set of contacts.

He and Karin lived extremely well, although most of the money was hers, and they had a house out at Obermenzing, near the Nymphenburg Palace, where he had fitted up a sort of plotters' corner in the cellar, all very Gothic and Germanic, with great pewter tankards. My wife and I used to go out there sometimes, but not very often, as we had no car and had to rely on the Goerings to get us there and back. In fact, my only form of transport was a gigantic, elderly Swift bicycle which had belonged to my father, who was the same size as I am. This I kept by me right up into the 'thirties, by which time I was without any question the only unmotorized member of the Nazi hierarchy. But then I took an idealistic view of the Party's duty to the working classes. I remember rebuking Goering once at one of the Munich cafés for screwing a monocle into his eye and then looking round with the stupid air of superiority that the wearers of such objects usually affect. "*Mein lieber Hermann,*" I told him, "this is supposed to be a working-class party and if you go round looking like a Junker we shall never attract their support." Whereupon he looked rather deflated and sheepish and stuffed it in his pocket.

Hitler found Goering useful, but was a little cynical about the *ménage*. He called on us late one evening after he had been out there

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and mimicked the pair of them for my wife. "It is a real love-nest," he told her. "It is darling Hermann this and darling Hermann that"—imitating Karin's slightly too-fond voice. "I have never had such a home and I will never have one"—continuing with a sort of mock-sentimentality, "I have only one love and that is Germany." (An echo of Wagner's *Rienzi*, I might add.)

The Goerings also had an unpleasant-looking gardener named Greinz, to whom I took an immediate dislike and who was to play a highly dubious rôle before the year was out. He was always outwardly full of the true Party spirit, barking slogans and flashing his eyes, but I never trusted him. "Hermann," I said one day, "I will bet any money that fellow Greinz is a police spy." "Now really, Putzi," Karin broke in, "he's such a nice fellow and he's a wonderful gardener." "He's doing exactly what a spy ought to do," I told her; "he has made himself indispensable."

Goering and Hess could not stand each other and provided one of the many personal rivalries in the party which endured through the years and enabled Hitler to play one off against the other. Apart from their differences in temperament, they had both been fliers during the war, but instead of this bringing them together it only seemed to exacerbate their relationship. Moreover, Goering was a man of action and had little time for the theoreticians of the Party. In his confused way this was the capacity in which Hess fancied himself. He had a common background with Rosenberg when, as members of the racial Thule Society, they had narrowly escaped with their lives at the time of the Munich Soviet Republic in 1919. He had also come greatly under the influence of the Bavarian General Haushofer, who had spent a period of duty in the Far East and had come back a rabid Japanophile.

Haushofer had a chair at Munich University and his geo-political nonsense helped to provide a number of the mental barriers which I had to try and surmount in order to influence Hitler's mind. The only foreign ally of which the Rosenberg-Hess group could conceive was Japan, the Prussians of the East, as they called them, and I tried over the years in vain to make them see that such an alliance would inevitably bring Germany into conflict with the United States. But the trouble was that there were many of them and only one of me.

*"What is a spy supposed to do
I would ask you—"
"Be nice."
"Be indispensable"*

Hans. 1923

Every time I tried to bring Hitler to his senses, one of them would always start him on the wrong track again.

As often as I tried to pump some salt water into Hitler's veins the others blinded him with the dust of the infantry. Up he would come with the old catch-phrases of *Ostpolitik* and stab-in-the-back, the brave German Army betrayed, treachery on the home front, the coming day of reckoning with the November criminals in Berlin and the final passage of arms with France. There he would be back with Clausewitz, and this led to the identification of these crazy longings with the military figure who was lending his prestige to the nationalist ferment—the man who was regarded as a tragic figure who had been betrayed by Freemasons and Socialists and Communists, the great hope and the galleon figure of German militarism and the unbeaten Army—General Ludendorff. On him they pinned their hopes, and the result was nearly to prove Hitler's undoing.

* Rosenburg to A.H.

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CHAPTER IV

PARTICULAR GENERALS

Ferment in Bavaria - Hitler and Roehm - Pyromania in the Rhineland - Jewish Anti-Semites - Dietrich Eckart loses faith - Rhinoceros whips in the courtyard - Rosenberg insults the Catholics - An offer from Mathilde Ludendorff - Hitler tempts General von Seeckt - Compromising reluctant allies.

THE NAZIS were only one of the numerous Right Wing radical organizations flourishing in Bavaria at the time. In fact, apart from the trump card they held in Hitler, they were by no means the most numerous or important. Bavaria had become the refuge of a whole rag-bag collection of militant nationalists, some of whom were unemployed members of the former *Freikorps*, which had helped the Army to beat down the soldiers' Soviets that had sprung up all over Germany after the war. The reason why they were left free to plot and agitate in Bavaria was twofold. First, there was the historical antipathy of Catholic, separatist-minded Bavaria towards Protestant Berlin and its Central Government. Secondly, the Bavarians had had a sharp dose of Communism under the régimes of Kurt Eisner and Ernst Toller after the war, and after their ejection the Government had remained firmly in the hands of the *Reichswehr* and a succession of Conservative State cabinets. With the Central Government in Berlin predominantly Socialist, the Bavarian authorities sought actively to thwart it and encouraged for their nuisance value all the disgruntled Right Wing elements who flocked south for safety.

To describe the situation as confused is an understatement. Most Bavarians wanted to restore the Wittelsbach monarchy. But some of them wanted the King to rule again over an independent Bavaria, some wanted him to become the head of a new Danubian confederation, and others wanted the family installed as German Kaisers. The acknowledged leader of the Right Wing refugees from the rest of Germany was Ludendorff, but he was anathema to the Bavarian

Hans.

1923

nationalists, due to his crack-pot attacks on the Roman Catholic Church, and his followers were distrusted as Prussians. The French occupation of the Ruhr in January 1923 provided a final seasoning to this brew, and the whole year was spent in a rage of nationalistic agitation, with most of the intransigence emanating from Bavaria. The chief part played by Hitler was to try to unite the various patriotic organizations and secure the co-operation of the Bavarian Government, and particularly of the local *Reichswehr*, for a march on Berlin to overthrow the Socialist Government and repudiate the terms of the Versailles Treaty. That he got as far as he did is an astonishing example of what one determined man can accomplish in times of such confusion.

He worked more or less openly with the Ehrhardt Brigade people, although there was much mutual distrust between them, and it was in the fight to maintain the S.A. as a separate organization that Goering won his spurs. When I first started going to the *Beobachter* offices, which was the headquarters of the plot, the two men on guard outside Hitler's door were not S.A. men at all, but members of the Organization Consul, that section of the Ehrhardt group which had been behind the murders of Erzberger and Rathenau, although there is no reason to suppose that Hitler was in any way involved with these assassinations. In any case, how any work ever got done in the office is beyond me. Hitler was a man who thought everything could be accomplished by speeches and that underlings could be left to look after the paper work.

He drove everyone to exasperation, as he could never be relied upon to turn up for an appointment and it was impossible to get a decision out of him. One unfortunate collaborator, who will have a part to play later in this story, was Captain Hans Streck, who was a close confidant of Ludendorff. He was a former artillery officer who had been on the Bavarian General Staff and wanted to organize the office along efficient lines. When he tried to bring some order into the motor pool by sacking drivers who turned up late for duty, he found Hitler insisting that they should be reinstated because they were old Party members. In the end he just gave up. Lt.-Col. Hoffmann, who was in fact an Ehrhardt man and Goering's adjutant, complained of the same thing. Hermann was bone-lazy. His

car would arrive a Karin sitting in the could be pinned do the expensive restat

With all this, Hi Herren," he would conclave, "don't bo for them. Within a the midst of disorgz were endless march-sabre-rattling, but n was a great review Fröttmaninger Hei ing into the town : only trouble was th riding up and down round his neck, was most were not, and came back to my G.

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PARTICULAR GENERALS

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car would arrive at the door hours late for an appointment, with Karin sitting in the back with some titled woman friend. Before he could be pinned down, they were off again to have lunch at one of the expensive restaurants.

With all this, Hitler kept up a drum-fire of exhortation. "*Meine Herren*," he would say, when they managed to pin him down in conclave, "don't bother me with details. There will be time enough for them. Within a fortnight we act, come what may"—so that in the midst of disorganization everyone was kept at white heat. There were endless marches and demonstrations, reviews and speeches and sabre-rattling, but nothing decisive ever occurred. One ghastly fiasco was a great review of the semi-militarized formations out on the Fröttmaninger Heide, which was supposed to end with their marching into the town and occupying the Government buildings. The only trouble was that it was pelting with rain and Goering, who was riding up and down on a white horse with his *pour le mérite* strung round his neck, was soaked to the skin. Some were for marching, but most were not, and in the end all that happened was that the leaders came back to my Gentzstrasse flat for some much-needed hot coffee.

At about the same time, May 1, a similar demonstration was held on the Oberwiesefeld, for which some of the S.A. men had raided an Army depot and got hold of some machine-guns. The *Reichswehr* had been allowing them to train with them for weeks and they probably thought they had a right to them. However, Army headquarters thought this was going too far and made them hand them all back. It was all a distinct blow to Hitler's prestige.

The whole movement was much more military in its style in those days. There were not so many swastikas and the processions were always headed by the German war standard. The S.A. usually marched together with the *Viking Bund*, who were Ehrhardt's militarized formations. The music was Bavarian, but the colours were the black, white and red of the Kaiser's Reich. In fact the Imperial flag gave its name to another organization, the *Reichskriegsflagge*, which was headed by Captain Rochm, and that is where I first came across him. He had been the political adviser on the staff of General von Epp, who had liberated Munich from the Communists in 1919, and he was still a serving officer in Munich on the staff of the local

Hans. 1923

78

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

Army Commander, General von Lossow. He was a man of considerable influence and Hitler's chief link with the Reichswehr.

Whether by then he had developed the proclivities for which he became notorious is an open question. Certainly during the war his interest in women had been normal and some say he only returned as a homosexual from two years of exile in Bolivia in the later 'twenties. But even if he was not yet an active pervert there were plenty of others around who were. Heines and one or two other patriotic organization leaders became notorious for their tastes in this direction. And when I thought of my earliest contact with a Nazi recruiting agent, it occurred to me that there were far too many men of this type around Hitler.

Part of the curious half-light of his sexual make-up which was only slowly beginning to preoccupy me, was that, to say the least, he had no apparent aversion to homosexuals. I suppose it is true to say that in any male movement of this sort, with one man at its head, you are bound to have a lunatic fringe of sexual perverts. Such men-admirers will always gravitate into a group which, through its very cohesion, manages to take over some of the leading posts. But the Balts and Prussians, who formed such a large proportion of the membership of these organizations, did not seem to share my misgivings. "Do not worry, these people will fight like lions against Bolshevism. It will be like the Sparta of old," they used to say. "It becomes a sort of *Liebestod* for them when they fall in front of the enemy." Hitler had a circumlocution for it. "My most enthusiastic followers must not be married men with wives and children," he would proclaim. "No one with family responsibilities is any good for street fighting."

It was also in Roehm's company that I saw Heinrich Himmler again, although the connexion was not what you might think. The school sneak had become a sort of adjutant, who ran the administrative side of the *Reichskriegsflagge*, while Roehm attended to his Army duties. He had a pale, round, expressionless face, almost Mongolian, and a completely inoffensive air. Nor in his early years did I ever hear him advocate the race theories of which he was to become the most notorious executive. Somewhere, in the meantime, I think it was in Weihenstephan, he had studied to become a

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Haus. 1923

PARTICULAR GENERALS

79

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Heinrich Himmler might think. The in the administration attended to his less face, almost in his early years which he was to in the meantime, led to become a

veterinary surgeon, although I doubt if he had ever become fully qualified. It was probably only part of the course he had taken as an agricultural administrator, but, for all I know, treating defenceless animals may have tended to develop that indifference to suffering, which was to become his most frightening characteristic. We had, however, a common Bavarian background and that and my having studied under his father added a little warmth to our acquaintance. He was never anything but polite and forthcoming and even friendly with me. After the Nazis assumed power this was to have its uses.

I used to think back to Himmler's father sometimes, when the Rosenberg clique expounded their ideas of a crusade against Russia. At some time or other Himmler père had undertaken a remarkable journey by sledge right across Russia as far as Novaya Semlya and he had never been able to get the impression of these vast spaces out of his mind. At school he used to chalk a map on the blackboard and point out the impossibility of ever conquering Russia from the west. "Russia is an open triangle," he used to say. "Whoever marches in from the west can only capture ever larger wastes of snow and must suffer the fate of Napoleon." I remembered his arguments and drawings with absolute clarity and sometimes quoted him in an attempt to confound Rosenberg and company. But his son's friends thought they knew better!

As light relief from this constant atmosphere of revolt, Hitler would often go to the cinema in the evening, a form of relaxation which continued right through the years when he was Chancellor. In fact I have known him put off serious conferences in order to see a film. One of the great successes of the time was the *Fredericus Rex* film, which came out in two parts, with Otto Gebühr playing the rôle of Frederick the Great. I had seen the first part the previous year at Garmisch with Rudolf Kommer and the second part ran for weeks in the spring of 1923 at the Sendlinger Tor Platz cinema. My wife and I took Hitler to see it. He was most impressed, but it was typical of him that the scene which had pleased him most was that in which the old king, played by Albert Steinrück, had threatened to have the crown prince beheaded. "That is the best part of the film," Hitler ranted as we came out, "what a classic example of discipline when a father is prepared to condemn his son to death. Great deeds

"Great Deeds Require Great Names."
(Paraphrase of the Bible?)

Hans. 1923

require harsh measures." Then we got on to talking about the resistance movement in the Ruhr during the French occupation and I brought up the historical parallel of the Russian resistance to Napoleon. Suddenly Hitler thundered: "Hanfstaengl, I tell you only guerrilla tactics will be effective. If the Russians had shown any scruples in 1812, Napoleon would never have been defeated and Rostopchin would never have had the courage to set fire to Moscow. What does it matter if a couple of dozen of our Rhineland cities go up in flames. A hundred thousand dead would mean nothing providing Germany's future was assured." I was thunderstruck—we were on the open street and were just walking past the Schiller monument. I could only shrug my shoulders and say that Rostopchin provided a bad example for Germany as we were deprived of the most important strategic element, the endless space of Russia. It was still too early to see that this pyromaniac aspect of Hitler's character would end in his nihilistic readiness to see Germany reduced to dust and ashes.

I was not the only one who worried about these sudden outbursts of Hitler. Dietrich Eckart was as preoccupied as I was and in despair at the influence that Rosenberg was gaining on him. Eckart had always been one of my favourites, a big bear of a man with sparkling eyes and a genuine sense of humour. But one day when I called on him at the *Boabachter* I found him literally in tears. "Hanfstaengl," he groaned, "if only I had known what I was doing when I introduced Rosenberg into the Party and then allowed him to take over the editorship here, with his rabid anti-Bolshevism and anti-Semitism. He does not know Germany and I have a very strong suspicion that he does not know Russia either. And then that name of his on the front page. He will make a laughing-stock of us all if this goes on." I thought back to Rudolf Kommer's remark about an anti-Semitic programme directed by Jewish or half-Jewish fanatics—Rosenberg was distinctly Jewish in appearance, although he would have been the first to protest furiously if anyone had questioned his ancestry. Yet I used to see him most mornings sitting in a dingy café at the corner of the Briennerstrasse and the Augustenstrasse, with a Hungarian Jew named Holoschi, who was one of his principal assistants. The man called himself Hollander in Germany and

was another of those who became the intimates of the editor of the paper from producing which the Nazis expected the Aryan Streicher looked at and even Goebbels pedigree.

Eckart made no pretence of being a politician. He was walking across the way to Hitler's flat and told me I am feeling grumpy. "Heaven Berlin and the B. build a political party and a poet and Hitler was only just words, but he made

I was even more especially in Catholicism the way to offend Hitler aside one explaining it in his where and told him the Iron Cross was the total population patriots," I insisted to our side." I had named Alban Schönbauer brought down the bore me no ill will enthusiast we got Slovakia and, although Hitler's general policy I met him again to lunch there together

Haus. 1923

PARTICULAR GENERALS

81

was another of these Jewish anti-Semites. In later years Rosenberg became the intimate friend of Steffi Bernhard, who was the daughter of the editor of the *Vossische Zeitung*, but this did not prevent him from producing ceaselessly the arguments and propaganda with which the Nazis sought later to justify their worst excesses. I suspected the Aryan background of many of the others, Strasser and Streicher looked Jewish to me, as well as later figures like Ley, Frank, and even Goebbels, would have had difficulty in proving their pedigree.

Eckart made no bones about speaking his mind. A group of us were walking across the Max-Joseph Platz one day after lunch on the way to Hitler's flat and I was a couple of yards ahead with him. "I tell you I am fed up with this toy-soldier stuff of Hitler's," he growled. "Heaven knows the Jews are behaving badly enough in Berlin and the Bolsheviks are an even worse lot, but you cannot build a political party on the basis of prejudices alone. I am a writer and a poet and I am too old to go along with him any more."

Hitler was only just behind and must have caught the tenor of the words, but he made no sign and no comment.

I was even more worried about Rosenberg's anti-clerical diatribes, especially in Catholic Bavaria. It seemed to me suicidal to go out of the way to offend such a vast majority of the population. I took Hitler aside one day and tried to make him see the danger by explaining it in his own terms. I had come across some figures somewhere and told him that more than 50 per cent of the holders of the Iron Cross were Catholics, although they only formed a third of the total population. "These people are good soldiers and good patriots," I insisted. "Just the sort of supporters we need to get on to our side." I had also met, accidentally, a Benedictine abbot named Alban Schachleiter. I had sat next to him in a tram and brought down the point of my umbrella on his sandalled foot. He bore me no ill will and as I found that he was a fellow Bayreuth enthusiast we got on famously. He had been evicted from Czechoslovakia and, although he had a certain amount of sympathy for Hitler's general political line, deplored the Party's anti-clericalism. I met him again at the house of my sister Erna, and we arranged to lunch there together with Hitler. They got on very well and Hitler

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listened and nodded and appeared to be impressed by the abbot's arguments. I was delighted, convinced that I had brought a useful influence to bear, but the contact did not last long. In a way I was myself the cause of the break, which was a by-product of the shooting of Leo Schlageter.

The French had executed Schlageter in Düsseldorf on May 26 for acts of sabotage. The Nazis later claimed him as one of their own and made him one of the major figures in their Pantheon, but I doubt very much whether he was ever a member of the Party. The news reached me at Uffing on the Staffell Lake, where I had just bought a house, as it had proved impossible to find anything comfortable in Munich to substitute for our little three-roomed flat. The papers were full of the Schlageter affair and the various patriotic organizations planned to hold a mass demonstration in his memory on the Königsplatz in Munich on the following June 1, which, as I recall, was a Monday. Schlageter's parents had been devout Catholics and it seemed to me essential for Hitler to take part in the meeting, and I hoped it would be possible to give it a solemn religious flavour as well as a patriotic one.

I caught the train to Berchtesgaden but found Hitler in an unforthcoming mood. No, there was so much to do and there would be so many people speaking anyway, it was not worth his time. He perked up a little when I suggested that the thing to do was to transport the coffin in solemn procession round Germany in imitation of the passage of President Lincoln's funeral, which my mother had seen and so often described to me. This did not prove practicable, but I had also armed myself with the works of Carlyle, and pointed out the quotation to Hitler about 'any nation which fails to honour its dead can no longer call itself a nation'. This appealed to him immensely and we sat down to block out the speech together round this central idea.

By this time it had become late and I decided to stay the night at the boarding-house Hitler used to frequent at Berchtesgaden. The place was crowded and I found myself doubling up with Dietrich Eckart, who was in his most disillusioned mood and distinctly dampened my spirits. The Pension Moritz it was called, run by a former racing driver named Büchner. His wife, Elisabeth, was a

towering Brünnhild developed for her. He used to play the round and crackle. Before we went to Hitler: "You know thing has gone on an incurable case and down in the shouting, 'I must and scourge out th I tell you, if he lets ruin us all."

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1923

PARTICULAR GENERALS

83

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towering Brünnhilde type with a flashing gold tooth, and Hitler had developed for her one of his unproductive, declamatory passions. He used to play the romantic revolutionary for her benefit, stamping round and cracking a rhinoceros-hide whip she had given him. Before we went to sleep, Eckart unburdened himself for hours about Hitler: "You know, Hanfstaengl," I remember him saying, "something has gone completely wrong with Adolf. The man is developing an incurable case of folie de grandeur. Last week he was striding up and down in the courtyard here with that damned whip of his and shouting, 'I must enter Berlin like Christ in the Temple of Jerusalem and scourge out the moneylenders', and more nonsense of that sort. I tell you, if he lets this Messiah complex run away with him he will ruin us all."

I had had the further idea of getting Schachleiter to bless the standards of the S.A. formations taking part in the Schlageter demonstration and had been very pleased when I got Hitler to agree to it. After the speeches—Hitler spoke last and scored one of his greatest successes—they marched in formation to the church of St. Boniface, behind the Königsplatz, where the remains of Ludwig I of Bavaria lie, and the banners were blessed with holy water after Schachleiter had preached a pretty inflammatory sermon about 'this great freedom movement', and so on. What happened a couple of days later? Rosenberg came out in the *Beobachter* with another of his really offensive anti-clerical leaders, with stupid insults about Christ and taunts against the Catholics. It was really too much. Poor Schachleiter was not only furious, but had to leave the living at St. Boniface not long after because of the storm which had been aroused. I took Hitler to task, telling him that Rosenberg was spoiling everything, but as usual he found excuses, said he would talk to Rosenberg and in the end did nothing.

All that was left of my part in the affair was the Schlageter song which I composed at the time and which became an integral part of the Nazi brass-band repertoire. I cannot write music myself, but I thumped out the melody and got an old Imperial *Kapellmeister* to orchestrate it for me. The Schlageter affair had really brought the general atmosphere to crisis pitch, and in spite of my disappointment I was determined to keep as near to Hitler as possible in the hope

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adjutant at the time, and apart from Lossow's adjutant, Captain Oxner, was the only other person present.

Seeckt had come to Bavaria on a tour of inspection and shortly before he left Lossow persuaded him to meet a 'political prophet' who Lossow maintained must play a considerable part in the future. The interview took place in the Army headquarters building, where Hitler launched into a tirade lasting an hour and a half about the situation. He ranted about the French in the Ruhr, the Lithuanians in Memel, the Communist Government in Thuringia and suggested, in short, that Germany was on the brink of collapse. His plan called for a coalition of all nationally-minded people, the formation of a huge militia under the S.A. and the expansion of the army. The French were to be forced out of the Ruhr and the shackles of the Versailles Treaty broken. At the end he gazed at Seeckt and said: "Herr General, I offer you the leadership of the whole German working-class movement."

Seeckt, who had listened to this outburst without interrupting once, replied curtly: "Herr Hitler, what is your attitude to the soldier's oath of allegiance?" Hitler jumped from his chair: "Herr General, my offer was not intended to conflict with your present duty of loyalty. It is self-evident that you cannot break your oath to the Weimar Government. We National-Socialists will see to it that the members of the present Marxist régime in Berlin will hang from the lamp-posts. We will send the Reichstag up in flames and when all is in flux we will turn to you, Herr General, to assume the leadership of all the German workers."

Now it was General von Seeckt's turn to rise: "In that case you and I, Herr Hitler, have nothing more to say to each other." As Hitler was ushered out Oxner went over to Selchow and whispered: "From now on Seeckt is a dead man." In the train on the way back to Berlin Seeckt talked to his adjutant for hours about this episode: "Come what may," he commented, "General von Lossow has assured me that Hitler cannot make a Putsch without the *Reichswehr*, and that suffices for the time being. I simply do not believe that the *Reichswehr* could be brought to fire on other *Reichswehr* units."

Hitler had never at any time referred to this conversation when

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talking to me. Selchow wrote down the details that night in his diary and his evidence is absolutely incontrovertible. The most astonishing aspect is the fact that Hitler had Lossow and his staff under his spell to such a degree that Oxner could commit such a flagrant breach of military discipline.

Such a situation of conflicting loyalties was made to order for Hitler. The *Reichswehr* had in the past regarded the Nazis with a benevolent eye and although their support had waned they might yet be won over again. The separatists were rivals but in their detestation of the Berlin Government possible allies. Definite action might yet weld every faction into a common front. The Nazis were growing in favour with many sections of the public and Hitler felt it only needed a major demonstration of some sort to make the position crystallize. He had powerful allies and could permit himself dangerous liberties. Franz Gürtner, the Bavarian Minister of Justice, was already a secret Hitler convert, and, with the sympathetic support of the police president, Poehner, and his chief assistant, Wilhelm Frick, enabled him to avoid the efforts of Schweyer, the Bavarian Minister of the Interior, to fasten charges on him as a disturber of the peace.

Hitler was engaged in a constant round of visits and interviews—Lossow, Poehner, Roehm and Scheubner-Richter, another Balt and a crony of Rosenberg, who was closely associated with Ludendorff. Max Erwin von Scheubner-Richter had been a Russian agent in Constantinople during the war, had defected to the Germans and had found a place among the Right Wing societies in Munich as an envoy of the White Russian and Ukrainian emigrants. Part of the strength of his position was due to the fact that he had persuaded the Grand Duchess of Coburg, who was a relative of the Russian royal family, to channel funds through him to the patriotic organizations. He was another 'stab-in-the-back' propagandist, who saw in the defeat of Germany only a failure of supplies and of the home front, to be cured by gaining control of the granaries of the Ukraine and White Russia.

Hitler did not really mind what form the uprising against Berlin took as long as there was an uprising. If the situation had appeared favourable, he might even have supported a separatist Putsch and

then mounted a counter-Putsch under the old Imperial colours which he would then direct from within along National-Socialist lines. I used to accompany him sometimes on his endless journeys round Munich and remember one phrase he used constantly: "*Wir müssen die Leute hineinkompromittieren*"—"We must compromise these people so that they have to march with us," which was typical of the blackmailing techniques the Nazis later developed.

The key to the situation was Lossow and the *Reichswehr*. Hitler knew that all the officers were longing to wipe out the indignities of the immediate post-war years, when they had had their badges of rank and medals torn off by Communist mobs. Although their hero remained Ludendorff, they recognized in Hitler the political *deus ex machina* of the threatened revolt and a great many of them gave him secret support. Even the members of the infantry cadet school were affected by the general atmosphere and had developed a complete contempt for the authorities in Berlin. One of them—it may have been young Xylander, who came from one of the best Munich families—was going round wearing the cockade on his cap reversed, which was an accepted formula for indicating the famous phrase from Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* '*Leck mich am A^{ss}*.' Another popular simile for this insult was to stick the postage-stamps with President Ebert's head upside down.

Sometimes I could only admire Hitler's effrontery. On one occasion he was addressing a small meeting in the street, outside the *Beobachter* office, with a S.A. guard, when a couple of mounted police trotted up and tried to disperse them. They really meant business, but Hitler berated them with all the strength of his orderly-room vocabulary and asked them what they meant by drawing sabres against their friends. Did they not realize that they only had sabres because people like Hitler and his Nazis were fighting the Communists, who would have taken them away from them? He produced such a torrent of abuse and argument that in the end the police just gave up and went away.

Hitler's 'in fourteen days we will march' had acquired a new urgency. His mind was wholly centred on the necessity for action. "Hanfstaengl, the only way to organize a Putsch is at a week-end," he said to me. "All the people in the administration will be away

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1923

PARTICULAR GENERALS

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from their offices and the police will only be at half-strength. That is the time to strike." He was putting every ounce of his energy into the struggle. At one point he booked the huge Krone Circus hall for a solid week and spoke there every afternoon and evening. They were some of the best speeches he ever gave and one, specifically directed at the students, was an absolute masterpiece.

On the last day, the Sunday, the authorities had forbidden any formations to march with unfurled flags and banners. As soon as the meeting was over the S.A. tramped off to the Mars Feld with their flags furled. But either due to a misunderstanding or deliberate disregard of orders, the second battalion, under Brückner, unrolled their flags and, on turning into the Arnulfstrasse, met a strong police cordon. There was a clash, and the story as I heard it maintained that one of the flag-bearers had had his wrist severed by a police sabre. Whatever the cause there was uproar at headquarters and Hitler sent Goering and myself to see von Kahr to complain of the brutality of his security forces. Somehow the incident was smoothed over. Even Kahr was not prepared to clamp down on the Nazis, so confused had the situation become.

I was sitting in Hitler's office with him that evening and he became so restless that he decided that Goering, Ulrich Graf and I should accompany him on a reconnaissance trip round the city to see if there were any new developments. This was typical of him; you could never keep him off the streets. We ended up in the Hofbräuhaus about eight o'clock at night and Hitler had the idea of getting the people out of the big courtyard in the back to follow us in a protest march, just for the sake of raising hell. The beer-drinkers would have none of it and, after calling us all the names under the sun and telling us to get out, started bombarding us with their heavy mugs. One whistled past my nose and shattered against the wall, spraying beer all around. I had not even ducked, which shows what a greenhorn I was in such matters. We had to beat a hurried retreat.

Any reason to start a Putsch was sufficient. One week-end—it must have been in October—I found Rosenberg in a high state of excitement: "We are just getting out the proclamations." "What on earth for?" I asked him. He pulled himself together a little and pronounced, in his omniscient Baltic way, "The next few days will

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see the opening of a new chapter and we must be ready." I inquired around and discovered that he had concocted a crazy plan for capturing Prince Rupprecht and his staff, together with the whole Government, at the unveiling ceremony of the monument to the Unknown Soldier in front of the Ministry of War.

Hermann Esser and I managed to stop that by arguing that any attack on Rupprecht's person would inevitably bring out the *Reichswehr* in force against us. Ludendorff and Scheubner-Richter had also been behind this plan, which was a good indication of how completely out of touch they were with the true situation in Bavaria. It gave me a chance to have another dig at Rosenberg and warn Hitler of the perils of getting too closely involved with the Baltic plotters. However, it was a bad time to ride my particular hobby-horse. "America is a long way away," Hitler said to me. "We must think first of a march on Berlin. Once we have dealt with the immediate situation then we can look around and I can find Rosenberg another job."

Hitler continued to rail at the Central Government in Berlin with impunity, and at the beginning of October von Seeckt ordered Lossow to suppress the *Völkische Beobachter*. Under pressure from Kahr, who in turn thought he might be able to use the Hitler-Ludendorff forces, nothing was done, and when Lossow failed to carry out a further peremptory order on October 20, he was dismissed from his command. In the conflict of loyalties he opted to support his neighbours. The centuries-old tradition of the formerly independent Bavarian Army reasserted itself and dislike of the General Staff in Berlin took precedence over military discipline. With von Kahr and Colonel von Seisser, the chief of the State Police, von Lossow formed a triumvirate to govern Bavaria as an independent State. Their aim was to restore the Wittelsbach monarchy, and their plan, as it later became clear, was first to use the Ludendorff-Hitler forces and then crush them. The scene was set for the next act.

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CHAPTER V

FIASCO AT THE FELDHERNHALLE

Plan for a Putsch—Cracks in the Kampfbund—Double-cross at the Bürgerbräu—Kahrfreitag—Red wine for Ludendorff—Fusillade in the Residenzstrasse—My escape to Austria—Hitler's attempted suicide.

MUNICH LITERALLY boiled with plot, counter-plot, demonstrations and rumour during the twenty days following von Lossow's defection with the Bavarian Army Corps. The best place to try and keep track of developments was at the *Beobachter* offices. I spent part of each day there and was sitting with Rosenberg in his room around mid-day on November 8 when Hitler told us he had decided to launch his Putsch.

Rosenberg was such an unappetizing fellow. He had only recently married, but his colleagues on the paper recounted innumerable stories about his unsavoury love life, which usually involved multiple intercourse with half a dozen men and women companions at a time in some grubby back-street flat. It must have been the Tartar in him. In dress he had the taste of a costermonger's donkey, and on this occasion I remember very well he was wearing a violet shirt with a scarlet tie, with a brown waistcoat and blue suit. He had some theory about it being a waste of money to wash shirts and used to throw them away when they became unwearable even by his standards.

However, there I sat with him in his little white-washed office. His desk was diagonally across the corner of the room, on it the pistol he always kept prominently displayed. We could hear Hitler stomping up and down the corridor and heels clicking as he called out "Where is Captain Goering?" It was all very military. Then he burst into our room, pallid with excitement, trench-coat tightly belted and carrying his riding whip. We both stood up. "Swear you will not mention this to a living soul," he said in a tone of suppressed urgency. "The hour

1923 Hauls.

has come. Tonight we act. You, Comrade Rosenberg, and you, Herr Hanfstaengl (I was still not a Party member) will be part of my immediate escort. Rendezvous outside the Bürgerbräu Keller at seven o'clock. Bring your pistols."

So that was the plan. The Bürgerbräu Keller had been booked for that evening by the ruling triumvirate for a major meeting of all the leading Bavarian personalities, to which Hitler and Ludendorff had been invited. Our informants in the ministries and the police had told us that this was to be the forerunner of the proclamation of the Wittelsbach restoration and the final break with the Socialist Government in Berlin. This was the point where Hitler and Ludendorff differed radically with their fellow-conspirators. The National-Socialists and the *Kampfbund* also wanted to do away with the Red Republic in the capital, but they wanted an integrated nationalist Germany under the black, white and red flag, and no part of Bavarian separatism under its white and blue banner. Even less were they prepared to listen to the plans of some Bavarians to join a Danubian federation with Austria.

Uneasy allies as the two groups had been, each had supported the other tactically as long as there seemed profit to be gained from the collaboration. Two days earlier the *Kampfbund* people, with Hitler, had been called to Kahr's office, where he and Lossow warned them to instigate no Putsch until the Provisional Government itself gave the signal. It was only after this meeting that Hitler learnt that the Catholic separatists had their own plans for taking the initiative. Now he proposed to unite the public ferment by a *coup de main*.

I may myself in a small way have helped to bring matters to a head. One of the journalists whom I helped to keep informed about events used to reciprocate by telling me of any remarks he had heard in Government circles. This newspaperman lived in the Regina Hotel, and in order to draw less attention to our relationship I used to announce myself as Georg Wagner, by which hangs a tale which I shall have to tell in due course. A couple of weeks or so before the Putsch, this newspaperman had called on von Kahr and had abstracted from him the information that he had no intention whatsoever of bringing Hitler into the Government in spite of their apparent alliance. The information did not come as a great surprise

to Hitler when I put the matter to him, "he commented, "a rogue," he commented.

A similar tip had been given to the Minister, who still had to be kept in the dark with my journalist. I had pronounced. There was the corridor, so I heard very little of what was going on. He must have caught the words: "Socialists, they are f..."

This further announcement was a double-cross and treachery. Some of our apparatus means to be trusted and relied upon. In fact, officer cadets the form much more doubtful were still on duty in the closest harmony from Uffing a few days before the Putsch. It was a conversation to a conversation was disposing of in a suspicious manner. He also was a man somehow covered up and died as on the day of the Putsch.

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1923 Hants.

FIASCO AT THE FELDHERRNHALLE

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to Hitler when I passed it on: "That's typical of the cunning old rogue," he commented.

A similar tip had come from Count Lerchenfeld, a former Prime Minister, who still had considerable influence in affairs. I was sitting with my journalist friend in his room when Lerchenfeld was announced. There was no time for me to leave without meeting him in the corridor, so I retreated hurriedly into the bathroom. I could hear very little of what was being said, but as Lerchenfeld stood up to go he must have turned in the direction of my hiding-place and I caught the words: "No, no, we shall have no use for the National Socialists, they are far too radical for our purposes."

This further annoyed Hitler, but was typical of the atmosphere of double-cross and triple-cross reigning in Bavaria at the time. Even some of our apparently firm allies in the *Kampfbund* were by no means to be trusted. Roehm and his *Reichskriegsflagge* could be relied upon. In fact he stormed and held the War Ministry with the officer cadets the following day. On the other hand, Ehrhardt was a much more doubtful element, although some of his *Viking* people were still on duty in the *Beobachter* offices, to outward appearances in closest harmony with the National-Socialists. I had rung up there from Uffing a few days earlier, got a crossed line and thus was witness to a conversation which made it clear that Ehrhardt's men were disposing of some of the mutual stocks of arms in a distinctly suspicious manner. I warned Hoffmann, Goering's adjutant, but as he also was a member of the *Viking* organization the matter was somehow covered up. However, my suspicions were more than justified as on the day of the Putsch Ehrhardt sided with Kahr.

Nor was Ehrhardt the only one. Captain Kautter, another of Goering's *aides*, also switched allegiances and defended Kahr's ministry when the time for decision came. Poehner, who had been superseded as police president, but still wielded great influence, was another doubtful ally. He had protected Hitler in many ways and great reliance was placed on his attitude. But when the Putsch foundered he lost his nerve and Goering and Roehm obtained no support from him, although he had made himself sufficiently suspect to stand trial later with the others.

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What was to prove an even more decisive factor was Hitler's disregard of the need to placate Catholic opinion. Ludendorff and a considerable proportion of the North German nationalist malcontents who had found refuge in Bavaria were either Protestants or violently anti-Church and specifically anti-Catholic. The mistake was to assume the Putsch would succeed with their help alone. General von Epp, himself a Roman Catholic, had been so grossly offended by Rosenberg that he became indifferent to any Putsch led by Hitler and Ludendorff. Von Epp's action in ordering a Mass and Te Deum of thanksgiving to be held in Munich's largest square at the liberation in 1919, had led Rosenberg to refer to him repeatedly in sarcastic articles in the *Beobachter* as the '~~Mutter-~~gottes-General'. This so alienated von Epp that he would have little further to do with the Nazis. Yet he had a personal following of some 25,000 Life Guard reservists and his influence on Hitler's side might have tipped the scales.

This then was the fantastically confused situation, and here was Hitler giving Rosenberg and myself orders to buckle on our pistols and liberate Germany. That morning, in a desperate ogle in von Lossow's direction, the *Völkische Beobachter* had come out with a great picture on the front page of General Yorck von Wartenburg, who carried the Prussian Army over to the Russians against Napoleon at Taugoggen, with the caption: "Shall we find a second General Yorck in our hour of need?" Rosenberg and I had been discussing its possible effect when Hitler burst in on us. After casting an approving glance at the copy on the table, Hitler said to me, as he turned to leave: "I shall rely on you to look after the interests of the foreign press." In a moment or two I followed. Hitler's announcement had at least stopped Rosenberg's infuriating habit of

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My first thought was to arrange for my wife, who had just become pregnant again, and my two-and-a-half-year-old son, Egon, to leave Munich. Walking quickly back to my flat in the Gentzstrasse, which I still retained as a *pied-à-terre*, I told them to pack up and go that afternoon to Uffing. I also had to pass the word round to the international journalists, such as H. R. Knickerbocker, and Larry Rue of the *Chicago Tribune*, who had come flocking to Munich in the expectation of exciting events, that they must under no circumstances fail to be at the Bürgerbräu Keller meeting that evening, although I could not, of course, tell them why. I was confused enough myself at the course events might take and although I tried to see Hitler again during the afternoon for a further discussion to clear our minds, I was unable to get in touch with him. I was told that he was in conference with Captain Eduard Dietl of the Bavarian general staff, who was one of his chief informants in the *Reichswehr*, and who later commanded a division in Norway and Finland.

I learned later that the plan for the Putsch had in fact been devised by Schenbner-Richter, who had also received information that von Kahr was about to take the initiative. Be that as it may, Hitler obtained all the credit, as Scheubner-Richter was one of those killed at the Feldherrnhalle the following day.

The Bürgerbräu Keller, an eminently respectable beer-hall much frequented by a better class of people at the time, is about half a mile up the Rosenheimer Strasse from the centre of Munich, on the other side of the Isar river. I got there early, about seven o'clock, to find the area cordoned off by police, who refused to let either me or the foreign journalists who were already there through into the hall. I will never make a revolutionary, although perhaps it was an indication of the disorganized and amateurish nature of the whole affair. So there we stood, with me trying to bluff our way through and no sign whatsoever of Hitler. It must have been half an hour or more before the red Benz car he had recently acquired drew up and he climbed out with Amann, Rosenberg and Ulrich Graf. "These gentlemen are coming with me," he said peremptorily to

1923 Hanf.5.

the police inspector on duty and forward we all trotted at his heels.

I was bringing up the rear with an American woman journalist, and although the others got through, the entrance door was then slammed in our faces. I stood outside, feeling uncommonly foolish, berating the police: "This lady represents an American newspaper," I said heatedly. "Herr von Kahr is giving an important speech and there will be a first-class scandal if reports are prevented from reaching the foreign Press." What turned the tide was the fact that my companion was smoking an American cigarette, a scent so rare and luxurious in impoverished Germany that her bona fides was established. We were let past, to meet one of Hitler's bodyguards whom he had sent back to find out what had happened to us.

The entrance corridor was completely empty, apart from the vast pile of top-hats, uniform-coats and swords in the cloakroom. It was quite clear that the *élite* of the whole capital of Munich was there. I found that Hitler had quietly taken up position by one of the big supporting pillars about twenty-five yards from the platform. Nobody seemed to notice us and we just stood there looking innocent, for what must have been at least twenty minutes. Hitler, who was still wearing his trench-coat, was chatting quietly to Amann, now and again biting a finger-nail and occasionally looking sideways at the platform, where von Kahr, von Lossow and von Seisser sat.

Kahr was on his feet, droning away at some incomprehensible and boring speech. I said to myself, this waiting is dull enough, but there's no need to go thirsty. So I went over to the serving-hatch and got three litre jugs of beer. I remember they cost a billion marks apiece. I took a good swig at one myself and handed the other two over to our group, where Hitler took a thoughtful draught. It is no use just standing around, I thought, and in Munich no one will suspect anyone with his nose in a stein of beer of having ulterior motives.

The wait seemed interminable. Kahr was still mumbling away and I had a good look round the hall. Sure enough, everyone was there: the Bavarian provincial cabinet, leaders of society, newspaper editors, and officers. Not far away I caught sight of Admiral Paul von Hintze, who had been German ambassador in Mexico before the war and now lived in Salzburg, where he was reputed to provide

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FIASCO AT THE FELDHERNHALLE

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some sort of line of communication with Otto of Hapsburg. So they are in this, too, I thought, with their plans for a Catholic Danubian confederation!

Kahr was sending us off to sleep. He had just said the words "and now I come to the consideration . . ." which, for all I know, was to be the high point of his speech, when the door behind us which we had come through flew open and in burst Goering, looking like Wallenstein on the march, with all his orders clinking, plus about twenty-five brownshirts with pistols and machine-guns. What an uproar. Everything happened at once. Hitler began to plough his way towards the platform and the rest of us surged forward behind him. Tables overturned with their jugs of beer. I saw Wutzhofer, one of the members of the Bavarian cabinet, crawl under another for cover. On the way we passed a major named Mucksel, one of the heads of the intelligence section at Army headquarters, who started to draw his pistol as soon as he saw Hitler approach, but the bodyguard had covered him with theirs and there was no shooting. Just as well, I remember thinking. If I had had to loose off the cannon I was carrying I would probably have maimed myself.

Hitler clambered on a chair and fired a round at the ceiling. It is always maintained that he did this to terrify the gathering into submission, but I swear he did it to wake people up. Kahr's speech had been such a bromide that at least a third of the people in the hall had almost fallen asleep. I had practically dozed off on my feet myself. Anyway, on home ground at last, Hitler barked an impromptu proclamation: "The national revolution has broken out. The *Reichswehr* is with us. Our flag is flying on their barracks. . . ."

I suddenly caught one glance from von Lossow at Hitler. There was such a furtive look of thinly veiled contempt on his monocled face, with its sabre-cuts, that I knew he could not be trusted to go along with us. I turned to Goering and said: "Hermann, watch your step. Lossow is going to double-cross us." "How do you know that?" Goering asked me. "One look at his face is enough," I said. I felt in my finger-tips that there was trouble brewing. Hitler and Lossow had been as thick as thieves for weeks but I knew that no binding promises of assistance had been forthcoming from the Army chief. He could never get over the fact that he was an aristocratic general

and Hitler was an ex-corporal. There was still no room for self-made men in the Germany of those days and Hitler's fight against this attitude was to take him years.

Hitler invited Kahr and company to join him in one of the side-rooms to discuss their plans. There they were joined by Scheubner-Richter and Ludendorff, tremendous in full regimentals with all his decorations. After a first somewhat inconclusive session, Hitler returned to the hall alone and launched into a tremendous tirade. "Now is the time to do away with the sinners' Tower of Babel in Berlin," and so on. Announcing that he had entered into coalition with the triumvirate and careful to hide the fact that they had been notably frigid about it, he soon had the audience bawling its enthusiasm. This may have been partly due to the fact that in his excitement he talked about "His Majesty the Crown Prince of Bavaria". Or it may have been deliberate in order to get the people on his side, under the impression that he was supporting the Wittelsbach restoration. In any case it worked. He went back to inform his reluctant allies that the whole sense of the meeting was on his side and that action against Berlin could commence.

For Hitler's words to achieve such immediate effect, they needed to reach receptive ears. To a great many staid and established members of the audience he represented little more than an adventurer. Nevertheless, they had been tempted by the voluptuous picture of power he had painted for them. Since Bismarck had founded the Second German Reich, Bavaria had been little more than a provincial vassal and here opportunity was being offered for Munich to assume the leadership of Germany and take it away from the despised Prussians in Berlin. There were a good many women in the audience, distinguished local matrons with heavy, provincial furs, and they had applauded the loudest. It was another example of the way women will respond to sheer effrontery.

In the main hall the S.A. was in complete command. All the police had disappeared and this, in fact, was the main service of Poehner, who still had enough authority with Frick at police headquarters to tell him to instruct his men not to interfere with the proceedings. Goering jumped on to the platform and, with his matchless lack of tact, informed the audience that the leaders had

now gone into conference where they were. 'unmistakable tone Bavarian, as if to hands there was lit

Somewhere above the more peaceable representatives of the impromptu press conference been formed, that order and discipline the things I truly felt the chair had also: von Borscht, the editor of the *Münchener* clamoring round. see you here," said "Can't you help me?

I took him over who in later years to go out. I have demands here, civilia complex, I thought Borscht and I return serving-hatch, when serving, I manage the kitchen." So off Larry Rue out the of high exaltation aificent thing, German soon as he got back article praising the day, before the most useful evidence at Kahr and Lossow p

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FIASCO AT THE FELDHERNHALLE

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now gone into conference and that everybody else was to remain where they were. "In any case, there is beer to drink," he said in the unmistakable tone of contempt of the northern German for the Bavarian, as if to suggest that as long as they had a stein in their hands there was little else they needed.

Somewhere about this time I, in my turn, climbed on a chair with the more peaceable and almost absurdly normal announcement that representatives of the foreign press should join me. Then I held an impromptu press conference, explaining that a new Government had been formed, that all persons and property would be respected, that order and discipline would be restored in the country, and so on—all the things I truly believed in at the time. Seeing my six-foot-four on the chair had also attracted a number of German friends. There was von Borscht, the former lord mayor of Munich, Dr. Gerlich, the editor of the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, and others who came clamoring round. "Ah, my dear Hanfstaengl, what a pleasure to see you here," said Borscht, who was an old friend of my father's. "Can't you help me to get out, we are being kept prisoner."

I took him over to the main door, where an S.A. man, Schreck, who in later years became Hitler's driver, was on duty. "No one is to go out. I have my orders. Only people in uniform can give commands here, civilians must do what they are told." This uniform-complex, I thought! And with the years it got infinitely worse. So Borscht and I retreated and I got him a stein of beer from the serving-hatch, where, after a word with the girls who were doing the serving, I managed to whisper in Borscht's ear: "Get out through the kitchen." So off he went. In due course I got Knickerbocker and Larry Rue out the same way, and also Gerlich, who was in a state of high exaltation about the evening's proceedings. "What a magnificent thing, Germany will be reunited again," he was burbling. As soon as he got back to his newspaper he dictated a tremendous article praising the national revolution, which came out the next day, before the march on the Feldhermhalle, and provided most useful evidence at Hitler's trial because it gave a full description of Kahr and Lossow participating in the Putsch.

After nearly half an hour the chief conspirators returned to the hall. Hitler had taken off his trench-coat and was revealed in his

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D.T. so-called good clothes, a black tailcoat and waistcoat, but cut in the Bavarian provincial fashion. He could not have looked less like a revolutionary; he was more like a collector of taxes in his Sunday best. This was the extraordinary thing about him, he still looked utterly mediocre in repose. A certain quality in his eyes and a certain reserve in his manner were all that made you look twice. He was still distinctly subservient in his attitude, except, of course, when he began to speak, as he had just shown. Then he rose into something super-human. It was the only element in which he felt himself totally at home. It was like the difference between a Stradivarius lying in its case, just a few bits of wood and lengths of catgut, and the same violin being played by a master. Just now he was quiet, looking like the slightly nervous sort of provincial bridegroom you could see in scores of pictures behind the dusty windows of Bavarian village photographers.

They all lined up on the platform: Kahr, Lossow and Seisser, Ludendorff, Frick, and Poehner, all looking very grave and history-conscious, and Hitler in that baggy, flabby suit, with a big swastika button in his lapel and the iron cross on his left breast. He was determined to lose no time. He made a short announcement that a new National Government had been formed. A solemn oath was taken by all the partners, following by the most impressive singing of *Deutschland über alles* I have ever heard. I caught sight of Gottfried Feder worming his way into the group from the back and trying to look important. He had some idea that he was going to become Minister of Economics in the new Government, but unfortunately there was no photographer present to record his momentary mingling with the great.

It had, in fact, all been highly dramatic and things had not yet started to go wrong. With his innate sense of mass psychology, Hitler had hit on exactly the right formula to sway the different sections of the gathering. Most of them educated men, they had sensed in the conspiratorial oath taken from the platform something of the tone of the Rütli oath in Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* and their naïve political romanticism had been fired. The Gambetta quality in Hitler had magnetized them.

Some of the side-shows, of course, were less romantic. Hess had

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FIASCO AT THE FELDHERNHALLE

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been entrusted with the task of segregating the other members of the Bavarian cabinet and I had watched him shooing them uncere- moniously up a narrow flight of stairs into another room. Some of the brownshirt fanatics were all for liquidating them out of hand, but I managed to bustle my way in and keep the hotheads out. My trouble was I was too civilized for this sort of thing. Brought up on the old idea that you do not kick your enemy when he is down, I tried to make myself pleasant by offering the ministers tankards of beer. Schweyer, the Minister of the Interior, who had been one of the few to have no truck whatsoever with Hitler, refused haughtily and just sat on, thirsty, which is about the worst punishment a Bavarian can endure. But Wutzhofer grabbed his stein, as did most of the others. However, that was another six billion marks out of my pocket and was literally all I had, so for the rest of the evening I had to go dry myself.

Then there was something of a lull. I found my way back to Goering, who said, "Putzi, go and ring up Karin and tell her that I shall probably not be home tonight, and when you get out, put this letter in the post for her." Somehow one sensed that all was not going well with the Putsch plans in the city. We had the news that Roehm had succeeded in taking over the Army headquarters with the officer cadets he had suborned, but elsewhere matters were by no means going so smoothly. Some of the other barracks were not under control and the attitude of the police was doubtful. When Hermann Esser turned up—he had been in bed with 'flu' and still had a temperature—I suggested to Hitler that we ought to make a reconnaissance. It had occurred to me that we had not made sufficiently sure that the police were not calling up reinforcements from outside Munich, so we drove down to their headquarters with the intention of taking over the communications centre. However, we were fobbed off and had to return to the Bürgerbräu. In fact, we must have been away for some time, as when we returned it was to find that Hitler, in an ill-advised moment, had also left for the centre of the city to encourage flagging spirits.

As Esser and I got back we were disagreeably surprised to find that the whole meeting was breaking up. Most of the people in the main hall had already left, as had Kahr, Lossow and Seisser, after

giving Ludendorff, who had also decided to leave, their word of honour not to alter the course of events. This seemed a very sinister development to Esser and me, and when, after some time, Hitler returned, only his brownshirts were left. He had put on his trench-coat again over that frightful tailcoat outfit and paced up and down like a desperado. I taxed him once more about von Lossow, but although he seemed worried he had by no means lost hope. He seemed to have accepted the argument of Scheubner-Richter, who was acting as Ludendorff's deputy, that 'you could not keep an old gentleman like Kahr sitting in a poky room in a beer-hall all night'.

I reminded Hitler of a recommendation I had made before the Putsch, that we should requisition an hotel into which the entire Government could be put under guard. The reason why I had tried so desperately to see Hitler again in the afternoon was to get his authority to take over the Leinfelder, which was a very respectable establishment catering for diplomats and aristocratic families. I was, heaven knows, a mere amateur in the business of revolutions—my chief claim to fame was as a player of the piano—but I knew enough from my history books to realize that if you are going to supplant a government by force you have at least to control the movements of your predecessors. In those days Hitler must have been even more of an amateur than I was because he neglected even this simple precaution.

Instead he retreated into a mood of exaltation: "Tomorrow either we are successful and masters of a united Germany or we shall be hanging from the lamp-posts," he said in that dramatic voice, and sent one confidant after another down to the *Reichswehr* headquarters to find out how things were going on, but they learnt nothing to their advantage. I stood next to Goering as he tried to ring up the Bavarian Government offices, where von Kahr was supposed to have gone. Who should answer the telephone but Kautter, the Ehrhardt Organization Consul man, who pretended he did not know where Kahr was. It was my first indication that some double-crossing was in progress and that the situation was going awry. Captain Streck, Ludendorff's adjutant, was sent down to find out what was happening, but he had an inconclusive parley with Captain Schweinle, a police officer, through a window—he was wise

enough not to accept cryptic report: "Tl

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Haufs. 1923

FIASCO AT THE FELDHERNHALLE

103

enough not to accept an invitation to go in – and came back with the cryptic report: “The situation stinks.”

A Major Siry was dispatched to find out what was happening at the Army barracks and came back with even worse tidings. He had only by great good fortune escaped being arrested. The worst news came from Lieutenant Neunzert, who had been sent with a message to Crown Prince Rupprecht begging him to throw his prestige behind the Putsch and offering him the post of Regent *ad interim*. He had a cold reception and came back empty-handed. In fact, Kahr, Lossow and Seisser had retired to the 19th Infantry Regiment barracks, but what we had no means of telling at the time was that an urgent emissary from Rupprecht had informed them that he would play no part in any Putsch connected with Ludendorff and that they must take all necessary measures. Seeking to save their skins by energetic action, Lossow and Seisser were preparing to use force to counter any Hitler march, and Kahr was about to leave for Regensburg to perpetuate his government of Bavaria in safety.

With the situation looking increasingly doubtful, Hitler decided to spend the night in splendid isolation in the Bürgerbräu, more or less in a state of siege. He thought I would be more useful testing the atmosphere in the city, so I left them and, prosaically enough, went to bed.

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The following day has come to be known as *Kahrfreitag*, a play on the German word for Good Friday, *Karfreitag*. When I got back to Bürgerbräu about eight in the morning, I found that Hitler had apparently been up all night. Ludendorff had returned with his own followers, but all in civilian clothes. They were no longer in the small room on the ground floor where Ludendorff had so misguidedly accepted his fellow-generals' word of honour, but had moved to a larger private room upstairs. The old quartermaster-general was sitting there stony-faced and frightening in his unperturbed calm, sipping away at red wine, the only sustenance the conspirators had enjoyed. The air was thick with cigar and cigarette smoke. In the ante-room there was a little orchestra platform and on it, in a pile about five feet high, thousands of million- and

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104

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

billion-mark notes, in neat banker's bundles, which the brownshirts had 'requisitioned' somewhere during the night. I could have done with a few of them myself, as my hospitality the night before had left me without a penny in my pocket, but evidently they were to be expended in a legal and formal fashion whatever their origin.

This even applied to the civilian brass band, which Brückner, Hitler's adjutant, had rustled up from somewhere. By this time there were about 800 uniformed men in and around the hall, all somewhat dispirited. It was an unlikely day for a Putsch, cold with flurries of snow, and most of the S.A. and *Kampfbund* men were in thin cotton shirts and had had nothing to eat since the night before. Anyway, this morose and resentful band was produced and demanded first breakfast and then prepayment, neither of which they received, so Brückner bawled them out, sent them up on to the platform and ordered them to play. We could hear them tootling away without any life in the music, even making a hash of Hitler's favourite *Badenweiler* march.

They were still undecided what to do next, although Ludendorff was pressing firmly for a march on the centre of the city. Hitler said he was relying on me to keep him informed about the general feeling in Munich and I spent most of the morning travelling by car between the *Bürgerbräu* and the *Beobachter*. I had to find some version to satisfy the suspicious foreign correspondents, who were more or less encamped at the newspaper, and the best I could do was to suggest that a few personal differences had arisen between the leaders of the conspiracy and that all would soon be settled. Rosenberg was under no illusions. "It is no good, the whole thing has failed," he said despairingly. By eleven o'clock I was back in the *Bürgerbräu* again, after great difficulty with ominously increasing police cordons. I found uncertainty and glum faces. No one was talking very much. Goering was all for retreating in the direction of Rosenheim and there collecting reinforcements for a fresh start. However, Ludendorff put a stop to that: "The movement cannot end in the ditch of some obscure country lane," he said tersely, and, sipping his red wine, froze them into submission.

They soon sent me back into the city to report further developments. I got through to the *Beobachter*, where it became clear that

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FIASCO AT THE FELDHERNHALLE

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mations of the setting up of the national republic, signed by Hitler,
Kahr, Lossow and Seisser, and *Reichswehr* formations were closing
in on strategic points in the city. There was no further sign of
Streicher, the Nazi leader in Nuremberg, whom I had seen harangu-
ing a crowd and distributing leaflets in front of the Feldherrnhalle,
and other speakers had disappeared from the Marienplatz, although
there was still a big crowd there. The situation seemed hopeless and
I decided to hurry home and prepare for a get-away.

I had not been there long when the telephone rang; it was my
sister Erna, who lived in Bogenhausen across the river. "Putzi," she
said. "Ferdinand Sauerbruch [the famous surgeon] has just been
on the line. They are all marching into town and are over the bridge
and in the Tal already." They had made up their minds to relieve
Roehm, now besieged in the Army headquarters in the Ludwig-
strasse. Most of the approaches were sealed off by the *Reichswehr*,
with the exception of the Residenzstrasse, the narrow street which
leads into the Odeonsplatz by the Feldherrnhalle, which was held by
Seisser's gendarmery, 'the green police', as they were called, com-
manded by Freiherr von Godin, who gave the order to fire on the
marching column.

I tore out of my flat and half ran in the direction of the Brienner-
strasse. I was past the Pinakothek museum—nearly there—when
a great mass of people came flooding up from the direction of the
Odeonsplatz. I saw one face I knew, a sort of first-aid man in one
of the S.A. brigades, being helped along in a state of collapse. "What
on earth has happened?" I asked him. "My God, Herr Hanfstaengl,
it's too terrible," he said. "It is the end of Germany! The *Reichswehr*
opened fire with machine-guns down at the Feldherrnhalle. It was
pure suicide. They're all killed. Ludendorff's dead, Hitler's dead,
Goering's dead. . . ." Heaven preserve us, I thought, and helped the
man up to his flat and then hurried back home to prepare for flight.

The three leaders were, of course, still alive, although Goering had
two bullets in the groin. True to their wartime training, all the old
soldiers had thrown themselves to the ground at the sound of
machine-gun fire. Ludendorff, however, had marched through
unscathed and Hitler had been borne to the ground by the dead

Amf. 1923

106

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

Scheubner-Richter, whose arm was linked with his, dislocating Hitler's shoulder. Fifteen others had been killed and scores wounded. The police had mostly fired into the ground and the ricocheting bullets and splinters from the granite setts had caused many nasty wounds. The leaders and most of the wounded were dragged away by the S.A. men without further interference from the police.

As I was hurrying up the Arcisstrasse on the way to my flat I saw an open car coming down it from the north. It screeched to a halt and in it sat Esser, Amann, Dietrich Eckart and Heinrich Hoffmann. In the hubbub of mutual inquiry I told them the news as I knew it and we all made for Hoffman's flat, which was nearby, to concert our plans. "There is only one thing to do. We must get out of Munich immediately," I told them. "Over the border to Salzburg or Innsbruck and see what we can reorganize from there." We all bid each other a hurried farewell and dispersed.

It suddenly occurred to me that Admiral von Hintze, whom I knew well, might help me to get away. I was expecting to be picked up by the police at any moment. I was an easily recognizable figure and by now well known for my close relationship with Hitler. However, I decided to pay a quick call at the Hotel Leinfelder, where the admiral was living. "Do you have a passport?" Hintze asked me. I had to confess I had not—it will give an indication of how poorly organized we were. "Good heavens, man, I have three," he told me. However, he gave me a couple of names and that evening I was already in Rosenheim on the Austrian border. There a doctor's secretary helped me to cross the frontier illegally and the following night I was in Kufstein, where there was a little group of fourteen railwaymen who were Nazis. The family of one of them, with a Czech name, kept a small flower-shop and I spent the night sleeping on the tiled floor underneath a bank of chrysanthemums. I suppose you might call it my first political interment.

The last place it would have occurred to me to go was my own home in Uffing, where I would surely be sought and arrested. To my astonishment, I was to learn that Hitler had chosen it as his hiding-place. Konrad Heiden has written a completely garbled version of this episode, in which he suggests that my sister was in residence there and that Hitler spent the next forty-eight hours in

FIAS!

her bed. Nothing remained in Munich house was registered who was in the first a maidservant. Hitler's passions for Helen a doctor treats a pati

Late on the evening outside stood Hitler, S.A. battalions, and was drooping and finally set until he later, and it would be a man with a dislocated arm behaving like Tannh

Hitler asked if he knew of all that had happened. She gave him a little while she slept down completely despondent together some sort of chief concerns was that he flung himself in from the fire, was dead and recovered. Later, Hitler nor forgive, simply boorish character nation to him.

The next morning he said you ought to find a way to come here, even if it is a risk." This he found for the Bechsteins' safety. So, for the time being in the attic-room, with travelling-rugs I had taken with him to Lan

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FIASCO AT THE FELDHERRNHALLE

107

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her bed. Nothing could be further from the truth. My sister Erna remained in Munich, and although for family reasons the Uffing house was registered in her name, the only occupants were my wife, who was in the first month of pregnancy of our daughter, Egon and a maidservant. Hitler certainly entertained one of his unproductive passions for Helene, but she treated his *Schwärmerei* rather as a doctor treats a patient.

Late on the evening of the Putsch a knock came at the door and outside stood Hitler, Dr. Walter Schultze, a physician in one of the S.A. battalions, and two or three others. Hitler's dislocated shoulder was drooping and he was in considerable pain. In fact it was not finally set until he arrived at Landsberg prison three or four days later, and it would take a better writer than Heiden to explain how a man with a dislocated shoulder could spend the next two days behaving like Tannhäuser in the Venusberg.

Hitler asked if he could stay the night. My wife, in total ignorance of all that had occurred, let him in and the others went away. She gave him a little attic-bedroom I had fitted up with my books, while she slept downstairs with Egon and the maid. Hitler was completely despondent and almost incoherent, but she managed to piece together some sort of account of what had happened. One of his chief concerns was the conviction that his bodyguard, Graf, who had flung himself in front of Ludendorff and Hitler just as the police opened fire, was dead. In fact, the man, although severely wounded, recovered. Later, Hitler, for reasons which I could never understand nor forgive, simply gave Graf notice, employing in his place a boorish character named Julius Schaub, and paid no further attention to him.

The next morning my wife told him, "Herr Hitler, for your own sake you ought to find somewhere else to hide. The police are sure to come here, even if only to look for my husband, and it is too much of a risk." This he fully understood. The plan was for him to wait for the Bechsteins' car to come and pick him up and take him to safety. So, for the time being, he stayed, spending most of the day in the attic-room, where the bed was covered by the two English travelling-rugs I had acquired in my student days, which he later took with him to Landsberg prison.

On the Saturday afternoon came another visitor. It was 'friend' Greinz, Goering's gardener, about whom I had entertained such justified suspicions. He asked to speak to Hitler, but when my wife told him he was not there went away and spent the night at an inn in Uffing. I have not the slightest doubt that he put the police on Hitler's track, as on the Sunday evening a couple of lorries appeared in the front of the house, full of green-uniformed gendarmery. My wife hurried up to the attic and found Hitler in a state of frenzy. He had pulled out his revolver with his good hand and shouted, "This is the end. I will never let these swine take me. I will shoot myself first." It so happened that I had taught my wife one of the few ju-jitsu tricks I know, for wrenching a pistol out of someone's grasp. Hitler's movements were awkward with his dislocated shoulder and she managed to get the thing away from him and fling it into a two-hundredweight barrel of flour we kept up in the attic to combat the recurrent shortages.

Hitler calmed down somewhat and in the few moments left sat down and scribbled out a political testament on a piece of paper. Rosenberg was appointed leader of the party, with Amann as his deputy, and Hermann Esser and Julius Streicher as the other members of the quadrumvirate. Underneath, Hitler wrote, "Hans-staengl will be responsible for gathering funds for the party," although where he thought I was going to get any more from is a mystery to me. Moreover, I did not like the company in which I had been placed. Of Goering there was no mention, the beginning of a long period of eclipse during which Hitler, still smarting from the double-cross of von Lossow, condemned almost all members of the officer class as totally unreliable.

By this time a lieutenant and a couple of gendarmes were at the door. They had just come from my mother's farm, which was near by, where they had been sticking bayonets in haystacks looking for Hitler, but now felt sure of their quarry. Hitler came downstairs and made no physical resistance, but gave them a terrible tongue-lashing at the top of his voice, accusing them of breaking their oath, conniving at the splitting of Germany, and so on, in the same vein. All this was above the heads of the police, whose loyalties had been veering like windvanes over the previous three or four days at the

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FIASCO AT THE FELDHERRNHALLE

behest of their senior officers. So they presented their excuses and politely carried him off.

There is little doubt that Hitler could have escaped to Austria if he had wanted to, and, although we never talked about it in detail, it is a fair assumption that he had specific reasons for not doing so. Years later, at the time of the Anschluss, the Gestapo made straight for the Vienna police headquarters and impounded a number of dossiers. One of them, I am convinced, related to Hitler and dated back to his early youth in the city, although what the charges were we shall probably never know. In fact, the Bechstein car did finally arrive at the Uffing house - half an hour after he had been arrested.

D.T.

D.T. Male prostitute?

*then from
failure in life.*

*to feed his soul As at the front
he lived the joys of freedom
who have led to love from death*

Hangs. 1923

CHAPTER VI

TWILIGHT AT LANDSBERG

Goering in exile - A first sight of Geli Raubal - Hitler's hunger strike - The acrobat of the cells - Duel for the leadership - Welcome with Liebestod - The narrowing of a mind - Operatic eroticism - The man on the tight-rope.

THOSE OF us who had escaped to Austria - Goering, Esser, Rossbach and myself - soon regained touch with each other and I was able to exchange news with my wife. We received word from Hitler's lawyer, Lorenz Roder, that we were to remain away, if possible, as any addition to the list of those arrested would only complicate his defence problems. Goering I found in hospital in Innsbruck. He really had been badly wounded, although he was over the worst when I saw him. He told me how he had managed to crawl up behind one of the monumental lions in front of the Residenz Palace after he had been hit. Some of the brownshirts had then carried him to the first doctor in the Residenzstrasse, who happened to be a Jew and for many years afterwards Goering spoke warmly of his kindness and skill. Goering was never one of the crazy anti-Semites of the Party, and, as one of the few unmistakably Aryan members of Hitler's entourage, was the least fervent exponent of their racial theories.

From Munich he had been smuggled over the border, and in Innsbruck had to be operated on. He was suffering severe pain and had to be given two morphia injections a day. It was always maintained that he later became an addict. I have no personal and positive proof of this, but this treatment in the Innsbruck hospital very likely provided the inception of the habit.

I went back with Karin to her hotel and found to my surprise that she was living in opulent fashion. The rest of us exiles were going around like tramps, but this was never the Goerings' way, and their ostentation caused a lot of bad blood in the Party. He simply had no

Hangs.

sense of the value of Venice for Sweden, thanks and never so cause offence. He was that can get away with that he spent so long with a much broader Hitler was now shut Frick and others, real in the confined space baked *Weltanschauung* value, poor old Dietrich Landsberg prison got only to die a few days

At one time we crossed over the frontier with and set the prisoners authorities would have dreaded such an attack would be shot by the out ordering us to the governor used to tell escape to test his security effects. It was a burst an alerted sentry while

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Handwritten: 1923

TWILIGHT AT LANDSBERG

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sense of the value of money, and when he finally left Austria via Venice for Sweden, I helped to finance the trip. I received little thanks and never saw my money back. Yet somehow this did not cause offence. He was a very attractive, rollicking fellow, the type that can get away with this sort of thing. In many ways it was a pity that he spent so long away. He was an intelligent and travelled man, with a much broader fund of common sense than the other Nazis. Hitler was now shut up in gaol with the worst of them, Hess, Weber, Frick and others, really narrow-minded doctrinaire provincials who, in the confined space of a prison, were able to imprint their half-baked *Weltanschauung* firmly in his mind. The only other man of value, poor old Dietrich Eckart, had a heart attack during one of the Landsberg prison governor's mock escape exercises and was released, only to die a few days later.

At one time we exiles concocted a plan for taking a few people over the frontier with a couple of machine-guns to raid Landsberg and set the prisoners free. It was a good thing we did not, as the authorities would have been fully prepared for us. Hitler himself dreaded such an attempt, as he was afraid he and his companions would be shot by the guards in the *mêlée*, and smuggled a message out ordering us to desist from any such enterprise. The prison governor used to tell off a couple of his guards to attempt a mock escape to test his security precautions, with all the necessary sound effects. It was a burst of machine-gun fire in the small hours from an alerted sentry which startled Eckart, literally, to death.

I took advantage of my involuntary stay in Austria to look up Hitler's family in Vienna. I was interested to find out all I could about his background and although I had no reason to suppose that his family had the slightest influence on him, thought it might be a good idea to plant a few facts about the more sinister members of his entourage, particularly Rosenberg. I could probably have saved myself the trouble, as when I finally tracked down his half-sister, Frau Raubal, I found her living in abject poverty on the third or fourth floor of a crumbling tenement block. She would not open the door more than a slit, as she was obviously ashamed of their miserable surroundings, but even through this crack I could see that the place was bare and dirty and that on the floor of the hall there

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Hand's. 1923

was nothing but a decrepit straw mattress. But she accepted an invitation to come out to a café and brought her not unattractive blonde daughter Geli, who was probably about sixteen at the time.

It was rather as if I had taken my charwoman out for a meal. The mother was diffident and confused, although the daughter was quite bold and pretty. They were dressed in cheap, nondescript clothes, but I thought I might as well get them on my side and asked Geli if she would like to come to a music-hall with me. It was some second-rate operetta and there was a fat tenor who sang a dreadful doggerel ballad about "who will cry when we must part, and another has found his way to your heart" or some such thing. This was just the sort of entertainment which appealed to Geli's mediocre mind. Here we have gone through this Feldherrnhalle thing, I thought, and here is Hitler's niece clapping her hands off at this drivel.

My worst experience in Austria was meeting my old friend Luigi Kasimir, the etcher. Not that I was not delighted to see him, as he was able to bring me news of home and take back mine. However, I was using again the name of Georg Wagner as a cover in Austria, and when he started addressing me loudly in a public restaurant as 'Putzi' I whispered to him: "Luigi, for heaven's sake drop this Putzi and call me Georg. I am going under the name of Georg Wagner while I am here." He looked at me appalled: "Good Lord, man," he said, "that is the fellow who has been making these forged twenty-pound notes. The police are looking for him all over the place. There is an immediate arrest order out for him in half a dozen European countries." That is what comes of being a Wagner enthusiast.

I went back in disguise to spend Christmas with my family. This involved traversing a single-track railway tunnel called the Hanging Stone near Berchtesgaden, a somewhat hazardous enterprise, as you had to run between trains alternating in both directions. It was more of a risk than I knew, as ten years later I managed to look at my own police record and saw that an order had been issued to arrest me on sight the moment I crossed the frontier. I had grown a set of Franz-Josef mutton-chop whiskers, wore dark glasses and walked with a limp. Strangely enough no one recognized me, even when I walked down to the *Beobachter* offices and talked to a couple of the drivers. The newspaper had, of course, been banned. By the time Hitler

Hand's. 19:

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I visited Hitler a couple back to the cells under trial, and then back to Egon along with me delighted. "Well, it is there is little Egon," choose some of the sympathizers. He had to children and the boy

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Hangs. 1923

TWILIGHT AT LANDSBERG

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came up for trial, the arrest order had been rescinded and I was free to move about again.

While on remand at Landsberg, Hitler, taking his example from the Sinn Feiners, had attempted a hunger strike. He refused to talk to the guards or any of his old comrades, so Roder, his counsel, got in touch with my wife. She sent a message through to say that she had not prevented him from committing suicide in order to let him starve himself to death and that this was the very thing his worst enemies hoped for. Her advice turned the scale. Hitler had a great admiration for her and his whole appearance at Uffing after the Putsch must have been part of some subconscious urge to turn for succour to this woman, who corresponded so closely to his repressed yearnings. Also, amidst the annihilation of all that he had organized, the Uffing house must have acquired the aura of an extra-territorial asylum.

I visited Hitler a couple of times in gaol, first when he was brought back to the cells under the court in the Blumenburgstrasse for the trial, and then back to Landsberg after his sentence. I even took little Egon along with me to the Blumenburgstrasse and Hitler was delighted. "Well, it is nice to see you, Hanfstaengl," he said, "and there is little Egon," taking the child on his knee and letting him choose some of the sweets and cakes which had been sent in by sympathizers. He had this extraordinary quality of immediate appeal to children and the boy adored him.

"I am so sorry about that business at Uffing," he said. "I had no idea your wife was pregnant and it was all a very stupid idea." He looked well and was full of confidence about the outcome of the trial. "What on earth can they do to me?" he said, "all I have to do is to tell some of the things I know about von Lossow and the whole thing will collapse." This was a little over-confident, but in spite of the five-year sentence he received, he turned the trial into a major triumph, making Kahr, Lossow and company look so foolish that he largely restored his prestige in Munich. The trump card he held was his inside knowledge of Lossow and Kahr's own plans, in which a number of authorities, both in Berlin and abroad, would have been more than interested. This was the threat he was able to hold over the head of his dubious accusers, and his final sentence was more a

matter of convenience than anything else, as it was understood from the first that he would not have to serve the whole of it.

The ascendancy he gained over the officials and guards at Landsberg was quite extraordinary. The gaolers even used to say *Heil Hitler* when they came into his cell. This was partly due to the extraordinary magnetism of his personality, and to his political martyrdom, which found a wide acclaim across many varied sections of the community. He received favoured treatment, which included freedom to accept gifts of food from outside, and this again gave him a further hold over his warders. It was very easy to say 'take this box of chocolates home to your wife' when he had almost unlimited quantities available. He and Hess had not so much cells as a small suite of rooms forming an apartment. The place looked like a delicatessen store. You could have opened up a flower and fruit and a wine shop with all the stuff stacked there. People were sending presents from all over Germany and Hitler had grown visibly fatter on the proceeds. Frau Bruckmann had been one of the most generous donors, but food supplies and money had also come in from Siegfried and Winifred Wagner, who in 1924 had restarted the Bayreuth Festival and were making collections among their friends for the political prisoners in Landsberg. Winifred Wagner is another of the women whose name has been mentioned in connexion with Hitler, but she again was an older woman, the motherly type, who found some outlet in making a social protégé of him.

"You really must take part in some of the gymnastic exercises and prison sports," I told him. - "No," he said, and the reply was very typical of his mentality, "I keep away from them. It would be bad for discipline if I took part in physical training. A leader cannot afford to be beaten at games." There on the table were Westphalia hams, cakes, brandy and everything one can imagine. It looked like a fantastically well equipped expedition to the South Pole. "If you don't watch out you'll get as fat as old Walterspiel [the massive owner of the Four Seasons Hotel]," I told him. "No," he insisted. "I shall always be able to get the extra pounds off by speaking."

I had taken along a couple of Hanfstaengl books of old-master reproductions of the Pinakothek and Dresden collections, which were accepted with grudging thanks. A recent copy of the German

satirical weekly *Sim* mocking cartoon in Berlin on a white horse like Sir Galahad. "I laugh but I shall get largely optimistic at the time he kept asking me much in favour of a style of Horthy's régime give his support it could

This was by no means left Hitler's side while his greatest and last for *Mein Kampf*. In which he added the chair he was sitting on it through his legs, sit arobat trying to show to any views other than attention. All Hess could learn to be much more to deal with our enemies and the Bürgerbräukas the word 'brutal', with and equal stress on the pleasure in the sound roared the word out bond between the two heard them speak to public they did not. I heard Hitler do it in his war days. Roehm which did not seem to

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Nov. 1923

TWILIGHT AT LANDSBERG

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satirical weekly *Simplicissimus* did more to cheer him up. It had a mocking cartoon in colour on the front page, showing Hitler entering Berlin on a white horse, surrounded by admirers, for all the world like Sir Galahad. "There you are," he said, delighted, "they can laugh but I shall get there yet," although his mood was not particularly optimistic at the time. "What are people in Munich saying?" he kept asking me eagerly. I told him that the mood was still very much in favour of a parliamentary monarchy, something after the style of Horthy's régime in Hungary, and that if Rupprecht would give his support it could be achieved with comparatively little effort.

This was by no means to the taste of Hess, who only grudgingly left Hitler's side while I was talking to him. This was the period of his greatest and lasting influence, helping Hitler to collect his ideas for *Mein Kampf*. Hess was another whistler, like Rosenberg, to which he added the exasperating habit of fooling around with the chair he was sitting on. He would sit on it the wrong way round, pass it through his legs, sit on the back, twirl it on one leg, like an amateur acrobat trying to show off. He could not bear to see Hitler exposed to any views other than his own and was always trying to distract attention. All Hess could do was talk in catch-phrases. "We must learn to be much more brutal in our methods. That is the only way to deal with our enemies," he would chant. "A little more of that and the Bürgerbräu affair would have ended differently." He loved the word 'brutal', which in German is pronounced with a rolling 'r' and equal stress on both syllables, and Hitler also seemed to take pleasure in the sound of it. You could almost feel him quicken as he roared the word out at Hess's prompting. There was a very close bond between the two during this period, and for the first time I heard them speak to each other on 'thou' terms, although later in public they did not. Drexler and Eckart were the only other people I heard Hitler do it with, and one or two of the old comrades from his war days. Roehm used to try it on, but he never got thou'd back, which did not seem to discourage him.

For all that, I was extremely worried about the narrowing of his prejudices in Hess's company in gaol, and I made one somewhat forlorn effort in an interview with Rupprecht's adjutant, von Redwitz, to have Hitler amnestied before it was too late. I tried to persuade

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Hans. 1923

the monarchists that if they placed Hitler under a debt to them, they would be able to exercise a restraining influence on him. On their side, his gifts as a demagogue might well bring the triumph of their cause. I tried to get them to release him with others on the occasion of the approaching tenth anniversary of the outbreak of the Great War on the first of August. As a volunteer he could have qualified. However, I could make no impression. Von Redwitz himself, with whom I had gone to school, was sympathetic enough, but the other members of Rupprecht's entourage were not prepared to take the risk. As it was, Hitler had to stay in gaol until just before Christmas, with only tragic blockheads for company.

It was hinted to me that Hitler was engaged in writing the political biography which, the following year, emerged as the first volume of *Mein Kampf*. At first Hitler used Emil Maurice as his secretary, but Hess soon ousted him, pecking out the pages on a decrepit Remington typewriter. The difficulty was to get it published. The *Völkische Beobachter* had been closed down by the authorities after the Putsch and although the publishing company and offices were still intact under Amann, there was no money coming in. Bills were unpaid and the creditors were about to move in and seize all the office furniture and property and put them up to auction. Amann rang me up one day and begged me to come to see him. I think we met in front of the Munich synagogue and he led me round the corner into the garden at the back, where we walked up and down. The organization was on its last legs, he said, if help was not immediately forthcoming, it would be broken up and dispersed.

Half the manuscript of *Mein Kampf* had been smuggled out from Landsberg gaol and they were in the process of setting it up in type, but if the duns moved in the whole thing would be lost. "You are the only man who can help us, Herr Hanfstaengl. You must do it if you believe in Hitler at all. Otherwise it is the end." I had a great many obligations at the time myself. I had received another instalment from the States, but part of it had gone on helping the families of those killed and injured at the Feldherrnhalle, and I had also made up my mind to move back into Munich and find a house so that I could start living a more normal and profitable life. Amann was so insistent that in the end I gave way. There were about half a dozen

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notes of hand of three or four hundred marks each but I paid some of them and backed others and this sufficed to keep the offices going. I was not alone in this. I think Gansser helped again, but the fact that Hitler found a functioning staff when he was released from gaol was entirely due to our efforts.

The National-Socialist Party had of course been dissolved by decree after the Putsch, although certain sections of it had re-formed and did very well in the elections of spring 1924 under the name of the People's Block. This was largely due to the moral triumph Hitler had gained during his trial, which made him for the first time a national figure. Riding in on the coat-tails of his prestige, the Block actually became the second largest party in the Bavarian parliament and obtained thirty-two seats in the *Reichstag*. Hitler tried to maintain a measure of control from the prison over the list of candidates to be presented and I remember him working on it during one of my visits. In fact it was at my suggestion that he included our eccentric bomb-manufacturing friend Emil Gansser in the roster.

However, his leadership was by no means unanimously acknowledged, while on the other hand the ill-assorted groups which had banded themselves together for electoral purposes were soon at loggerheads and the flimsy coalition fell apart. At the *Beobachter* offices there was a running fire of partially justified criticism against Hitler himself, led particularly by Anton Drexler, with the active backing of Gottfried Feder. Drexler wanted to remodel the party along his own less revolutionary lines and Feder was probably playing his own game. They called Hitler a dictator and a *prima donna* and proclaimed that he must be brought under greater control if the Party was ever to be built up again. He was generally blamed for the failure of the Putsch, which in retrospect they regarded as an over-hasty and ill-organized attempt to seize power.

More dangerous still was the determination of Ludendorff to centre the control of the nationalist groups in his own hands and take advantage of Hitler's absence to neutralize him permanently. To achieve this and bring the banned but still functioning Nazi Party under his wing he called in Gregor Strasser to act as political leader and organizer. I had not had a lot to do with Strasser, who had a chemist's shop down in Landshut, where he had organized a small

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S.A. battalion which was in fact very much better disciplined and more effective than the group in Munich. Strasser was a gifted organizer and was to play an important, but frequently independent, rôle in the years that followed. Between them Strasser and Ludendorff obtained the adherence of Rosenberg, Hitler's nominated successor, but this only hastened the split in the party, as the anti-Rosenberg faction was growing in strength, led by his three nominal co-regents.

I was in almost constant communication with Hitler through Roder and helped to keep him informed about the intrigues within the Party. It had become clear to me that street marches and demonstrations would get us nowhere and, in advocating a campaign through parliamentary channels, I had found myself, as usual, in opposition to Rosenberg. I had little confidence in any of the lesser lights and kept pointing out that if the movement was to get anywhere in a resuscitated form, it would only be under the leadership of Hitler. One malicious act of Rosenberg's I could not prevent was when he had Goering struck from the roster of the Party, which seemed to me a monstrous piece of pettiness from a man who had come scot free out of the whole affair.

It became clear to Hitler that he could not control these manoeuvrings from his comfortable gaol and in July he smuggled out a letter formally dissociating himself from this internecine brawl and in effect resigning the leadership of the Party. His sound political intuition had told him that the best thing to do was to let the various factions fight and avoid drawing too much attention to himself for the time being. A moderate government of the Bavarian People's Party under Dr. Heinrich Held had assumed political power and von Lossow had been superseded by General von Kressenstein. In fact it was being seriously considered whether Hitler should not be expelled to his native Austria on his release. We know now that he was not repatriated only because the Austrian Government would not have him. By the time he got out, the Party wheel had come full circle and he was acclaimed as the only man capable of putting the pieces together again. From that time on his position was never seriously challenged.

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TWILIGHT AT LANDSBERG

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the Pienzenauer Strasse for a quiet celebration dinner. The invita- tion had been forwarded through Roder. I had in the meantime received the last payment on the liquidated Hanfstaengl interests in America and had been able to buy this very attractive house in the Herzog Park quarter. It had a huge studio and much charm, and after all these years I am now living in it again, although we have rebuilt it and the studio has disappeared.

He arrived about half past six, in the little blue serge suit of which he was so proud, straining at the buttons with the weight he had put on in Landsberg. Egon was with me to greet him at the door. "I am so glad to see you again, Uncle Dolf," he said and Hitler took his hand as we walked down the corridor. I had a big concert grand in the studio and before I could gather my wits or offer any hospitality, Hitler, who seemed tense and wound up, said, almost pleadingly: "Hanfstaengl, play me the Liebestod." It was one of my party pieces. So down I sat and hammered out this tremendous thing from Tristan and Isolde, with Lisztian embellishments, and it seemed to work the trick. He relaxed. My wife came in and he was charming to her, apologizing again for the scene at Uffing a year earlier and crooning over our new little daughter Hertha. In his curious frustrated way he was somehow jealous of me for having such a good-looking wife.

First we made small talk. "Well now," he said in that diffident tone which was one part of his character, "after that little flat of yours in the Gentzstrasse who would have thought we would meet again in a fine house in the best part of town. You are the most feudal acquaintance I have." He was most impressed and kept repeating the phrase about the feine Gegend, which indeed it was. It was the most fashionable part of Munich. Suddenly he looked over his shoulder and stopped in mid-sentence. "I am sorry," he apologized ruefully, "that is the effect of prison. You always expect someone to be listening," and he launched into a graphic description of the psychological effect of the peep-hole in the prison door.

We had prepared a real welcome dinner, turkey, followed by the rich Austrian pastries that he loved. I noticed that he was hardly drinking at all, so there was no need to keep the sugar castor out of his reach. In fact it was about this time that he started to develop the vegetarian eating habits which later became so marked. It may have

Aug 1. 1923

started with the necessity of dieting off his extra poundage, but as usual he made a personal issue of it. "If I feel that meat and alcohol are damaging to my system I hope at least I have enough will power to do without them however much I enjoy them," he used to say. But there was nothing wrong with his appetite that evening.

After dinner he started warming up, striding up and down the room like a soldier, hands clasped behind his back. He was never much of a man for sitting down. Somehow he got back on to the subject of the war again and we discovered that his powers of mimicry did not only cover the human voice. He was describing some recollection of the Western Front and started imitating an artillery barrage. He could reproduce the noise of every imaginable gun, German, French or English, the howitzers, the 75's, the machine-guns, separately and all at once. With that tremendous voice of his we really went through about five minutes of the Battle of the Somme and what the neighbours must have thought I cannot imagine. Fortunately the windows were closed and there was quite a large garden surrounding the house. As an encouragement to his morale I had just given him as a homecoming present an autographed document signed by Frederick the Great, which had come down through my family. "Don't forget how even *der alte Fritz* sat on a drum chewing his nails after the Battle of Hochkirch, wondering what on earth he was going to do next," I tried to encourage him. His eyes brightened. You could almost feel the head of steam building up.

Suddenly he launched into a great political tirade. To my horror he spouted a still further distilled essence of all the nonsense that Hess and Rosenberg had been concocting. All those ridiculous prejudices of little infantry minds, incapable of appreciating the balance of world forces and concentrating instead on the internecine conflicts of purely Continental war and politics. "We shall reach the decision in France," Hitler screamed. "We will reduce Paris to rubble. We must break the chains of Versailles." Oh! my God, I thought, Paris in ruins, the Louvre, all those art treasures gone. Each time Hitler got into this mood I felt almost physically sick.

He seemed to have come out of Landsberg with all his worst prejudices reinforced. I am sure that this is the point at which his

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Hans. 1923

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latent radical tendencies started to crystallize, although there were still years to go before he became the unteachable, unreasonable and unapproachable fanatic whom the world knows from his days of power. The year he spent in Landsberg, instead of giving him time to sit back and take a broader view of political problems, had only given those imprisoned with him an opportunity to narrow his mind within their own confined limits. His anti-Semitism had acquired even more specific racial undertones. Between them, they had filled his mind with fury about the French use of Senegalese troops in the Ruhr during the occupation, and I am not at all sure that this was not the starting-point of the racial purity laws which the Nazis finally evolved. They would pick these ideas up and embroider on them and, to bolster their arguments, even quote such respected sources as Bernard Shaw, who was not averse to advocating the necessity of breeding human beings according to the standards we have developed in the domestic animal world. Of course G.B.S. had the advantage of a full beard, so that no one could see he was smiling all the time and that it was not necessary to take him seriously. But Hitler only had his little moustache and he was taken seriously and he took himself seriously and the whole thing became an obsession with him.

That was bad enough but what really worried me was the way in which Hess had succeeded in pumping his head full of the Haushofer thesis of getting the Russians to be knocked out a second time by the Japanese, who were Germany's only possible ally in the world and so on. America had simply been banished from his mind and I was right back to where I started. In a way the racial obsession played a part in this. He was not really anti-American. He had failed to absorb any of the information I had kept trying to give him and merely regarded America as part of the Jewish problem. Wall Street was controlled by the Jews, America was run by the Jews, and therefore he could not take them into account. They were out of his reach and not an immediate problem. As *Mein Kampf* was to show, he was right back in the politico-military conceptions of Frederick the Great and Clausewitz. He thought only in European terms and was juggling with the idea of making England or, failing that, Italy, into an ally for his day of reckoning with France. It was just as if

the man who really turned the tide of war, Pershing, and his millions of fresh troops transported across the Atlantic had simply not existed. Nor did it occur to him that in another war the same miracle of amphibious organization could be repeated, even faster and even more to Germany's disadvantage.

When he calmed down I started to reason with him. I was one of the few people to whom he would listen, perfectly reasonably and soberly, when we were alone, although he never gave an indication whether he agreed with one or not, or what he proposed to do about it. The moment another person was present Hitler would revert to his declamatory platform style, and it became impossible to try and make him see something in a new light. "It is no good," I told him, "you have got to get rid of this fellow Rosenberg," and I showed him one of the old articles in the *Völkische Beobachter*, in which there were no less than fourteen grammatical errors. Rosenberg was intrinsically illiterate, carried along by his ridiculous Nordic race resentments. "In another fifty years this mythos of his may be recognized as one of the great masterpieces of philosophy," said Hitler. "It is tripe," I insisted, "and tripe remains tripe." I really did talk to him like this, any number of witnesses will confirm it. "If you fold a piece of paper over an ink blot no one is going to mistake it in fifty years for a Rembrandt. Rosenberg is a dangerous and stupid man and the sooner you get rid of him the better." As events turned out I might just as well have been talking to a brick wall.

Another quirk Hitler had developed was a passionate dislike of the officer class. First Lossow, then Ludendorff and somehow Goering got included in the condemnation. He would never trust any of them again, he said, and embroidered great plans for so building up the brownshirts that they would swamp and neutralize the *Reichswehr*. It may seem far-fetched, but I have a private theory that the lunatic contempt and suspicion which Hitler later showed for his generals and field-m Marshals had its roots in this 1923 Putsch. He never lost his wildly romantic ideas about the rôle of the Army, but the officers he never trusted again. "As far as I am concerned I will never believe an officer's word of honour in my life," I remember him saying that evening. "One of these days these gentlemen will know how I feel about them."

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TWILIGHT AT LANDSBERG

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The other strong impression he left me with that evening was the emotional quality of the friendship that had developed with Hess. "Ach, mein Rudi, mein Hesserl," he wailed as he stomped up and down. "Isn't it appalling to think he's still there. [Hess was not released from Landsberg until later.] I will not be a happy man until I see the last of them is out." It is probably not true to say there was a physical homosexual relationship between the two, but in a passive way the attraction was there. I certainly did not trust the manhood of either. You can drink very weak tea, or very thin absinthe and you can suffer from very diluted sex-inversion. These are border emotions and in the science of sexual derangement we still have a long way to go before tracking them down.

I felt Hitler was a case of a man who was neither fish, flesh nor fowl, neither fully homosexual nor fully heterosexual. Somehow the very rootlessness of his background, his very capacity for balancing out a situation and his intuitive gift of always remaining above the petty personal jealousies of his supporters were all a reflection of his sexual isolation. You could never pin him down, say that he was this thing or that thing, it was all floating, without roots, intangible and mediumistic. He had these people of unsavoury habits round him, from Roehm and Heines on the one side to Rosenberg on the other, and seemed to have no sense of moral displeasure at their behaviour. Ernst, another homosexual S.A. leader, hinted in the 'thirties that it would only need a few words from him to silence Hitler when, for political reasons, he started to complain about Roehm's behaviour. Perhaps that is why he was shot as well.

From watching Hitler and talking to those near him, I had formed the firm conviction that he was impotent, the repressed, masturbating type. To adopt scientific jargon for a moment, he had an Oedipus complex, which often ends up that way. He had hated his father, a stupid, petty, brutal, small-time, provincial customs inspector, and adored his mother. Hitler's repressed homosexuality probably dated from the time when he caught syphilis in Vienna about 1908. From the time I knew him, I do not suppose he had orthodox sexual relations with any woman. He was probably incapable of a normal reaction to their physical proximity. In due course he did become identified with various women and the case of his niece Geli Raubal

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Hanfs. 1923

TWILIGHT AT LANDSBERG

125

American. He started giving Hitler a great pep-talk about how he must start anew and how great his chances were, and so on. After this tirade Hitler was in his modest mood again: "*Ach, Herr Professor*," he said (he still had the petty bourgeois complex of addressing any man of some attainment with a title of some sort), "that is all very good advice, but you must never forget how terribly difficult it is for someone without a name or position or academic qualifications, to work himself up to the position where his name is identified with a political programme. You underrate all the bitter hard work involved." And then turning to me he added: "Perhaps, after all, Hanfstaengl, this Putsch was a good thing, at least no one can say I am unknown now, and that gives us a basis to start on again."

For the benefit of the new guest, he started giving a long explanation of his reasons for organizing the Putsch, the imminent danger of the separatist movements, the disorganization and disunity, the need to restore German pride and prestige, and then, coming to the point, almost musing to himself: "What else could we have done? The *Beobachter* was almost in the hands of the receivers and we had no money. There was simply no money left in the Party. What else could we be expected to do? We had to do something." He looked up at my wife: "It has all been a terrible disappointment, dear Frau Hanfstaengl, but the next time I promise you I will not fall off the tight-rope."

1924 Hays

CHAPTER VII

HITLER AND HENRY VIII

A revision of Mein Kampf—No waltzes for the Führer—Ludendorff for President—The return of Rosenberg—A world tour rejected—The scaffold block at the Tower—Hitler on his knees—Forced repayment of a debt.

FOR A FEW weeks, Hitler seemed to be trying to get his political bearings. He visited us again before the turn of the year and I impressed upon him the absolute necessity of reaching some sort of *modus vivendi* with Heinrich Held, the head of the new Bavarian Government. "Unless you can persuade him that the Party has moderated its views, they will simply ban it for good," I told him. "You have got to remember that Bavaria is predominantly Catholic. You will never get anywhere by constantly offending them or letting Rosenberg loose again with his diatribes in print. You have reached the parting of the ways with Ludendorff, and if you can reassure Held on this point it will make a very good impression." A few days later, to my surprise, Hitler called again and said that he had in fact seen Held, had had a friendly half-hour's conversation with him and hoped for the best. He must have been unusually persuasive as within a couple of months the Party was legally permitted to reconstitute itself.

I had a little study in the Pienzenauer house where I used to work. There was no central heating, and the big studio cost such a fortune to warm that I spent most of my time in this cubby-hole. It was full of books and I had hung up a few pictures and photographs on the wall. One of them was a portrait of Mussolini, which I had put there more as a warning than anything else, with his eyes rolling and looking like a ham actor playing Othello. It also made nonsense of his claim to be a Lombard of ancient ancestry. You could see he was two-thirds Moorish. There was also a Hanfstaengl print of a Van Gogh sunflower, which I had persuaded my brother, much against

his will, to include ahead of public taste most popular reproach did not like it. "The he liked the Mussolini conducting.

Roehm was up there asked him along to get a real emperor's head "He looks like Tiber Roehm was much less thick Bavarian accent never make a Fascist a Bavarian monarchist joking and I never felt wondered whether Hitler

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his will, to include in our catalogue. Perhaps I had been a little ahead of public taste, although in later years it proved one of our most popular reproductions and sold in enormous numbers. Hitler did not like it. "The colours are too loud for me," he remarked, but he liked the Mussolini portrait and another photograph of Toscanini conducting.

Roehm was up there with us one afternoon in February. I had asked him along to get Hitler away from his café cronies. "There is a real emperor's head," said Hitler, pointing at the Mussolini picture. "He looks like Tiberius, one of the busts in the Vatican museum." Roehm was much less impressed. "*Mein lieber Adolf*," he said in his thick Bavarian accent, "the man looks like an Abyssinian. You will never make a Fascist out of me. I remain what I have always been, a Bavarian monarchist." I looked at him, but he did not seem to be joking and I never forgot his remark. The day was to come when I wondered whether Hitler had remembered it too.

For a short period it really seemed as if Hitler was prepared to listen to the voice of reason, and in the first few weeks of 1925 I seriously considered giving most of my time again to the guidance of this unpredictable genius. Politically his stock was at a low ebb. The Party had yet to be reactivated legally, there was a ban on his making public speeches, the Central Government had been stabilized, Dr. Schacht's new mark had cured inflation and robbed the Nazis of one of their most effective arguments and Hitler yet had to reimpose himself on his nationalist allies. One day he came to me and said: "We must have 100,000 marks, with that money everything could be built up again." His chief hope lay in the success of his book, the manuscript of which was now complete. Here I felt was a means of making him beholden to the camp of respectability. I told my brother Edgar the book was available and that it was well worth the while of our firm to acquire the rights. We had published a few political biographies and I suggested that this would be a very profitable title to have on our list. But Edgar, who was a very conservative business man, turned the idea down, which was highly indicative of the way a great many people felt about Hitler after the failure of the Bürgerbräu Putsch.

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and one morning Hitler appeared with a bunch of them in his hand. "Would you help me correct them?" he asked, to which I agreed only too readily, until I started to read them. It was really frightful stuff. I suppose I did not see more than the first seventy pages or so, but already his impossible political premises were evident and, quite apart from that, the style filled me with horror. Heaven knows the German language offers endless opportunities for diffuseness of thought and an infinite number of dependent clauses. Here it was combined with a schoolroom phraseology and blatant lapses of style.

I set to work first of all crossing out his worst adjectives, *furchtbar* and *ungeheuer*, and the excessive use of superlatives. Some of the faults were highly indicative. In village schools you were taught it was polite to write *mein Vater besass ein Haus* and not the more colloquial *mein Vater hatte ein Haus* for 'my father had a house'! There on page 22 it came up: *mit mir besass das Schicksal in dieser Hinsicht Erbarmen*—'fate was kind to me in this respect'. Somewhere else he spoke of his talent as a painter. "You cannot say this," I told him. "Other people may say you have talent, but you cannot say it yourself." There were little dishonesties, like describing his father as a *Staatsbeamter*, who is a senior official, which his father never was. His limited outlook was reflected in his use of the word *Weltgeschichte*—world history—in connexion with quite minor European quarrels.

He soon lost patience with me and said "yes, yes, I will see to it," but of course he never did, and the book still reads like one of Fafner's monologues out of Wagner's *Siegfried*. But if you cut your way through the verbiage it reveals the essential Hitler, with all his blind spots, combined with the fantastic energy and single-mindedness with which he adhered to this rigmarole. When I found one set of sheets was missing, I asked what had happened to the others and was told that they were being corrected by Stolzinger-Czerny, a Bohemian German who was on the staff of the *Beobachter*. I told Hitler that unless I had the whole text I could not hope to correct it properly, but I never did see the rest and had to read it in book form when it came out.

It was, I suppose, a forlorn hope, but my wife and I even thought

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HITLER AND HENRY VIII

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of instilling in him some of the social graces as a means of resisting the threat of increasing radicalism in his views. We wanted to soften the manner he still had of a non-com in civilian clothes and suggested that he should go to a dancing school, where we knew they usually taught social deportment as well. The Charleston was the rage at the time, but we intended to avoid that at all costs and hoped that a well learnt waltz might be more conducive to inner harmony. It was odd for a man with such a musical sense that he seemed completely allergic to this expression of it. Even my wife's charm could make no difference. "No," he declared, "dancing is an unworthy occupation for a statesman." - "But, Herr Hitler," I interjected, "Napoleon enjoyed dancing very much, and Washington and Frederick the Great could always be relied upon to attend a ball." - "No, I won't do it. It is a stupid waste of time and these Viennese waltzes are too effeminate for a man to dance. This craze is by no means the least factor in the decline of their Empire. That is what I hate about Vienna."

Although we continued to see quite a lot of Hitler, I could feel that the rabid extremists of the Party had got their claws into him again and the arguments of the more reasonable of us were constantly being countered. Even the march of events conspired against us. The authorities legalized the existence of the Party again on February 24. On the 27th Hitler spoke again for the first time in the Bürgerbräu Keller. Although he seemed reasonably circumspect to me, there was a sufficient hint of the old threats for Held to become alarmed at the liberty he had allowed him, and he was prohibited from speaking again, a ban which was to last for over two years in Bavaria and until September 1928 in the rest of Germany. I had been sitting next to Hess, who by now was also out of gaol. We were quite near the platform and I tried to raise this gloomy young man's spirits by betting that I could foretell the exact words with which Hitler would start his speech. "What do you mean?" asked Hess. "I will lay any money he says '*wenn wir uns die Frage vorlegen*' ['when we ask ourselves . . .'] his old formula for a résumé of events]." And sure enough he did.

The next day President Ebert died and Germany was suddenly in the throes of an election. Immediately the Party was faced by the

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1925

132

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

me. It is not true to say that Hitler openly sponsored this development. He never ordered anyone officially to address him as *Mein Führer*. On the other hand, he never objected and took a secret pleasure in it, and so the custom grew.

Nevertheless these were the gestures of a truncated clique spitting into the wind. Only a drastically reduced rump of the old faithfuls was left. Goering was still in exile in Sweden. Roehm, whose energetic reorganization of the *Kampfband* and S.A. while Hitler was in gaol had been regarded as probably delaying his release, had fallen out of favour. The fault he was to repeat later of wanting too much independence led to a break, and at the end of April he resigned all his offices. Strasser was estranged and had transferred his activities to Berlin, the Rhineland and Saxony, the Communist strongholds, in an almost autonomous capacity. Ludendorff was discarded. Hitler had deliberately permitted the coalition of the radical Right to collapse in order to rebuild the Nazi Party under his complete control. A distinct hiatus period ensued.

I was sharply disappointed in the turn events had taken and made a private resolution to devote myself to my personal interests. There seemed little point in continuing to associate with this discredited group of political adventurers and I felt that only some fundamental broadening in Hitler's views would maintain my faith in his future. His personal habits did not change. In the late summer of 1925 he acquired, I think with the Bechsteins' help, the villa at Beyltesgaden, Haus Wachenfeld, which, with later additions made at the expense of the State, remained his private residence. It was there that he installed Frau Raubal as housekeeper with her daughter Geli. But until that time, and whenever he was in Munich, he was usually to be found with his inner circle at the Café Heck, in the Galleriestrasse, which became his *Stammtisch* after leaving Landsberg. In fine weather they usually met out in the Hofgarten.

I continued to join him there not infrequently, in a final attempt to wean him away from his vulgarian entourage. There were, it is true, one or two exceptions. Karl Anton Reichel, an art expert, was a man of some education, and another adherent was Father Bernhard Stempfle, who had been in his time the editor of a small anti-Semitic paper called the *Miesbacher Anzeiger* and had helped with

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the corrections on *Mein Kampf*. Apart from these two, most of the people at the *Stammtisch* were the sort of men who lose their way after any war and make a precarious living selling life assurance or something of the sort.

Whether one got to talk to him at any length depended on his mood or the strength of his company. The pin-headed provincials who had remained faithful to him objected to my presence, as they did to that of anyone they thought might bring any influences to bear apart from their own. I had been trying to interest him for some time in the idea of learning English. I thought that if he was able to read the British and American papers himself he would at least realize that another world existed and functioned outside Germany. "Give me two afternoons a week, Herr Hitler," I told him, "and in three or four months you will know all you need to start with." He was half suspicious and half fascinated by the idea, but would never make up his mind. Like most basically ignorant people, he had this complex about not needing to learn anything.

I tried to get him to realize that there was more than one view of a problem and to illustrate this I described the working habits of such classical painters as Albrecht Dürer and Vermeer. They used to have a mirror standing behind them so that from time to time they could turn around and see the whole picture in reflection, checking on one plane the details of what they were trying to paint. "You must look at a problem from several angles," I told him. "You cannot have a *Weltanschauung* unless you have viewed the world. Why don't you take advantage of this lull to travel abroad? You would get a completely new view of Germany's problems." "*Um Gotteswillen*, Hanfstaengl, where would I find the time?" "You forget, Herr Hitler, that the world is growing smaller every day. Three or four months, or half a year at the most, and you could see America, Japan, India, and even if you spent the last few weeks in France and England you would have a picture of what a small part of the globe Europe—to say nothing of Germany itself—occupies. To see Germany from outside will be a revelation for you."

"You make it sound too easy," he replied. "What would happen to the movement if I did that? The whole thing has fallen apart since I was in gaol and everything has to be built up all over again."

"That may be so," I said, "but you are not going to do that overnight. Besides, don't forget that you might easily have spent another couple of years in Landsberg and you ought to look on this period as a gift from Providence. Nothing much can happen in the meantime. Germany will not run away from you and you will come back full of new plans for the future."

"What curious ideas you have," he answered, slightly nettled. "Where do you think I spent the war? After all, it was fought outside Germany's borders, I don't need to tell you that, and I spent months, years, as a soldier in Belgium and France." I almost gasped. "But Herr Hitler, you cannot possibly judge a country by the impressions of a soldier. You have a gun in your hand and the inhabitants either crawl to you or treat you with contempt. You never see their true face and cannot possibly form any judgement. You must meet them as equals in times of peace to get to know their real qualities."

"I know them, I tell you," he went on. "I used to see those French women coming out of their houses late every morning in dirty aprons and carpet slippers to go and buy the day's bread and vegetables, slopping around unwashed. They won't have changed. What do you think I can learn from them? And why should I try to learn anyone else's language. I am too old and have no interest and no time. Besides, German is my language, and quite sufficient for me. After all, your British friends also refuse to talk any other language."

Nevertheless the germ of the idea had lodged, and he had obviously been thinking about it, if only because of the new objections he kept finding. I tried to bring up the subject whenever I could. No, he could not possibly travel under his own name. But, I told him, I had friends in the big German shipping companies and it would be perfectly possible to arrange for him to travel incognito. I even offered to go with him and was accused of talking like a travel agent when I told him of the fascinating contrasts in the United States, the vast distances of the Pacific Ocean and the enticements of the Far East, which my father had so well remembered.

When I talked about Japan I thought I had succeeded, as he started to wax lyrical about this warrior nation with its sacred traditions, Germany's true ally and so on, the Haushofer stuff. I should

have bitten my tongue. I had counter-arguments in the field of war wherever we met at competition, quite a American idea.

"That is typical sharply. "You, with of everything in the material side of thin agreements. The man think alike in terms have learnt to think own ideas in Japan could America play Canal and they won't their navy."

"Well, what about still there?" I interjected. He smiled resignedly, but three visits to the capital politics had taken coming and going of Bavarian *Landtag*, *Beobachter*, the press and the endless per got him alone again quite like to do it," that length of time England though." I only part of the work else. So I tried to Castle and the National Hitler was quite car a menu-card from him. This was the sort of and the drawing was

1925 Hamps.

136

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

architect's elevation but all the details and proportions were correct, and he had obviously carried them round in his mind from reading the old copies of Spamer's or Meyer's encyclopaedias I had often noticed in his flat.

"Of course the Tower is always worth seeing and Hampton Court which is still just as Henry VIII left it. . . ." At this he got genuinely excited: "Henry VIII, now there was really a man. If anyone understood the art of politics he did, both abroad and at home. How many wives was it he had?"—"Five or six I think," I answered, racking my brains for their names and then trying to explain that this unusual turnover had been due basically to Henry's need for ensuring an heir and the stability of his line. "Six wives," mused Hitler. "That is not bad, even when you leave the scaffold out of account. We must go to the Tower and see where they were executed. I really must get away. That would really be something worth seeing." And that was all that was left of my world tour plans. He wanted to see the scaffold at the Tower of London. He was quite obviously gripped by the successful ruthlessness of this British monarch, who fought the Pope and imposed his will and enhanced the strength of the Tudor line. Is it too fanciful to see in this exchange an indication of the terrible complexes which were to lead to Dachau and Auschwitz and Majdanek?

I had completely lost heart by now. There was no one left in the Party to whom I could turn for any support. Eckart was dead, Toni Drexler was still around, but completely deprived of influence. I remember seeing his wife Anna one day who told me: "You know, we met Adolf on the street and asked him why he never came to see us. Do you know what his answer was?—'As soon as I have my new car I will come and call on you'—And Toni told him: 'You know you can come and see us in your old car,' but he has never been."

Goering might have helped me, but a warrant was still out against him and he dared not leave Sweden, although we used to correspond. I was unhappy to hear Hitler planning the future without taking Goering into account at all. It was partly his anti-officer complex and partly the fact that his remaining intimates had no time for Goering at all, claiming that he was no National-Socialist, and in the sense which they gave to the words they were right. Gottfried Feder,

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HITLER AND HENRY VIII

137

who was a fairly harmless crank, had also fallen away. In fact he saw the light if anything more clearly than I did. "How can you take over power with no reserves but that bunch of illiterates?" he said to me once. "Hitler will have to have a better second team to back him up in the long run."

Hitler had found no outlet to his personal repressions, although that did not prevent him from indulging in the preliminaries. On one occasion at the Pienzenauerstrasse house, when I had gone out to call a taxi, he went down on his knees in front of my wife, proclaimed his love for her, said what a shame it was he had not met her while she was still free and declared himself her slave. Helene managed to get him on his feet again and, when he had gone, asked me what she should do about it. I knew he had acted out this scene with several other women, so I told her to ignore it and just treat the whole affair as an aberration of loneliness.

He made another attempt with one of the daughters of his early benefactor Ohnesorge. Hitler was staying in his home in Berlin when Ohnesorge was called away, leaving his daughters in the house. Hitler made passionate advances to one of them, and at one point again went down on his knees. He said he could not marry her, but asked her to come and live with him in Munich. Ohnesorge was, of course, furious when he returned and in fact broke off relations with Hitler from about this time. They only came together again in 1931, by which time his offspring were safely married.

At one party out on the Tegern Lake, Hermann Esser took Hitler out with some ladies in a rowing-boat. It would be too much to say that Hitler was shivering with fright, but he was completely out of his element and kept suggesting reasons why the young ladies should be returned to dry land again. He seemed absolutely convinced that the boat was going to capsize and Esser told me afterwards that Hitler had an unreasoning fear of the water. He could not swim and would not learn. In fact I can never recall having seen him in a bathing costume, nor had anyone else. A story, probably authentic, was frequently told that Hitler's old army comrades, who had seen him in the wash-house, had noted that his genital organs were almost freakishly underdeveloped, and he doubtless had some sense of shame about displaying himself. It seemed to me that this must all be

*during World War I
each time his courage waned, he
would think of his tiny genitals.*

part of the underlying complex in his physical relations, which was compensated for by the terrifying urge for domination expressed in the field of politics. This fear of the water must also have played its part in his total incomprehension of naval matters and anything to do with the sea. Looking back it all makes sense.

Hermann Esser had his faults and lived a pretty Bohemian sort of life, but at least he shared my dislike of Rosenberg, whom he would have consigned cheerfully to a dung heap. But with Rosenberg installed again in the *Beobachter*, which was still the only printed outlet for the Nazi programme, there was nothing Esser or I could do. My own personal problems had grown in the meantime. Our little daughter was sick, the start of a distressing illness, during which she wasted away for nearly four years and I was faced by the first mountain of doctors' bills. I had made up my mind to study for a doctor's degree in history and start paying more attention to my obligations to the family firm, and I was really very short of money. The same could not be said of Hitler and his immediate clique. Wherever it came from, they were still tearing round Munich in big cars and their Hofgarten café sessions were certainly not run on credit. I thought well, I helped them out of a hole once over the *Beobachter*, which after all was only ever a loan. I will see if I can get at least some of it back.

I went down to Amann and explained the position, but he was first stupid and then obstinate and then rude. To give an example: I had Egon with me and he looked at the boy and said: "Well he does look nice and tidy, has he just had his hair cut?" So I said yes, he had just been to the barber, whereupon Amann commented: "I have to cut my boy's hair myself you know, to save money. You could do the same if you tried, it is quite easy to learn." That was his tone, and when I said that was neither here nor there and that I needed the money he just turned obstinate again, the Party had no funds and so on and so forth. I was not even asking for the dollars back, although they had represented a fortune at the time. I was perfectly prepared to accept the equivalent in new marks.

The thing went on for months. My wife even brought up the subject once with Hitler himself in Berchtesgaden, where we happened to be early in 1926. He was complaining about our not coming

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HITLER AND HENRY VIII

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to the meetings and our general aloofness. So my wife asked him what to expect when he still allowed a man like Rosenberg so much influence and then taxed him about Amann's behaviour over the loan. He tried to talk his way out of it by saying that Amann had told him nothing of my situation. He contended that the Party was at its wits' end for finance and used more arguments of the same sort.

In the end I lost patience and went along to see Christian Weber, the tough, brawling horse-dealer who had still managed to keep his position in the Hitler circle, although in his rough way he had started to see through his chief. "What does Hitler mean by calling his book *My Struggle*," I asked him once. "I should have thought the least he could have done would have been to call it *Our Struggle*." Weber gave his great beer-belly laugh: "He ought to call it *Mein Krampf*," he said. He was still loyal but did not mind roaring his criticisms. He was an old bandit with an underlying yearning for respectability. We had always got on very well together and he thought I was being scurvily treated so, good horse-dealer that he was, he agreed to take over my claims at a 20 per cent discount and paid me the balance in cash. He had made a good bargain and of course got the whole amount back in no time. He knew exactly how to deal with Amann, who was, needless to state, absolutely furious. Hitler was no better pleased, although he pretended to be above such petty considerations and for some time relations between us were more or less broken off.

Hayes. 1926-27

CHAPTER VIII

THE BOHEMIAN AT THE BROWN HOUSE

Art versus politics—The return of Goering—A red ground for the Swastika—The radicalism of Goebbels—Appearance of a Hohenzollern—An electoral triumph—Picking the first team—Interlude with the Press—A letter from the Kaiser—Committed to the Nazis.

FOR THE next couple of years or so, my contact with Hitler was more or less spasmodic. I immersed myself in my history books again and in February 1928 obtained a rather belated Dr. Phil. from Munich University with a thesis on the problem of Bavaria and the Austrian Netherlands in the eighteenth century. It was still very much a sign of respectability in Germany to be able to call yourself 'Herr Doktor', and I thought the least I could do was to conform. My wife and I had also spent some time abroad the previous year, chiefly as a respite to her from the continued and harrowing illness of our little daughter. We stayed in Paris and London and I had a good look at all the art galleries, making notes for possible new reproductions for the family firm. It all seemed so much more civilized and satisfying than the rowdy complications of life with Hitler.

1928-7 These of course were the years of his political eclipse. He was not allowed to speak anywhere and although he was slowly reorganizing the Party it was a very gradual process and he was making little real impact. Economic conditions were improving out of all recognition with the flood of American capital which was streaming into the country and the apparent stabilizing of the Central Government. As a result his programme and slogans lost much of their impact. He was spending most of his time out in Berchtesgaden, but we were in touch in a desultory fashion through Hermann Esser, who still kept in with him and seemed to have been deputed by Hitler to render occasional reports of our attitude. Quite apart from the fact that I was now fully occupied in other directions, I let him know that as

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THE BOHEMIAN AT THE BROWN HOUSE

141

long as the Rosenberg and Hess factions maintained their influence, I was not particularly interested in associating with him further.

Nevertheless, we continued to see him from time to time, although I cannot say it was an unmitigated pleasure. There was a new air of truculence and impatience about him in his private manner, which I had not remembered. His *obiter dicta* were somehow acquiring a slightly nightmarish tinge. He gave my wife and me a lift across Munich one day in his car and I remember him saying, although what brought up the subject I cannot recall: "There are two ways of judging a man's character; by the woman he marries and by the way he dies." That sounds a little morbid I thought, but the next one was worse: "Politics is like a harlot; if you love her unsuccessfully she bites your head off." It seemed a lurid turn of phrase and I wondered in what directions his thoughts were running. However, in his general attitude to politics he seemed reasonably conciliatory. We were having lunch together at a little wine pub in the Sonnenstrasse with some others, and the conversation turned to the Party's twenty-five point programme, which was an awful hodge-podge, but had long since been declared immutable. Somebody was suggesting that it should be modified and pruned of some of its contradictions, but Hitler did not agree: "What do the contradictions matter?" he said. "The New Testament is full of contradictions but that did not prevent the spread of Christianity."

In public he was professing himself a convert to the tenets of political legality and parliamentary processes, which somewhat reassured me as it was a point I had advocated very strongly after the collapse of the Putsch. The Party diehards were dead against it and failed even to draw any conclusions from the rise of Mussolini, whose march on Rome had after all only been made possible by an electoral success. Hitler appeared to have overcome their objections and earned a nickname in press circles in the process. It was coined by a Swiss journalist who had interviewed him. I forget his name, but he was a tall, pleasant fellow with a very white face, who described Hitler to me as a baffling combination of the ultra-Conservative and the ultra-radical, "in that respect he is very like Philippe Egalité, or should we perhaps call him Prince Legalité."

There was no sign of Hitler's private life becoming normal. For a

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time he was occasionally seen in the company of Henny, the pretty little blonde daughter of Heinrich Hoffmann. He always used to call her *my saint* ^{his} *mein Sonnenschein*, but I never heard it seriously maintained that they were having an affair. Apparently he had also taken advantage of Hermann Esser's absence on one occasion to make passionate declarations to his by no means unattractive first wife. Again it was all rhetoric and was followed by a flaming row with the husband, as a result of which Esser was never offered a position of importance when ultimate Nazi success brought the distribution of lucrative jobs for the boys.

It was not until the end of 1927 that I started getting slightly more involved again with the Nazis' affairs, and the occasion for it was the return to Germany of Goering. A general amnesty had been declared in the autumn and he came back first to Berlin, where as far as I could make out he was living on his wits and making a certain amount of money representing a couple of Swedish firms making aircraft components and parachutes. He soon turned up in Munich and I was genuinely pleased to see him. In fact I am not at all sure that he did not come and stay with us. He certainly did so frequently over the next few months and if he was not with us he lived with Captain Streck, who had been Ludendorff's adjutant at the time of the Putsch and was now successfully established in, of all professions, that of a music teacher. Goering was fatter, more business-like and materialistic and concerned chiefly with the Babbitt aim of life.

It seemed to me an entirely good thing that his wider knowledge of the world should be brought to bear on Hitler again, but he did not find the going at all easy. We had corresponded while he was in exile and in the early stages I had helped him from time to time with money, so he rather turned to me as a confidant. The Party hacks were still suspicious of him and Hitler's reception was distinctly cool. General elections were due in the spring of 1928 and Goering wanted to stand high up on the Party list as one of the candidates, partly from ulterior motives I suspect, as it would not only give him a position and a useful income in Berlin but also the protection of parliamentary immunity should opponents in the Government care to rake up any of his past misdeeds. Hitler put him off and sought

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THE BOHEMIAN AT THE BROWN HOUSE

143

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excuses and in the end Goering lost his temper. It was in February or March. I remember there was snow on the ground as we walked together to the Thierschstrasse, where Hitler still maintained his little flat, for the crucial talk. Goering kept asking me to go up with him, but I preferred not to. I only heard afterwards that the two had had a shouting match, with Goering delivering an ultimatum: "This is no way to treat a man who got two bullets in his stomach at the Feldhermhalle. Either you put me up for the *Reichstag* or we shall part for ever as enemies." It worked, and Hitler gave way, although it caused much bad blood in the Party and a lot of them went round saying Goering had blackmailed Hitler.

The election results gave little cause for rejoicing. The Nazis obtained twelve seats in the *Reichstag* and considerably less than a million votes. Goering, as I recall, was number seven on the list and just above him was General von Epp, who had now reconciled himself with Hitler and resigned from the Army to stand. In spite of nearly four years' work, the movement had made little headway and was still local in its appeal, only attracting the support of the ultra-nationalist fringe in most of Germany. In spite of Goering's blandishments I had taken no part. His own position in the Party was shaky for quite a time. He had grown enormously fat during his years of exile and the old hands considered that this was no advertisement for a working-class party. Even Hitler expressed doubts about his capacity. "I don't know whether Goering is going to make it," he used to say to me. But Goering fooled them all, developing as a speaker, although all he did was to ape Hitler's style and phrases. For some reason Hitler took this as a compliment, a sign of fidelity, in contradistinction to his attitude to Esser, who did exactly the same, but with more intelligence and independence.

Goering, of course, was delighted with his new-found eminence. I saw him off at the station after the election and he had fitted himself out with a showy great aviation overcoat, made out of leather, with one of those mountaineers' hats, covered with edelweiss and enamel tokens and a great shaving-brush stuck at the back. Having been elected in Bavaria, perhaps he thought he should play the part. "Why don't you make it up with Hitler?" he asked me. "We shall win through in the end and he would certainly put you on the Party

list next time. As an M.d.R. you would travel everywhere first-class like me"—waving his free ticket in my face. "What is an M.d.R.?" I asked foolishly. "*Mitglied des Reichstags* [Member of the Reichstag]," he said. "Surely you know that." He kept up his business interests and became known as the wonder of the Nazi Party—the only man who had risen by means of a parachute.

I was far more pleased with a private triumph which had resulted from a second visit to Paris before the elections, where I had gone to stay with an old college-friend, Seymour Blair. I had sent in my card at the Louvre to the director, Henri Verne, who I found was a nephew of the famous novelist. He greeted me with open arms—he knew the name of the family firm well—and when I asked, rather diffidently whether it would be possible to photograph part of the collection for reproduction purposes he immediately promised his full co-operation. I almost fell out of the chair. In my grandfather's day, under Napoleon III, the French authorities had flatly refused such facilities and we had always assumed the request was hopeless. Now not only could I pick whatever I chose, but I was permitted to use our own photographer in a studio at the top of the museum and was promised further facilities in every museum in France. It was a major coup and for some months my time was taken up with little else. I spent two or three lengthy periods in Paris supervising the work and through Verne and his friends met several of the leading French artists—Picasso, Derain, Marie Laurencin and others.

Hitler's, and even Germany's, problems seemed far away, although they were brought home to me once by the odd behaviour of the French workmen who were helping me move the massive canvases from their place on the walls up to the studio where I was working. They were splendid fellows, most of them ex-soldiers. I always had my pocket full of good cigars and we got on famously. One day I felt they were dragging their heels and not displaying their usual cheerful energy, so in the end I ventured to ask if anything was wrong. One of them produced a crumpled copy of a French newspaper from his pocket with the headline, '*Docteur Schacht dit non*', with a furious story about how Schacht, in an interview in the Hotel Georges V, had said that Germany was unable to continue making any reparations payments. It was around the

time of the negotiating cigar ration and our personal relations were in full cry with what a good thing of this sort of propaganda.

I still saw Hitler in Munich and tried to develop a habit of when he saw me appearing. "I am no longer entitled to keep some together he was always gossip, and on one of the buildings there he sketched the Opéra, pushed over for my was also a man of it done. It was an odd back of menu-cards fancy borders, or Schumann usually used once, only to have the

We got talking on great care to design for the swastika, which we did that I could in the Berlin Lustgarten. I tell you there is or and that is red." I told swastika in the corner even if we used the peace flag with a white background tion," he said. "Then change it."

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THE BOHEMIAN AT THE BROWN HOUSE

145

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time of the negotiations on the Young Plan. So I had to double my cigar ration and order up a crate of Munich Spaten beer before personal relations were re-established. At home, of course, the Nazis were in full cry with the same slogan and I could not help feeling what a good thing it would have been if they had seen the effect of this sort of propaganda abroad.

I still saw Hitler occasionally in his café when I was back in Munich and tried to interest him in my accounts of France. He had developed a habit of dropping his voice and changing the subject when he saw me approaching his table, but I did not take it too ill. "I am no longer really in his confidence," I thought, "and he is entitled to keep some things to himself." When we had a few minutes together he was always perfectly pleasant, listening to my Paris gossip, and on one occasion pulled his little trick of drawing public buildings there he had seen illustrated. In ten minutes he had sketched the Opéra, Notre-Dame and the Eiffel Tower, which he pushed over for my approbation with an air as if to prove that he was also a man of the world, and in fact they were perfectly well done. It was an odd, childish quirk. He was always doodling on the back of menu-cards, with squares and circles and swastikas and fancy borders, or scenes out of the Wagner operas. Heinrich Hoffmann usually used to collect them, but I picked up three or four once, only to have them stolen later by a maid.

We got talking once about the Party flag, which he had taken great care to design himself. I told him I did not like the use of black for the swastika, which was a sun symbol and should be in red. "If we did that I could not use red for the background," he said. "I was in the Berlin Lustgarten years ago at a big Socialist demonstration, I tell you there is only one colour with which to attract the masses and that is red." I then suggested that it might be better to put the swastika in the corner of the old black, white and red flag and that even if we used the red background as a war ensign, we should have a peace flag with a white background. "If I put the swastika against a white background we are going to look like a charitable organization," he said. "This is the right thing and I am not going to change it."

I also had occasion to go up to Berlin later in 1928 and went

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Mongem - big sheet, money

146

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

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along to have lunch with Goering in the *Reichstag*. He introduced me to Goebbels, whom I met for the first time. I had heard a lot about him; how he had started as a secretary to Gregor Strasser and then switched to profuse support of Hitler when Strasser had tried to make his North German Nazi group too independent. In fact, Strasser was also in the restaurant, but sitting at another table. Goebbels always had a fine nose for which way the wind was blowing and in two or three further Party splits always switched at the last moment to Hitler's side, which, as it turned out, was a great pity.

Yuppies
rich folk

Goebbels was an odd little narrow-gutted fellow, with his club-footed limp, but he had a beautiful articulate voice and very large brown, intelligent, almost doe-like eyes. He remained a Strasser radical in his political views and talked a lot about the Bonzen and the need for helping the unemployed and badly paid. I started on my hobby-horse about soup kitchens à la Count Rumford and he said yes, not only for the poorer people, but for everybody. "When we get to power they will all get Spartan soup, for young and old, high and low. We will show them that the German people is really unified in its needs and happiness. We will give our ministers 1,000 marks a month, and if anyone in the country thinks he has a right to make more we will deal with him." That from a man who thought nothing when he came to power of spending 100,000 marks on some Byzantine bacchanal in his Schwanenwerder house on the Wannsee.

My connexion with Hitler and the Party remained vicarious. I had started writing a book on the eighteenth century, which I finally called *From Marlborough to Mirabeau*, and paid, I think, one more visit to Paris to round off the colour photographs for the firm. In fact I was there again at the end of July 1929 and was just returning home when a telegram was handed on board the train at Baden-Baden, to say that our daughter Hertha had died. It was a merciful release; she was five years old and weighed 21 lb. It was probably only superstition on our part, but we felt that we had been partly responsible for her death by giving her a name beginning with an 'H'. There was an old story in the family dating back to my grandfather's time that a gipsy woman in Coburg had told him that any member of the family whose Christian name did not begin with 'E' would have bad luck. With this one exception, we had always

kept to it—we were was never anything v

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THE BOHEMIAN AT THE BROWN HOUSE

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I sent my wife up to her relatives in Pomerania for a long holiday and when I had got over the misfortune a little I decided to go and have a look at the annual Party rally in Nuremberg, which had been instituted two years earlier. The first one had coincided with the lifting of the ban on Hitler making public speeches in Bavaria, and for a year he had been free to speak anywhere in Germany. The pulse of the movement was quickening again and I felt under something of an obligation to keep an eye on developments. I travelled on my own in civilian clothes and there on the station platform were Hitler and Goebbels to greet the mass of brown-shirted delegates on their arrival. I got a fairly perfunctory welcome, and Goebbels, who was already engaged in his long campaign to become Hitler's right-hand man and shared, like his rivals, a cankerous jealousy of anyone who seemed to have an unusual *entrée* to him, made one of his typical half-malicious remarks about how glum I was looking. He had a phenomenal memory for small faults of behaviour and attitude in people, on which he would then enlarge to Hitler, and I was astonished years later when he referred again to the incident, suggesting that I had shown little enthusiasm for the Party rally. It was only then that I told him I had just come from the cremation of my daughter, which at least shut him up. I remember being quite impressed with the marching and the bands at the rally, but of course it had not in any way acquired the mammoth, Hollywoodian proportions which were soon to make it such an effective propaganda weapon.

It was, I think, at Nuremberg that I first met Prince August Wilhelm of Prussia—'Auwi'. We came to like each other very well. He was taking an interest in the Nazi Party's activities on behalf of the Hohenzollerns and it was largely through him that I became reconciled again with the movement. I felt that if a member of the former royal family was prepared to identify himself with it, there was more hope of keeping it within bounds. From the end of 1929 Auwi started to use my home as his Munich headquarters and he had a brief meeting with Hitler there at the end of November, although I remember nothing of the details.

At this time also, the Nazis made considerable gains in the provincial elections, especially in Thuringia, where Frick even became the Minister of the Interior. This had largely been the result of a temporary alliance between Hitler and Hugenberg, who had taken over the leadership of the German Nationalist Party, in a campaign to defeat the continuation of reparations and the German signature of the Young Plan. Although the agitation, which had included a national plebiscite, was totally unsuccessful, Hitler had succeeded in impressing his abilities as propagandist and politician on several of the Ruhr magnates, who had previously confined their support to Hugenberg. Through a young man named Otto Dietrich, who had family connexions in the Ruhr and had become Hitler's press relations officer, Hitler met Emil Kirdorf, who, with Fritz Thyssen, started paying the Nazis quite large subsidies. It was certainly a larger and more regular income than they had ever had, but as I have no intimate knowledge of these transactions there is no point in my enlarging on them.

Needless to say, this gave a great fillip to the Party organization, and, with political success and an appeal which was now for the first time national rather than regional, Hitler and his supporters started to blossom visibly. A large mansion on the Briennerstrasse was purchased as Party headquarters and became the famous Brown House. It was the turning-point, and with the spread to Europe in general and Germany in particular of the consequences of the economic crash in America, Hitler once more had fertile ground in which to sow his seeds. I was still bound up in my literary and artistic work, but recognized that things were on the move again and that Hitler had not only re-emerged as the man to be watched, but that unless influences other than those of his immediate entourage were brought to bear on him anything might happen. This was something I felt more or less subconsciously, and for some time yet did nothing really practical about it.

It was only at the beginning of (1930) that I really found myself being sucked in to the Nazi maelstrom again. Both Auwi and Goering found my house a convenient centre, Auwi because he wished to keep a reasonable distance between himself and the Party offices, and Goering because he had by no means rehabilitated

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himself as yet with the old stalwarts. This is an entry in my guest-book for February 24, the day after the murder in a Berlin street brawl of Horst Wessel, which shows that both Auwi and Goering were in the Pienzenauerstrasse with Hitler and Goebbels to discuss the event. The leadership was divided on what action should be taken, and, on the initiative of Goering as I remember, they all met at my house to thrash things out.

The argument was about whether Hitler should go and make a funeral oration at the service in Berlin. Goebbels was wanting him to do it, but Goering said no, the situation was already tense enough and the Party could not guarantee Hitler's safety. "If anything goes wrong it would be a catastrophe," I remember him saying. "After all, there are still only twelve of us in the *Reichstag*, and we simply haven't enough strength to make capital out of this. If Hitler comes to Berlin it will be a red rag to the Communist bulls and we cannot afford to take the consequences." That was conclusive and Hitler did not go in the end, but it certainly did not detract from my opinion of Goering as a moderating influence.

It is probably not generally known that the famous *Horst Wessel Lied*, which became the Nazi anthem and had been composed by the victim, was not original at all. The tune is exactly that of a Vienna cabaret song at the turn of the century, from the Franz Wedekind *Überbrettel* period, although I do not think that Wedekind wrote it himself, to which the words originally ran more or less like this:

Und als dein Aug' das meine einst erblicket
 Und als mein Mund den deinen einst geküsst
 Da hat die Liebe uns umstricket...

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which became *'Marschieren im Geist in unseren Reihen mit.'**

Wessel certainly wrote the new words and hotted up the tune to march time, but that is where it comes from.

My main interest still lay in my book, which finally came out in September 1930. The chief reward was the nicest possible letter

* And as your eye met mine
 And as my lips kissed yours
 Then did love enshroud us . . .

[which became] Walk in spirit within our ranks,

Hans.

1929-30

150

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

from Oswald Spengler, whom I had recently met in Munich and for whom I had a great admiration. He was a very unprofessorial type, at least for a German, and laid about him in all directions in his tremendous Berlin accent. Yet even he, with his incredible knowledge of world history, had a lot of blind spots about England and America. He had mastered to the smallest detail the sort of history which is taught in German universities, but even his mind had not fully grasped the rôle of the maritime powers.

I had sent him a proof copy of my book and one day on the hall table I found a grubby envelope, which I thought at first was a dentist's bill, in a cheap green cover. I opened it only later in the day and it was from Spengler. He said some very flattering things about it being the most profound and far-reaching study he had ever seen concerning the particular period, the eighteenth century, all in one long sentence right down the page. I think it was the happiest moment of my life. Even my success at the Louvre had been accomplished by and in the name of the Hanfstaengl family, but here was the world's greatest historian praising something which was entirely my own work. A whole new set of perspectives opened up and I thought, ah! now at last with this backing I can really set to work on Count Rumford and Ludwig II of Bavaria and make my reputation as an historian.

In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that the political events of the month found me miles away in another world. New national elections were on the point of being held. The measures necessary to combat the economic crisis had riven the *Reichstag* with faction, but when the members challenged the emergency powers which Chancellor Brüning had obtained from President Hindenburg to meet the situation, he had dissolved the chamber. It was, in fact, the beginning of the death throes of parliamentary Government in the Weimar Republic which were to bring Hitler to power. The Nazis, and indeed every other party, were throwing every ounce of their energy into the campaign.

I tried in a desultory way to gauge which way the wind was blowing and remember one lunch with Seymour Blair, who had come to Munich to see me, and a mutual friend, Anton Pfeiffer, who was one of the leaders of the Bavarian People's Party, at the

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Four Seasons Hotel interests was a big (I had told Blair that a few minutes and as a foreigner, which had been on at me on the Party list, I later that Pfeiffer people in the *Reich* was unduly pessimistic looked at it, and they could win thirty than I was to learn and increased their

This, of course, were all still digesting telephone rang at night "Herr Hanfstaengl, would it be convenient to come along whenever at the door, Hitler's silent support. I see them and what all regarded as self-Hanfstaengl, I have press chief of the Party or at the most in a power. You have a service."

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Haus. 1929-30

THE BOHEMIAN AT THE BROWN HOUSE

151

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Four Seasons Hotel. Pfeiffer was quite a figure and one of his interests was a big German-American boys' school at Nymphenburg. I had told Blair that I would find some excuse to leave the table for a few minutes and go and telephone, and wanted him to ask Pfeiffer, as a foreigner, which way he thought the elections would go. Goering had been on at me to make it up with Hitler and get my name put on the Party list, but I had done nothing about it. Blair told me later that Pfeiffer had said the Nazis would be lucky to get six people in the *Reichstag*, half their 1928 representation. This I felt was unduly pessimistic, or optimistic, depending on which way you looked at it, and thought that in the situation the Nazis might conceivably win thirty to forty seats, but nobody was more staggered than I was to learn that they had obtained nearly 6½ million votes and increased their representation to 107.

This, of course, was a political sensation of the first order, and we were all still digesting its implications when, a day or two later, the telephone rang at my home and there was Rudolf Hess on the line: "Herr Hanfstaengl, the Führer is very anxious to talk to you. When would it be convenient for us to call on you?" All very polite and courteous. "What can I lose?" I thought, and said, "Yes, certainly, come along whenever you like." In half an hour they were knocking at the door, Hitler very authoritative and staccato and Hess providing silent support. I sat them down and said how pleased I was to see them and what an astonishing success it had been, which Hitler all regarded as self-evident and promptly came to the point: "Herr Hanfstaengl, I have come to ask you to take over the post of foreign press chief of the Party. Great things are before us. In a few months, or at the most in a couple of years, we must irresistibly sweep to power. You have all the connexions and could render us a great service."

I knew what was in his mind. Munich was being flooded with foreign correspondents who had come down to interview this renascent phenomenon and he simply did not know how to deal with them or talk to them. He never had, and in spite of our years of semi-estrangement I was the only person he knew who had the whole background of the Party in his mind and could deal with the problem. In a way I was flattered, but not to be hustled. At least it

would give me a position, I hoped of influence, near him, but I had serious reservations. My arch-allergy, Rosenberg, had, of course, also been swept into the *Reichstag* on Hitler's coat-tails, and I felt this would give him an even bigger field for his nefarious theories. I produced all my standing objections, which Hitler tried to counter by saying that if the Party really came to power, Rosenberg and the *Beobachter* would have much less importance.

Then he tried to bribe me by saying that at the next elections he would certainly put me up for the Bavarian *Landtag* or the *Reichstag*, whichever I preferred, and that I could look forward to an important position in the Foreign Office and that now was my chance. It was certainly clear that this was my best opportunity of entering on the ground floor on equal terms with the wild men of the Party whose influence I had always feared, so in the end I agreed. I told him that I had developed a great many other interests, but that I would undertake this liaison work in a voluntary capacity and we would see how it worked out. He left with profuse thanks and spacious phrases: "*Hanfstaengl, Sie gehören in meine nächste Umgebung*" ["You will form part of my immediate entourage"]. But, of course, with no hint of practical arrangements, or where I was to have an office, or how I was to work. Those were the details he could never be bothered with.

If I was to be closely identified with him again, the best thing seemed to collect a small group of advisers with whom I could work out arguments to counteract the wilder aberrations of the Party extremists. I held a whole series of meetings and conferences and dinners at my house in the Pienzenauerstrasse. There was a Major Gramaccini, who had been for many years the Italian member of the Disarmament Commission resident in Munich, who not only briefed me about what was still the relatively moderate Fascist régime in Italy under Mussolini, but reinforced my anti-Rosenberg arguments of the potential danger of offending Catholic opinion and allowing illegal methods to gain the upper hand in the Party. He also warned me that if Hitler thought that future friendship between the two régimes was going to be automatic he was going to be severely disillusioned.

I also called in General von Biskupsky, who was a very presentable

former Czarist officer: with Rosenberg, but convincing arguer: Poland and Russia. I to the house and wh: mania, turned to a M spent long years in a much more balan political *fantaisiste*. to listen to him. In wing of the Party I was still very much remained true to his:

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Haus. 1930

154

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

I arranged. Hitler gave me a 30 per cent cut, which I must say was by no means unwelcome. However, the arrangement leaked out to the Party and the radicals took a very displeased view of this surrender of Hitler to the mighty dollar.

He was certainly beginning to give himself airs in financial matters at the time, and at the Hotel Hauflé, where we were staying, when I thought I was being particularly generous in giving the maidservant a 20 per cent tip of about three marks, I saw him giving her ten marks. In my travels with him he always gave three or four times the amount that was necessary, and claimed that it had a very good effect, as the staff showed the notes around in the kitchen and sometimes even got him to autograph them. It was also at Leipzig that I realized for the first time that he had acquired quite a following among the German aristocracy. If I remember correctly, Prince zu Wied and his charming wife were there, together with several others, for the late-evening conversation sessions, and in this I saw nothing but good. These were people from the right sort of society, and if the political situation developed they would provide a useful restraining influence.

With his power and position suddenly increased beyond measure, Hitler was picking his first team for the struggle that lay ahead. For two or three years the S.A. had been under the command of a Captain Pfeffer, but Hitler was not satisfied with the way in which it was being run. In all conscience it was military enough, with the old *Freikorps* hands in the subordinate ranks still thinking that all they had to do was to keep alive the spirit and comradeship they had developed in the trenches. There had even been a movement at one time to replace their Austrian ski-cap with the round Prussian soldiers' headgear, but this had been turned down for the curious compromise of something which looked uncommonly like a French Army *képi*. Pfeffer had been a soldier in Alsace-Lorraine and this was his idea. However, Hitler wanted the S.A. developed on a national scale as a political weapon, and turned again to one of the best organizers he had, Ernst Röhm, by then serving as a mercenary in the Bolivian army.

By this time his sexual perversion was complete, although to what extent Hitler was aware of this when he sent for him I do not know.

Haus.

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Haus.

1930, 1931, 1932

THE BOHEMIAN AT THE BROWN HOUSE

155

Fellow-officers who had known Roehm during the war always maintained that he had been completely normal and even described orgies in which he had taken part in the Army brothels. He had certainly acquired a syphilitic infection during this period and this may have had some effect on his subsequent development. The scandal started soon after he had returned in October 1930. Letters from his male companions in Bolivia somehow came into the hands of third parties and the accusations started. General von Epp, who had held a high opinion of Roehm's organizational abilities before the Ludendorff Putsch, even taxed him with the rumours at quite an early stage and received Roehm's completely false word of honour that they were not true. Later, about 1932, the scandal became public, and although it was somehow glossed over, Roehm quite openly admitted his aberration to Toni Drexler, because he passed it on to me. Hitler can have had no illusions at any time and his mock horror when he found it necessary to shoot Roehm in 1934 was, of course, pure invention.

On January 1, 1931, the Brown House was formally opened as Party headquarters. A tiny room had been reserved for me on the third floor, which seemed a very unsatisfactory arrangement, as it meant that the foreign correspondents who came to visit us could wander all over the building on the pretence of trying to find me. My immediate neighbour was Heinrich Himmler. Until the 'thirties he had only been a shadowy hanger-on of the inner group of the Nazi Party, but Hitler had at last found him a niche and had entrusted him with the formation of a special bodyguard responsible for the protection of Hitler's person. Its growth was slow and it was some time before the membership even reached three figures, yet, in the end, it staffed the concentration camps and provided thirty-five Waffen S.S. divisions. But if anyone had asked me to foresee that I would have sent them to have their head examined.

It was in Himmler's office that I saw young Baldur von Schirach for the first time. What persuaded his parents to give him such an operatic name I cannot think. It was enough to give him a knock on the head to last a lifetime. He spoke really quite good English and lounged into my office one day to see if I would take him on as my secretary, or adjutant, as the Nazi phraseology had it. He

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slouched on the other side of the desk and picked up a pen and played with it and shifted other things around as he talked, so that I got pretty sharp with him and asked where he had learnt his manners. This was a bad start to our relationship and he never liked me, but he ended by marrying Henny Hoffmann and at one time was regarded as the golden boy of the Party and almost the crown prince.

As far as my nominal duties were concerned, I derived little satisfaction. Hitler had never grown out of his café habits and his congenital inability to keep to an orderly daily time-table. I would make appointments with journalists and he would never keep them, or have to spend the whole day hunting him down in one of his public haunts. His whole life was lived in this impromptu Bohemian style. He would turn up at the Brown House at eleven or at twelve as it suited him. He would come announced and unannounced and would keep people waiting for hours.

The only place where you could be reasonably sure of catching him was still the Café Heck, where he used to hold court from about four o'clock in the afternoon onwards. He hated any sort of gathering where he could be pinned down, and preferred his informal *Stammtisch* which gave him unlimited occasion to talk and expatiate without being contradicted. He usually had people listening to him spellbound and it was very hard to get anything out of him, as everyone there hung on his words and it took hours to get him alone. In due course he realized that I had not come to hear the same repeated stories of the Party's history for the fiftieth time and that I had something particular to say to him, but that time was not yet.

I did what I could. There was a not unfriendly journalist in Paris named Gustave Hervé, who was the editor of *La Victoire*, with whom I arranged an exchange of open letters advocating Franco-German understanding. Then there was old Hermann Bahr, the very respectable Austrian feuilletonist and author. He was a staunch Catholic, but had written an article somewhere not unfavourable to the Nazi movement and I persuaded Hitler to take advantage of his prestige and print an article by him in the illustrated *Beobachter*. Rosenberg slashed it to pieces and Bahr, very put out, would have nothing further to do with us. There was a Portuguese journalist

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THE BOHEMIAN AT THE BROWN HOUSE

157

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from *Diario de Noticias* in Lisbon. I tried to get Hitler to have a few words with him in the Café Heck, but the trouble was he had no idea what to talk to foreign journalists about. He either wanted them to be converted to Nazism in advance or expected them to become passionate admirers. He had no command of the amiable banalities with which a true politician can fob off the press. In this case our Portuguese visitor was very annoyed. He had spent several days at the expensive Regina Hotel to no purpose and, of course, wrote a very unfavourable article. This came back into the hands of Philip Bouhler, one of Hitler's adjutants, who spoke excellent Portuguese as a result of long residing in Brazil. So of course they all rounded on me for not doing my job properly.

I see from a letter I wrote on February 9, 1931, that all my reservations were being reinforced. Someone named Maximilian von Hamm had approached me through my friend Karl Oskar Bertling in Berlin to ask if some employment could be found for him in the Party organization. He cannot have found my advice encouraging: "The foreign and internal policies of the N.S.D.A.P. under that Russified German Alfred Rosenberg are so incredibly clumsy, not to say criminal, that at the moment I can only see a second disaster looming for the Party. The anti-clerical agitation furthered by this Mythos of his can only lead to national Bolshevism. . . . Most of the people in the Party leadership are second-raters and nothing good can come from their continued influence. . . . You will have cause to be grateful if I dissuade you from joining us. . . . It is very sad to have to write you this, but unless he mends his ways, Hitler, for all his incredible powers as an orator, will never be more than the drummer-boy for the rest. As things are he simply does not possess the qualities for a leader of Germany."

Nevertheless, I still found myself being caught up willy-nilly in the Party's internal squabbles. I was dragged up to Berlin by Hitler in April 1931, when the S.A. formations there revolted against the leadership. They had not been paid and thought they were being prevented from playing their true part in the political struggle. Hitler had to go round from suburb to suburb and beseech them with tears in his eyes to rely on him to see that their interests were protected. He managed to restore order and we all sat around the next day in

8 Hamps. 1931

a sort of commercial travellers' hotel called the Herzog von Coburg, opposite the Anhalter Station, Goebbels, Hitler and Walter Stennes, who was usually referred to as the leader of the revolt, but was in fact much more the victim. I found him a very decent fellow, a nephew of Cardinal Schulte of Cologne, and he took me over to one of the open windows, where our conversation was drowned by the noise of traffic, and said: "Does Hitler realize that the real instigator of this revolt is standing by him?"—and that was Goebbels. "He has been egging them on to demonstrate in the streets in spite of Hitler's orders that we were not to get into fights, and now they blame it all on me." Part of the trouble was that some of the money they should have been receiving had been pocketed by Goebbels to set himself up in luxury. He was in the middle of his affair with his future wife Magda, who at that time was still married to a Herr Quandt, and needed presumably to impress her with his power and affluence. Stennes, in fact, came to no harm and eventually made his way to China, where he became an adviser to Chang Kai-shek.

A much more significant meeting occurred shortly after our return to Munich, when Auwi was again my guest with Goering and brought a letter from his father, the Kaiser, to Hitler, which, although phrased in very general terms, more or less formally appointed Auwi as his representative with the Nazi movement and promising support and benevolent interest. I did not see the text myself. I was standing two or three yards away when the letter was handed over and Hitler read it through silently and folded it away in his pocket with an approving grunt. Afterwards Auwi said to me: "Hitler ought to be very pleased with that. My father has given him a pretty open undertaking to give what help he can and I shall make a point of keeping in with Hitler as much as possible myself." And then with the possibility of a restoration running through his mind, he added: "After all, I am the best horse in the Hohenzollern stable."

In fact Auwi stayed on for several weeks as my guest and the telephone was always humming to Doorn and Potsdam. It cost me a fortune. Hitler was shrewd enough to realize that monarchist support could be a very important factor and, in fact, he played on the German royal families' hopes of a restoration for years, at least

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CHAPTER IX

GELI RAUBAL

*Hitler takes a luxury flat—The amours of his niece—Porno-
graphic drawings and blackmail—Soprano without talent—
The unwilling sub-tenant—Suicide—Corpse without inquest—
Hara-kiri and a pregnancy—The impotent Herostratus.*

WITH THE advent of money from the Ruhr, Hitler had at long last given up his little flat in the Thierschstrasse and abandoned his pretension of being the leader of a working-class party. Some time before the end of 1929 he had moved into a handsome nine-roomed apartment at 16 Prinz Regentenplatz, in one of the most expensive parts of the city. He took with him Frau Reichert, his landlady in the Thierschstrasse, together with her mother, Frau Dachs. He then took into his employment as manservant a former non-commissioned officer named Winter, who had been the valet of General von Epp. In due course Winter married the lady's maid of Countess Toerring, and the pair became the principal servants in the flat. Angela Raubal, the half-sister Hitler had brought from Vienna, remained in charge of his house at Berchtesgaden.

Her daughter Geli was by then a buxom young woman of twenty-one. A couple of years earlier she had taken a bed-sitting-room in Munich not far from Hitler's old flat, and had, I think, made a pretence of starting some course of study at the university. She completed one aspect of her education pretty quickly, and was soon having an affair with Emil Maurice, Hitler's driver. Nor did she keep her sentiments exclusive. Maurice was furious one day to find her *flagrante delicto* with a student, whom he threw out of the room neck and crop.

Hitler came to hear of this liaison, but at first his reaction did not seem to go beyond anger with Maurice. In his usual fashion he did not sack him directly, the man was an old faithful Party hack, but he gradually started to freeze him out, fell behind in paying his

wages, and in the end Maurice himself made the break. There was, I believe, a minor lawsuit about money, and his job was taken over by Julius Schreck.

Geli went to live with the Bruckmanns for a while to keep her out of temptation's way, but as soon as Hitler moved into his new apartment, she was given a room there. She and her mother were, of course, completely dependent on Hitler, but what particular combination of arguments her uncle used to bend her to his will, presumably with the tacit acquiescence of his half-sister, we shall probably never know. Whether he assumed that a young woman who was already no saint might be brought fairly easily to submit to his peculiar tastes, or whether in fact she was the one woman in his life who went some way towards curing his impotence and half making a man out of him, again we shall never know with certainty. On the evidence available I incline to the former view. What is certain is that the services she was prepared to render had the effect of making him behave like a man in love. She went round very well dressed at his expense, or, more probably, at the Party's expense, as a lot of resentment was expressed, and he hovered at her elbow with a moon-calf look in his eyes in a very plausible imitation of adolescent infatuation.

She was an empty-headed little slut, with the coarse bloom of a servant-girl, without either brains or character. She was perfectly content to preen herself in her fine clothes, and certainly never gave any impression of reciprocating Hitler's twisted tendernesses. I only got the story at third hand, it was not the sort of thing you could expect a young woman to talk to a man about, but she is supposed to have remarked to a girl friend, who passed it on to one of the wives in the Party, that her uncle was a "monster. You would never believe the things he makes me do." In addition, there was, of course, an unpleasant suggestion of incest about the affair, which I can only assume harked back to their in-bred peasant family. Hitler's parents were cousins, and if you look at his genealogical tree there are several marriages between blood relations. It was yet another facet of the darker side of his character.

My first indication that there was something wrong with the relationship came, as I recall, fairly early in 1930 from Franz Xaver

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GELI RAUBAL

163

Schwarz, who was the Party treasurer. I had known him for years. He was a qualified accountant and had been a senior official of the finance section of the City Council. He may even have run it. When he told me the Nazis wanted him to take over their book-keeping, I encouraged him. Their financial affairs were obviously in hopeless disorder, with everyone making pickings wherever they could find them and it seemed to me he would introduce a measure of integrity and stability.

I met him on the street one day, and he looked very down-in-the-mouth. I was pretty pessimistic about the Party outlook myself, so we exchanged our woes and Schwarz said, "Come up and have a cup of coffee with us. My wife would like to see you again and we can have a talk." He had a little flat in the shabbier part of Schwabing. His wife greeted me, gave us our coffee, retired to the kitchen again, and Schwarz poured out what was on his mind. He had just had to buy off someone who had been trying to blackmail Hitler, but the worst part of the story was the reason for it. This man had somehow come into the possession of a folio of pornographic drawings Hitler had made. How he came by them I never heard. Perhaps they were stolen out of Hitler's car. They were depraved intimate sketches of Geli Raubal, with every anatomical detail, the sort of thing only a perverted voyeur would commit to paper. much less oblige a woman to model for, Schwarz had bought them back. "Heaven help us, man," I said, "why don't you tear the filth up?" "No," said Schwarz, "Hitler wants them back. He wants me to keep them in the Brown House safe." So this is the man, I thought, who prates about cleaning up Germany, the dignity of conjugal life, *die deutsche Frau* and all that. Anyone who thought he was going to reform Hitler carried a lot of millstones round his neck.

At some time during 1930 Geli started to take singing-lessons. Hitler had some idea she might develop into a Wagner heroine and sent her first to an early Party member named Adolf Vogel. He dated back to the Café Neumaier days in the 'twenties and one of his early pupils became a well-known opera singer under the name of Bertha Morena. In fact her real name was Meyer and she was a full Jewess. Hitler had admired her voice and simply would not believe it when I told him about her background. I did it only to

make his anti-Semitic prejudices look foolish, and it goes to show how skin-deep they were.

Vogel did not find Geli a very apt pupil. Her voice was different, her theatrical gifts precisely nil, and the possibilities of an operatic career began to fade. Hitler was going to be compelled to fulfil his Lohengrin rôle in real life only. The next teacher appointed was Hans Streck, the Ludendorff adjutant of the Putsch days, who persuaded Hitler that perhaps the girl could be taught to sing *Lieder*. Streck had built up quite a clientele and had a studio in the Gedonstrasse, near the English Garden. It was arranged that he would give Geli twelve lessons a month and be paid 100 marks. "Geli is the laziest pupil I have ever had," he used to complain. "Half the time she rings up to say that she can't come and she learns very little when she does." She never practised at home and the main impression Streck derived was of Hitler's boundless tolerance of the waste of his money. He used sometimes to come and call for her before the lesson was over, and would creep in and listen from the hall.

My wife also used to keep her voice in trim with Streck and occasionally used to see Geli there, although our contact with her was very limited. We saw her on one occasion with Hitler at the Residenz Theatre, where we had gone to see a Bavarian piece by Ludwig Thoma. (They were standing in one of the side galleries during an interval, with Hitler mooning at her, thinking he was unobserved, but as soon as he saw me he switched his face to the Napoleonic look. However, he was perfectly friendly and when we suggested that they should join us for supper at the Schwarzwälder Café he agreed. We got a quiet table up on the first floor and chatted amiably about the play we had just seen. I was furious because three of the actors had Berlin accents, which for me had completely spoilt its regional character, but Hitler couldn't see this, which surprised me in a man who in politics and music had such a highly developed sensitivity.

When we left we walked part of the way together, by which time Hitler was back on to politics again and emphasized some threat against his opponents by cracking the heavy dog whip he still affected. I happened to catch a glimpse of Geli's face as he did it and

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GELI RAUBAL

165

there was on it such a mixture of fear and contempt that I almost caught my breath. Whips as well, I thought, and really felt sorry for the girl. She had displayed no sign of affection for him in the restaurant and seemed bored, looking over her shoulder at the other tables and I could not help feeling that her share in the relationship was under compulsion.

On the evening of September 18, 1931, she shot herself in Hitler's flat. Winter found the door of Geli's room locked from the inside the next morning, burst it open and discovered the girl lying on the couch in a beige dress with a bullet in her lung. In her hand was Hitler's revolver. They had heard nothing the evening before. The shot had probably gone unnoticed amid the general tumult in the streets of Munich which precedes the famous *Oktober Fest*.

Hitler was away. He had left in the afternoon of the 18th on some Party tour to Nuremberg and points north. After Frau Winter had rung up the Brown House with the news of the tragedy, Hess tried to get Hitler on the telephone at his Nuremberg hotel, but he had already left and a hotel page had to chase the column in a taxi. Schreck drove him back at breakneck speed and he arrived to find that Gregor Strasser and Schwarz had been in the flat and had the situation under control. Hitler was in a state of hysteria, and left the same day to stay with the Müllers, the *Beobachter* printer, on the Tegern Lake. Not, it will be noted, with his bereaved half-sister at Berchtesgaden.

The whole affair was hushed up and glossed over as much as possible. At first an attempt was made to suggest that there had been an accident. During the day of Saturday, the 19th, Baldur von Schirach got on to the Brown House from the apartment to tell Dr. Adolf Dresler in the press department to issue a communiqué about Hitler having gone into deep mourning after the suicide of his niece. Then the group at the flat must have got into a panic, because twenty-five minutes later von Schirach was on the phone again asking if the communiqué had gone out and that it was the wrong wording. They should announce that there had been a lamentable accident. But by then it was too late. The word was out, and by Monday, the 21st, all the opposition papers carried the news.

The *Münchener Post*, a Socialist daily, was the most explicit. Its

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Sept 1931

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166

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

long account was full of circumstantial detail and alleged that Hitler and his niece had been having frequent arguments of late, culminating in a final row over the breakfast table on the morning of the 18th. Geli had long expressed the wish to return to Austria, where she intended to become engaged. An unposted letter to a girl friend in Vienna had been found in the flat saying that she hoped to leave soon. The report also alleged that when the corpse was found, the bridge of the nose was broken and the body showed other signs of maltreatment.

Two days later, on the Wednesday, the *Völkische Beobachter* carried on an inside page a denial by Hitler of all these allegations, threatening the *Münchener Post* with legal proceedings if it did not publish a withdrawal. In the meantime, so I learnt from acquaintances in the Party, the corpse had been smuggled down the back stairs of the block of flats and placed in a lead coffin in the mortuary of the Munich East Cemetery. After that a veil was drawn over the whole affair, and apart from one further broadside in the *Münchener Post*, disappeared from the newspapers for sheer lack of further information. The opposition paper made the telling point that the death of a Nazi street fighter would be made the basis in the *Völkische Beobachter* of leading articles and a campaign lasting several days, while the death in the cause of Hitler's niece was passed over in silence.

After that no further details were announced. The Party high-ups had got hold of Gürtner, who was still Bavarian Minister of Justice, and persuaded him to dispense with the formalities of an inquest and a coroner's verdict. This was of course highly improper, but Gürtner had long been a sympathizer and may have thought it worth his while to keep his political fences in repair. If so he was handsomely paid off, as within a year they had lobbied his appointment as Reich Minister of Justice in the von Papen cabinet, even before they came to power and he retained the post well into the 'thirties. Gürtner also gave authority for her body to be transported to Vienna, where she was buried in the Central Cemetery. Himmler and Roehm were there to represent Hitler. Perhaps he thought the scandal would die down more quickly if there was no grave in Munich to remind people of what had happened.

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GELI RAUBAL

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Apart from the fact that Hitler was prostrate with grief or frustra-
tion or some darker emotion, exactly what had happened? There are
few facts, but much room for conjecture. One of the few surviving
eye-witnesses of the scene is Frau Winter and I strongly suspect it
was made worth her while for the rest of her life to adhere to the
official version of an inexplicable accident. Goering came to see us a
fortnight later but gave us a purely romanticized version of the affair.
Hitler was apparently furious at Strasser for maintaining and pub-
lishing the fact that it was a suicide and had fallen on Goering's neck
weeping with gratitude when Hermann suggested that it was just as
likely to have been an accident. "Now I know who is my real friend,"
Hitler had sobbed. I think it was pure opportunism on Goering's
part. He wanted to eliminate Strasser as a rival in Hitler's favour.
Circumstances never healed these eternal jealousies in the Party.

It was months before I learnt from Streck that Geli had rung up
two days before she died to say that she would be taking no more
lessons in September, was leaving for Vienna and would let him
know when she returned. The story gained currency in Party circles
that Hitler and his niece had had a flaming row at breakfast on
the 18th. Even Frau Winter admits that they were having an argu-
ment of some sort, but tries to minimize it. Clearly there was an
emotional crisis of some sort. I talked at some later period to Karl
Anton Reichel, one of the closest intimates at the Café Heck *Stamm-
tisch*. He told me that Hitler had shown him a letter he had
written to Geli at Berchtesgaden. It was couched in romantic, even
anatomical terms and could only be read in the context of a farewell
letter of some sort. Its most extraordinary aspect was a pornographic
drawing which Reichel could only describe as a symbol of impotence.
Why on earth he should have been shown this letter I cannot
imagine, but he was not the man to make up such a story.

It was not until the autumn of 1937, when I was in exile in
London, that I was given another leading clue which might explain
the change in Hitler's attitude between the time he wrote that letter
and the morning row on the day that Geli Raubal died. I was visited
by Mrs. Brigid Hitler, an Irish woman, who had met Hitler's half-
brother Alois, the full brother of Angela Raubal, in Dublin in 1909,
when he was studying the hotel business as a waiter. She married

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GELI RAUBAL

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perhaps, have made a normal man out of him. With her death the way was clear for his final development into a demon, with his sex life deteriorating again into a sort of bi-sexual narcissus-like vanity, with Eva Braun little more than a vague domestic adjunct.

He certainly had an eye for good-looking women and two or three more are sometimes named as having enjoyed his special favour. But in my experience none of them went beyond an expressive shrug and sigh and an upward hopeless lift of the eyes to describe how far the relationship had led. He would call them 'his princess' or 'his little countess' and was never chary of making passionate declarations of affection. He was perfectly prepared to indulge in the physical preliminaries, but when it came to carrying matters to a conclusion, or even worse, when he had succeeded in awakening the woman's interest and acquiescence in the idea of consummation, there was nothing he could do about it.

Psychologists could fill a whole text-book about Hitler, starting with his own description of himself in *Mein Kampf* as a *Mutter-söhnchen*—a mother's boy. Hitler claims that this was a stage he grew out of, but many of them do not and neither did he. Germany and the world were yet to suffer from the fact that he had all the psychological faults of the type magnified to a daemonic degree. His over-compensation for the inferiority complex of an impotent masturbator was the driving force of his lust for power. Uneasily aware that he was incapable of perpetuating himself as a father, he developed a substitute-obsession to make his name known—and feared—throughout the ages, whatever monstrous deeds such a mania involved. He became the modern counterpart of Herostratus, who, desirous of acquiring eternal fame, if only by a great crime, burnt down the Temple of Diana at Ephesus.

D.T. Hanf.

1931

LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

171

was going to prevent him from reaching the top. If only the radicals like Strasser and Goebbels and the crackpots like Rosenberg and Hess could be off-set by people of more cosmopolitan views, in which I included myself, I believed the social revolution he preached would be orderly and beneficial. I was convinced, to use the old phrase, that there was every possibility of this poacher becoming a reliable gamekeeper.

Too many of us, the monarchists, industrial leaders, the Papens and Schachts and Neuraths, thought we could tame him. There never will be a limit to wishful thinking. We all hoped to be the sage advisers of an unruly but irreplaceable genius. Instead we had a tiger by the tail. I pulled it once too often, let go and paid the consequences with ten years of exile. I am not trying to make excuses, and do not need to rely on my own account for the evidence that I tried to fight the Nazis' excesses when they came to power. I criticized them to their faces, Hitler, Goering, Goebbels, all of them. For quite a time I got away with it, partly because I had been around a long time and still played the piano for Hitler and entertained him with my jokes, partly because I shared the Bavarian background of some of the leaders, was uninhibited, outspoken and emotional anyway, and partly, I suppose, because I controlled no faction, was no orator, and although a lot of people thought as I did, we could not combine and therefore represented no real threat.

I became a member of the inner circle again largely on personal grounds. After the crisis of Geli Raubal's suicide, Hitler seemed to suffer a temporary fit of nostalgia for the old days. His infatuation for my wife, which had never been entirely stilled, brought him increasingly into our lives again. Nor was he the only Party leader in the throes of a domestic loss. Goering's wife Karin died in the middle of October 1931. She and Helene had revived their friendship and Goering sought solace for his personal isolation with us. He was still not entirely accepted in the Party and our house continued to offer him a useful retreat. So it was that at the beginning of the fifteen months which were to bring them to power they both, if for dissimilar reasons, sought our company.

Hitler emerged from the shadow cast by his niece's death, to find a political situation tailored to his order. The Nazi's position as the

D.T. It was more than time to bring him forth again

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second largest party in the *Reichstag* had not, in spite of all their agitation and accretion of strength, brought them any nearer to power. But the defences of the established forces were breaking up. No stable coalition could be found to deal with the economic collapse and the four million and more unemployed, and neither Hindenburg nor General Schleicher, who had emerged as his and the Army's political adviser, was convinced that the emergency powers accorded Chancellor Brüning provided any long-term solution. Their increasing weakness coincided with the growing surge of political radicalism and the final hardening of Hitler's character into the savage urge to impose himself on all those with whom he came in contact, which was the only outlet to his repressions and super-human energy.

He was still making a virtue of legality. That was one of his many postscripts to Machiavelli. He did not make a revolution to acquire power, but acquired power in order to make a revolution. It was a process which very few people foresaw. His great catch-phrase at the time concerned the necessity to *umorganisieren*—to reorganize the State—a seemingly acceptable necessity in view of the Weimar Republic's increasing decrepitude. But then he gave his own meaning to the words he used. Careful though he was to disguise his thoughts and intentions, I found it, in my renewed association with him, more and more difficult to penetrate his mind and put over my own ideas. His personal manner in a room had not noticeably changed. He could still relax and look back on earlier stages of his struggle and talk about them with charm and humour. But in his view of the future he had become more abrupt, the underlying extremism and radicalism had tightened up, the old Hess and Rosenberg prejudices had become sharpened. Here the new influence was Goebbels, and the nearer we got to Berlin and power, and Goebbels and his Sportpalast tirades, the more Hitler was lost to me.

The first personal recognition of Hitler's importance on the national front came towards the end of 1931, when, after preliminary talks between Schleicher and Röhm, who still eagerly fostered his Army contacts, Hitler was granted interviews with Hindenburg and Brüning. The only positive result was a violent outburst of jealousy on the part of Goering, who could not bear to think

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that his Bavarian rival had provided the sort of contact he regarded as his exclusive right. Hitler made a bad impression and received a worse one: "They are all bourgeois. They consider us as trouble-makers and disturbers of order, to be treated in the same way as the Communists," he told me. "They have got it into their heads that we are all equal before the law. If they cannot see that the Communists are out to destroy the State entirely and that we wish to give it a new content on a German patriotic basis then there is nothing to be done with them. *"Hanfstaengl, Sie hätten dabei sein sollen"* - "Hanfstaengl, you ought to have been there," which is what he usually said when something had gone badly wrong.

My own position was somewhat anomalous. I was never a member of the Party organization, but had a purely advisory capacity as foreign press chief directly under Hitler. I had a constant battle to hold my own, as not only did Hitler until the end of my days with him have a total incomprehension of the ways of the press abroad, but everyone else in the Party within striking distance wanted a piece of my job. Otto Dietrich wanted a share in it as home press chief, although he was small fry and easy to deal with, and Goebbels thought it ought to be part of his propaganda organization, and he of course was a very different proposition. Baldur von Schirach also had ambitions, with a certain amount of tacit encouragement from Hitler, who used him as interpreter at some of his interviews. This was typical of Hitler's divide and rule methods. He did it with everyone. He would never delegate clear functions and they all overlapped, so that he was able to maintain final control as arbiter.

Schirach was a great trial to me. He used to insinuate himself into conversations with visitors whenever he could. When I would try and tone down some of Hitler's more radical pronouncements, in the hope of avoiding too much china being broken, Schirach used to tattle this to Hitler afterwards. There was one occasion when Hitler was talking about the Jews to a visiting British M.P., whose name I forget, and I was being very careful to emphasize that the Nazis only demanded the reduction of their representation in the professions to the same proportion as their strength in the population - which was the accepted party *numerus clausus* policy - when Schirach broke in

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on his own account: "We students don't wish to have any Jewish professors at all."

Fortunately one of my early interventions stood me in good stead for a long time. In (November 1931) the State authorities in Hesse seized a series of documents drawn up by the local Party headquarters which threatened an armed *coup d'état* by the S.A. They became known as the Boxheim Papers and caused a political scandal of the first magnitude. In view of Hitler's very clear instructions to the S.A. at the time to refrain from violence, this is one of the few instances when I think his disclaimer was probably genuine. The Party press was still insignificant and all the other papers were howling for the Nazis' blood. We were in Berlin at the time and I called the foreign press to the Kaiserhof Hotel, which Hitler was already starting to use as his headquarters, for a conference. He came in and talked brilliantly, lucidly, rationally and with complete conviction. Their stories went out with such effect that the German opposition papers were obliged to reproduce them on the rebound with banner headlines. It was a complete break through of their normal policy of either denigration or silence concerning Hitler and he was of course ecstatic at this success: "*Das war sehr gut, Hanfstaengl, das haben Sie wirklich fein gemacht.*" The trouble was that that was the sort of effect he expected me to produce every time.

The next major interview set me right back on my heels. We were in Munich again and Hitler rang for me to come and interpret at an interview in his flat with a Japanese professor named Momo, whose visit had been sponsored by his embassy. "But I don't speak Japanese," I complained.—"He talks English and this is very important," Hitler countered, so I went along and this little character came in, hoicking and hissing like something out of the *Mikado*, and they started a dreadful mutual admiration session. "I have come to discuss your movement, the heroic spirit of which we Japanese admire so much," said Momo. So Hitler went into a brazen eulogy of Japanese culture and samurai swords, warrior codes and the Shinto religion, all the drivel he had picked up from Haushofer and Hess. Momo needed little encouragement. "We are both the victims of democracy, we both need living space and colonies, we must have raw materials to ensure our future. It is Japan's destiny to lead all

Asia. . . ." This was reticent, but he was sphere in which we came to power there." This of course was a great report. He was disguised as a newspaperman. In 1936 he told me: "Here were my words to Hitler I might just as well expostulations that sympathy fell on my ears. [Hanfstaengl, today we have]

As an antidote I tried to do as I could. The *Times*, who came to see Knickerbocker, praised me as an expert journalist of the day on the basis of a type of very well. Knickerbocker's lively way and photographs. Knickerbocker of the best photographs wanted to have some things often taken by a clenched fist and a madman.

I had told Hitler some pictures taken of man with whom in the end we got taking the photographs but aimed most of them were first class. He happened? I was with Hitler furious. "I do!" "Of course you look!"

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LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

175

Asia. . . ." This was awful and I tried to persuade Hitler to be more reticent, but he was in full flood: "Asia and the Pacific Ocean is a sphere in which we Germans have no demands," he ranted. "When we come to power we shall respect Japan's legitimate aspirations there." This of course was meat and drink to Momo, who fired off a great report. He was, needless to state, a Government emissary disguised as a newspaperman, and at the time of the anti-Comintern Pact in 1936 he turned up again. I had, of course, been appalled. Here were my worse fears taking shape, but in my protestations to Hitler I might just as well have been talking in Hindustani. My expostulations that such a policy would finally alienate American sympathy fell on deaf ears. Hitler brushed them all aside: "Hanfstaengl, today we have made history," he said fatuously.

As an antidote I tried to farm in as many American correspondents as I could. There was Harold Callender of the *New York Times*, who came at the end of November 1931 and of course Knickerbocker, probably the best informed, most conscientious and expert journalist of his day. I got Hitler to see him for the first time on the basis of a typewritten list of questions and the interview went very well. Knickerbocker spoke excellent German, and Hitler liked his lively way and red hair. The only back-lash I had was over photographs. Knickerbocker had James Edward Abbé with him, one of the best photographers I have ever known. I had long since wanted to have something else available, other than the dreadful things often taken by Heinrich Hoffman, which showed Hitler with a clenched fist and a distorted mouth and flaming eyes, looking like a madman.

I had told Hitler in one of his quieter moments that he must have some pictures taken which made him look like a statesman, the sort of man with whom foreign diplomats felt they could do business, and in the end we got them by a trick. Abbé pretended that he was taking the photographs of Hitler talking quietly to Knickerbocker, but aimed most of the time at Hitler alone, and I thought the results were first class. He looked normal, intelligent and interesting. What happened? I was called round when the prints arrived and found Hitler furious. "I don't look like that," he shouted. "What is this?" — "Of course you look like that," I told him. "They are much better

than those things that make you look like a fakir." The reason of course was that Heinrich Hoffmann had been enraged at this breaking of his monopoly and Hitler was taking it out on me. More to the point was the fact that Hitler apparently had an arrangement with Hoffmann to share in the proceeds of his work and this in due course was to provide a very handsome side income.

The tempo of the year 1932 was determined by its four national elections, two rounds for the Presidency, and two for the *Reichstag*, plus voting in the individual States. By train, by car and for the first time by plane, Hitler conducted a series of campaigns which rocked the rival Parties and exhausted companions and opponents alike. I accompanied him almost everywhere as a sort of right interference guard for the foreign press.

The first step he took was to make himself a German citizen. He disappeared from the Kaiserhof on February 22, 1932, and spent part of the afternoon at the representation in Berlin of the State of Brunswick, where the Nazis wielded sufficient power to have him appointed an *Oberregierungsrat* in the local civil service, an established post which carried with it the automatic grant of citizenship. The original plan had been to give him a nominal post as professor of arts in the Brunswick education service. However, when I threatened to greet him with 'Heil, Herr Professor', after all the years he had spent making fun of academicians, the idea was modified. He displayed his warrant when he returned in the evening, and from that time on I sometimes addressed him by his new title as a joke. I must have been the only person to get away with it. "Now at last you can stop singing the *Blue Danube* and learn the *Wacht am Rhein*," I told him, which put him such good humour that he signed a photograph for my son which I still have. It says: 'For my young friend Egon Hanfstaengl, with my best wishes.'

The boredom and confusion of the election tours was such that I can no longer sort them out in my mind. The team, with occasional additions and subtractions, was Brückner and Schaub, the adjutants, Sepp Dietrich, the later S.S. General, as bodyguard, Otto Dietrich, Heinrich Hoffmann, Bauer the pilot and myself. We must have visited every city in Germany several times, and it was always claimed afterwards that Hitler was the first politician to come to

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LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

177

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power who knew the country inside out. Of course he knew nothing of the sort. - It might just as well have been the Bürgerbräu or the Sportpalast wherever we went, whipping up mass hysteria within the confines of four walls and travelling and sleeping in between. When he was not speaking he was in the hotel behind closed doors, trying to iron out quarrels in the local Party organizations.

Like the leadership itself they were all split into nationalist and socialist wings - it is very necessary to bear in mind that hyphen in the name of the party, because the two groups were intrinsically quite separate and only combined out of self-interest. The hyphen of course was Hitler. The regional leaders used to drive him mad, and more than once he would say to me: "I know why these Gauleiters are always harrying me to speak for them. They take the biggest hall in town which they could never fill themselves. I cram it to the roof for them and they pocket the proceeds. They are all at their wits' end for money and I have to tear round Germany like a maniac to see that they don't go bankrupt."

I think it was probably only in the later elections that we travelled everywhere by plane. Often in the early stages we went in a great convoy of cars, which was usually met at the outskirts of a town by a pilot to take us through back streets to the meeting hall. Hitler left nothing to chance and always had a street plan on his knee ready for use. The precaution was probably not exaggerated as the Communists were always waiting to attack us and on two occasions, in Breslau and Cologne, wrong turnings took us into red beflagged streets which we got through in the midst of fisticuffs and uproar. It should not be forgotten how strong the Communists were in these years. In 'red' cities like Chemnitz, people did not even dare to display Christmas trees for fear of being attacked by fanatics.

In Nuremberg a bomb was thrown from the roof of a house and hit Streicher's car, which only had the driver in it, and once in Bamberg late at night we had a couple of windscreens shattered with revolver shots. On these occasions Hitler would berate the local Gauleiter at the top of his voice. His use of a map was of long standing and I can remember when we arrived at Brunswick, while Emil Maurice was still the driver and there was no map. Hitler began to yell imprecations but Maurice, who was an old hand and

Handy. 1932

178

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

allowed himself a number of liberties, said: "Herr Hitler, what are you getting so excited about. Just remember Christopher Columbus." Hitler stopped in full spout. "What do you mean Columbus?" — "Well, Columbus had no map but that did not stop him discovering America."

Sometimes we would still stop *en route* for a picnic. There was one not far from a monastery or theological seminary, with a couple of teams of young clerics playing football in long habits. I think it was near Eichstätt. I pointed them out to Hitler but he refused to be entertained. "We'll teach them asceticism if we come to power," he said. "I am not going to have a lot of fat monks loafing around looking like characters out of a Grützner picture. They can keep up their social service if they like or work in the hospitals as practical Christians. But I am not going to have them holing themselves up in abbeys pretending they are superior to the rest of us, and they are going to be kept away from the new generation. We Nazis will see to their education. Of course the finest propaganda of all would be if the Pope were to excommunicate me." I looked at him astonished, but it was a phrase I was often to hear him use later. "If you feel like that why don't you announce officially that you have withdrawn from the Church?" I asked. "Why should I deprive him of the pleasure?" Hitler answered, "let him do it." What he meant was that if he proclaimed himself an atheist he would lose Catholic votes, but that as a mere heretic he might get away with it.

The plane journeys were misery. There were always protracted security precautions to ensure that the machine had not been tampered with. That was Bauer's responsibility and when he slept I do not know. Hitler used to sit in the left- or right-hand front seat and either doze or pretend to doze, look out of the window or back at his map and hardly talk at all. The others would sometimes try and attract his attention with a letter or a photograph to push their pet peeve, but then he would retire behind a newspaper or some document or other. The most extraordinary thing about him was that he never had a notebook. He never wrote a thing, never took notes, never had a pencil and only occasionally a fountain-pen to sign his autograph with. His notebook was Schaub—Schaub make a note of this or that—he never wrote it down himself. I got used to

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LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

179

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The atmosphere used to get on my nerves. It smacked of a low-grade orderly-room, with this stupid, inartistic, inarticulate bunch. We were in all these towns and never went to a museum or historical house. I used to carry two picture postcards with me of Goethe's workroom in Weimar and when I could stand the boredom no longer take them out and look at them for minutes at a time to relax in their mood of classical repose, while this rattle-trap of an aircraft plugged on. Of course the others used to jeer at me. At first I sprinkled Yardley's Lavender on my handkerchief to keep out the smell of petrol, but even Hitler objected to this, so in the end I resorted to smelling-salts. The others were not above a sniff at the bottle too, as it would of course have been very *infra dig* and very un-National-Socialistic to be airsick.

One incident which I think has never been recorded is how we nearly crashed in the Baltic on the way back from Königsberg. We had made a brief stop at Danzig and were, as I recall, bound for Kiel. The weather was very bad and overcast, but Bauer got above the clouds and we flew along in bright sunshine. What had not been taken into account was the increasing headwind and when we finally came down again we could see nothing but rain-lashed water. Bauer had the direction-finding apparatus on, but for some reason the Berlin station had failed and Bremen and Lübeck were badly interrupted and kept giving us different readings. Fuel was starting to run low and the atmosphere got very tense. I was sitting up ahead by Hitler, and although he said very little I could see his jaw muscles working. "That is the North Sea," he exclaimed. His left hand on the little folding table was clenching and unclenching in spasm and then I remembered that he couldn't swim and realized the suppressed agony he must be going through. I tried to make a bad joke by suggesting that we would soon be in England and might at last get a decent cup of tea, but Hitler was in no way amused.

In the end he could stand it no longer, jumped forward and yelled at Bauer: "You must turn south, it is the only way to hit land," which of course was quite right. I had not taken the headwind into account and also thought we had crossed Schleswig-Holstein above

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Hans. 1932

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the clouds and were out over the North Sea. The situation was now really serious. The petrol tanks were as good as empty but at the last moment we hit the coast over a small medieval town which none of us could recognize. It was Heinrich Hoffmann who got our bearings. "It is Wismar," he suddenly shouted. He had remembered a photograph he had seen years before. Bauer, who had made us fasten our safety-belts and was about to bring the big plane down in a field in a forced landing, calculated quickly that he could just make the airfield at Travemünde, which he did literally with not more than a few pints of fuel to spare. Hitler was quite groggy, and it was one of the few occasions when I saw him in a physical fright.

These trips naturally attracted a lot of attention from the foreign press and from time to time one or other of the correspondents would accompany us part of the way. Sefton Delmer of the London *Daily Express* took a great interest in our campaign and became very much *persona grata* with the Nazi leadership. I was with him on one occasion when he went off to interview Dr. Georg Heim, the leader of the Bavarian Peasant Party, at Regensburg. Some of Heim's remarks harked back to Bavarian ideas of separatism, and as this seemed to me a valid point for the Nazis to refute, I persuaded Delmer to drive all the way down to Berchtesgaden and give Hitler a full résumé of his talk. Hitler, of course, was delighted: "That is worth two million votes to us," he shouted, slapping his thigh. He was really very partial to Delmer and, when he became Chancellor, willingly agreed that the *Express* man should be given the first exclusive interview.

It was towards midnight that I was usually called upon to play my rôle of court minstrel. Hitler would loll in the corner of his suite or the hotel lounge, exhausted with speeches and Gauleiters and say, "Hanfstaengl, play me something." It was not easy, as I never had any time to practise and had to cobble some of the passages, so I would start off with a little Bach or Chopin or some of the marches to get my fingers warm, but in the end it always had to be *Tristan* and *Meistersinger* and Hitler would sit there in a half doze and gurggle with delight. It would usually go on for an hour or more, often with repeats of his favourite pieces, but it gave him a respite, as the Chauffeureska did not dare to interrupt or talk to him and

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LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

181

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just lumbered round the other rooms drinking and smoking cigars. There were never any women around. In that dark corner of his life there was a great hiatus.

People often ask me how Hitler reacted to the political events of this fateful year that brought him to power. The question begs the simple fact that he was not a politician in the ordinary sense. He did not concern himself with the day-to-day kaleidoscope of the political scene. He was not looking for alliances or coalitions or temporary tactical advantage. He wanted power, supreme and complete, and was convinced that if he talked often enough and aroused the masses sufficiently he must, in due course, be swept into office. Of course his intention was brought, by the members of the entourage or the local Gauleiters, to specific developments and regional issues. Although the general content of all his speeches was more or less the same, he would work in such points as reinforced his arguments or gave him the opportunity for new attacks and abuse of the Government and rival parties.

Otherwise it was just like accompanying a musical artist on a concert tour. He would give his performance, have his bags packed, and be off to the next town. There was little time in between for anything but recuperation. We were reduced to the status of boxers' seconds, sponging him off between rounds, while he gasped for air and gathered his wits. If the necessity arose for an important talk at any of the stops with some prominent personality who might be won over or made use of, Hitler would shut himself up in his room alone or walk out in the garden with them. No one was ever vouchsafed an account of these interviews. He stored up the information he needed and that was that. Nor was there anything in the nature of a conference to plan campaign strategy. The committee idea was absolutely foreign to Hitler. He would pick one man's brains and then bounce these ideas off the head of someone else. By the time their propositions had cancelled each other out he had made up his mind which line to adopt. His habit of keeping people in separate compartments was one of the first quirks I had noticed in him and he retained it to the end.

He even kept his senior partners at arm's length. There was no warmth in his opinions of them. He regarded Goering as little more

than a useful muscle-man, wielding a great claymore at their opponents: "Give him a full belly and he really goes for them," Hitler once commented to me approvingly. This was the kind of man he could use. In picking his Gauleiters, he always looked for the bawling sergeant-major type, ready to use their fists if need be. The Gau-bulls, some of us used to call them. Hitler only really had time for people who could sway an audience. This reconciled him to Hermann Esser, although he was secretly jealous of him, as Esser was quite a ladies' man in a raffish sort of way. Esser had one extraordinary quality: he had joined the party so young and so early and had come under the influence of Hitler for so long that he could speak exactly like him. Every phrase, every nuance, plus more of a sense of humour and a quicker appeal for the women in the audience. He could always fill a hall anywhere, and with the Nazi oratorical strength spread thin, this made him extremely valuable.

There was another senior Nazi for whom Hitler's jealousy had deeper roots, and that was Gregor Strasser. He was the one potential, indeed actual rival within the party. He had made the Rhineland his fief. I remember during one tour through the Ruhr towns seeing Strasser's name plastered up against the wall of every railway underpass. He was obviously quite a figure in the land. Hitler looked away. There was no comment about 'Strasser seems to be doing well', or any approving sign. In Berlin, Strasser had been superseded by Goebbels, for whose golden voice Hitler had genuine admiration: "I have heard them all," Hitler said once, "but the only speaker I can listen to without going to sleep is Goebbels. He really can put it over."

Another, more ominous, characteristic was the distance he was starting to keep between himself and his immediate collaborators and entourage. He had always been a lone wolf all the years I had known him, and although he dominated most groups by the sheer force of his rhetoric, this was instinctive rather than deliberate behaviour. Now there was a new harshness in his tone, a conscious attitude of speaking from a higher level and keeping people in their place. He did not seem to mind what liberties he took. One day there was an article in the *Völkische Beobachter* to which he took exception, and he rang up Rosenberg to find out who had written it. It

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LOHENGGRIN PREVAILS

183

was the work of some other Baltic crony, but instead of berating Rosenberg he turned on poor little Otto Dietrich, who had no jurisdiction over the paper, and called him down in my presence like a dog, overwhelming all Dietrich's protestations that he had no responsibility. "What do you think of that?" the victim said to me afterwards. "For two pins I would have thrown my job in his face." But, of course, he did not do so, and there was another collaborator taken down a notch.

Hitler did it to all of them in turn. At table one day he rounded on Heinrich Hoffman, criticizing his photographs, telling him that he drank and smoked too much, that he would kill himself if he continued that way, and so on. Then, when the victim was out of the room, he would praise him behind his back to keep the rest of us in our place. Hitler would also say things which later proved to be sheer duplicity. We were staying in Mecklenburg on a big estate, which I believe belonged to Magda Goebbels' divorced husband. The bailiff, Walter Granzow, was a Party member. I found that his and several of the farms around were being worked by unemployed students who had founded what they called the Artamanen Society. They received no pay, just their keep, and their chief purpose was to keep Polish workers from coming over and settling on the land. Their idealism impressed me and I told Hitler he ought to address them. So they were called together and he made a very pleasant half-hour's speech, praising their efforts and particularly commending them for preventing foreign blood being introduced into Germany. What pleased me most was his statement that "in the Third Reich of the National-Socialists, we Germans will never attempt to infiltrate or subject other nations to our will. That would be to repeat the fault of Roman imperialism." If he believes that, I thought, then there will be no danger of war if he comes to power, but I underrated Hitler's ability to tell people what they wanted to hear and still reserve his own intentions.

At the first Presidential election on March 13, Hitler polled 11.4 million votes to Hindenburg's 18.6, leaving the old President just short of his necessary absolute majority. The Nazi vote had increased in eighteen months by 86 per cent, but many of them were in despair at the result. They seemed as far away from power as ever. Goebbels

was literally weeping with defeatism, although Goering managed to keep a cooler head. At one moment there was a move to abandon the second round of voting four weeks later, but I felt there was no stopping now. Where the radicals only saw a solution in an armed uprising of the S.A., I argued with Hitler that he must stand again. A third of the population had shown themselves ready to accept him as presidential timber. "You must give the world time to adjust itself to the idea that Adolf Hitler can follow in the steps of Hindenburg. Up till now they have only known you as the Opposition leader," I told him. "To win you must attract the support of the smaller parties." I thought the necessity of reaching a compromise with other political leaders would help act as a brake on the wild men of the Party. Anyway, Hitler did stand again and got two million more votes. Hindenburg got another million, and that was more than enough.

The emergence of Hitler as a national, and indeed international, figure of the first rank nearly provided one of those confrontations which would have been the delight of historians—with Sir Winston Churchill. Sir Winston refers to the incident in his memoirs, but as he was not at the time in possession of all the facts, the story will bear retelling. I had seen quite a lot of his son Randolph during our election tours. I had even arranged for him to travel once or twice in the plane with us. He had indicated that his father was coming to Germany and that we should arrange a meeting. In April, either during or just after the second presidential campaign, I landed with Hitler at Munich airport to find a telephone message awaiting me from Randolph. His family were staying with a party at the Hotel Continental (not the Regina Palace, Sir Winston's memory plays him false), wanted me to join them for dinner, and hoped that I would be able to bring Hitler along to meet his father. I told him I would do what I could, but that we were tired, dirty and unshaven, and I would ring him back.

I caught up with Hitler at the Brown House and burst into his room. It looked, I might say, like an hotel lounge, early Adlon and late North German Lloyd, but that was his taste. He was trying to catch up on business and in his most unapproachable mood. "Herr Hitler," I said, "Mr. Churchill is in Munich and wants to meet you.

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Haup. 1932

LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

185

This is a tremendous opportunity. They want me to bring you along to dinner at the Hotel Continental tonight."

I could almost see the asbestos curtain drop down. "*Um Gotteswillen*, Hanfstaengl don't they realize how busy I am? What on earth would I talk to him about?" "But, Herr Hitler," I protested, "this is the easiest man to talk to in the world—art, politics, architecture, anything you choose. This is one of the most influential men in England; you must meet him." But my heart sank. Hitler produced a thousand excuses, as he always did when he was afraid of meeting someone. With a figure whom he knew to be his equal in political ability, the uncertain bourgeois re-emerged again, the man who would not go to a dancing-class for fear of making a fool of himself, the man who only acquired confidence in his manipulation of a yelling audience. I tried one last gambit. "Herr Hitler, I will go to dinner and you arrive afterwards, as if you were calling for me, and stay to coffee." No, he would see, we had to leave the next day early—which was the first I had heard of it, as I thought we had two or three days free: "In any case, they say your Mr. Churchill is a rabid Francophile."

I rang Randolph back and tried to hide my disappointment, pointed out that he had caught us at the worst possible time, but suggested, against my better knowledge, that Hitler might join us for coffee. I turned up myself at the appointed hour. There was Mrs. Churchill, serene, intelligent and enchanting, Lord Camrose, Professor Lindemann, one of the Churchill daughters, and one or two other younger people whose names I forget. We sat down about ten to dinner, with myself on Mrs. Churchill's right and my host on the other side. We talked about this and that, and then Mr. Churchill taxed me about Hitler's anti-Semitic views. I tried to give as mild an account of the subject as I could, saying that the real problem was the influx of eastern European Jews and the excessive representation of their co-religionaries in the professions, to which Churchill listened very carefully, commenting: "Tell your boss from me that anti-Semitism may be a good starter, but it is a bad sticker." I had to get this bit of slang explained, which made the rest of the party laugh.

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Hans. 1932

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LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

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come back," I said. "I will play the piano for them or something until you get back." "I have too much to do, Hanfstaengl. I have to get up early in the morning," and he evaded me and walked out. I put on the best face I could and went back to the party. Who knows, I thought, perhaps after all he will turn up. I kicked myself for not having been more explicit to Hitler, but the Continental had a narrow little panelled hall, with porters and receptionists every yard. I could not blurt this thing out in front of the Dutchman, and Hitler had been backing away from me the whole time. So I played my football marches, and *Annie Laurie*, and the *Londonderry Air*, and the party was in high fettle. All except me, of course.

Hitler never turned up. He had funk'd it. The next morning early his car was waiting for me outside my house. We picked him up with his tame thugs and drove off to Nuremberg, where, if you please, he spent the whole morning talking shop with Julius Streicher. On the way there I leant forward in the car and told him all about my talk. He did not really believe it, or if he did I could feel that Hess and Rosenberg had been at him trying to prevent this outside contact at all cost. "In any case, what part does Churchill play?" Hitler complained. "He is in opposition and no one pays any attention to him." "People say the same thing about you," I answered, nettled. But it was no good. He had made up his mind not to expose himself to anyone with the capacity to steal his thunder. I did not even pass on Churchill's comment about his anti-Semitism in case it provided him with the excuse he needed. The Churchills stayed in Munich for two or three more days, I believe, but Hitler kept away until they had gone.

The *Reichstag* elections at the end of July had brought the Nazis yet further towards, but still so far from, their goal. With 230 seats out of 608 they became the strongest single party, and during the first fortnight of August, the new Chancellor, von Papen, talked to Hitler about his entering the Government as Vice-Chancellor. With the possibility of total power looming on the horizon he had become more chary than ever of compromising himself in coalition. "What sort of a fellow is this Papen?" he asked me. "You must have known him during the war in New York." "Socially he is a charmer," I said. "But politically he is a *Luftikus* [a light-weight]." This appealed to

Hamp. 1932

him. "Ein Lustikus," he repeated, slapping his thigh, "that just describes him," but he did not entirely dismiss the idea of collaborating with him. "Mind you, if it amuses his vanity to go on living with his wife in the Chancellor's palace and they confide the real power to me, I would not mind," he added. But the time for that was not quite yet. It was late in the evening when we drove out of Berlin after the talks had failed, and quite dark. We all sat very silent in the car. Schreck was at the wheel, the inevitable Schaub, Brückner and Sepp Dietrich in attendance—"Wir werden schon sehen"—We shall see," muttered Hitler.

This, of course, was the worst possible time for me to press my American complex on Hitler. Their economy was nearly as shattered as ours, and the only other stories one heard were about gangsters in Chicago and the scandals surrounding Jimmy Walker, the mayor of New York. It all gave Hitler a perfect argument. "Any country which cannot even master its own internal police problems cannot hope to play a part in foreign affairs," he used to say. Schirach and company also never failed to bring to his attention the bad press he was getting, which he ascribed entirely to Jewish influence or to my ineffectiveness, if he was in a bad mood. I would have despaired if I had not received a private emissary from Franklin D. Roosevelt, my old Harvard Club friend, about to be swept into the Presidency. The message was to the effect that it looked as if Hitler would also soon achieve power and that Roosevelt hoped, in view of our long acquaintance, that I would do my best to prevent any rashness and hotheadedness. "Think of your piano-playing and try and use the soft pedal if things get too loud," my visitor quoted. "If things start getting awkward, please get in touch with our ambassador at once." The message heartened me enormously, and in due course I was to do just that.

November brought Reichstag elections again, but in spite of a frenzied campaign, the Nazis lost ground. Their representation was reduced to 196, and it was at this point that Schleicher became Chancellor, to exercise the power he had so long controlled from the wings. His plan was to split off the Strasser wing of the Nazi Party in a final effort to find a majority with the Weimar Socialists and Centre. The idea was by no means so ill-conceived and amidst

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LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

189

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the momentary demoralization and monetary confusion in the Nazi ranks, very nearly came off. With the failure came the final break between Hitler and Strasser, who, two years later, paid for this disloyalty with his head.

I always thought Strasser's reputation undeserved. He was a good organizer, but another of the un-Teutonic figures in the party. He looked like a Levantine business man. But several people had a high opinion of him; one of whom was Spengler. I had often tried to bring Hitler and the great historian together, in the hope that his Olympian acidity would deflate Hitler a little. They did, in fact, meet without my intervention and I learnt of it one Sunday when the subject came up at a luncheon given to Hitler by the Wagners at Bayreuth. I could see Hitler had a bad conscience about it in my company, as he faked a sort of sleepiness, scratching his ear and asserting that Spengler had only talked in terms of compromise, that his whole background was too monarchist and conservative, and that he had no understanding of racial problems. "Hanfstaengl, you should have been there."

I could hardly contain myself, as I had indeed wanted to act as catalyst at the conversation. I rang up Spengler in Munich the next day and he invited me round to coffee and cigars. I found him completely contemptuous. He thought Hitler a fantastic and won my heart with a demolition of the Rosenberg mythos, which Hitler had made the mistake of spouting. "There are no brains in the party, Hanfstaengl," he complained. "They are just a lot of pinheads." I tried to bring up the name of General von Epp, who was being mentioned as the possible next President. "Impossible," snorted Spengler, "he is a man without ideas, without powers of decision, he is just plain stupid. The only man who appeals to me in the whole movement is Gregor Strasser. At least he has a trade union background and a sense of realities."

That, I thought, was a powerful enough recommendation, and when, back in Berlin, Knickerbocker asked me to get an interview with Strasser, I organized it for him. It was a terrible flop. Knickerbocker had got hold of a book on economics published under Strasser's name, of which he had carefully read every word, and came out with a whole list of contradictions. After an hour of this

Handls. 1932

cross-examination, Strasser had sweated through his second handkerchief and was reduced to retorting: "If you read the book again you will understand what I mean." As soon as Knickerbocker had gone he flew into a rage and said that if I ever brought anyone like that in again he would throw him out. It was only later that a member of his staff told me that the book had been written by a subordinate and that Strasser knew less about it than Knickerbocker.

My first indication of Strasser's threatened defection came from Sefton Delmer—we used to anglicize names when we talked over the telephone. "Hempstalk," said Delmer, "tell your boss that Mr. Streeter [Strasser] has been to see Mr. Creeper [Schleicher]." I went downstairs to Hitler's office in the Brown House with the news. He just grunted glumly, which was always the worst sign. Many years later I was to hear from a friend of ours, Dr. H. Martin, a private banker in Munich, Strasser's story of his final break with Hitler. The row took place on December 8, 1932, in the Kaiserhof in Berlin. Goebbels, needless to say, was there in support of Hitler.

For upwards of a year Strasser had espoused the opinion that the only solution to the chaotic situation in Germany was for the Nazis to enter the Government in a normal coalition. He knew of Hindenburg's and Schleicher's aversion to Hitler, particularly after the incident of the Potempa telegram, in which Hitler condoned the murder of a Communist miner by five Nazi toughs. As a result, Strasser was prepared to serve under Schleicher as Vice-Chancellor, leaving the leadership of the Party to Hitler. At the Kaiserhof meeting they could come to no agreement; in fact the split between them was widened. Hitler told Strasser he was a traitor to the Party and said his only recourse was to shoot himself. Strasser reciprocated the invitation.

The next day Dr. Martin happened to call on Strasser at his flat in the Tengstrasse and received a full account of what had happened. He found Strasser calm and resigned, in spite of his bitter words: "Dr. Martin, I am a man marked by death. We shall not be able to go on seeing each other for long and in your own interests I suggest you do not come here any more. Whatever happens, mark what I say: From now on Germany is in the hands of an Austrian,

Handls

who is a congenital clubfoot. And I tell Satan in human form.

It was also about Ribbentrop, who was a friend of Count he had ingratiated himself in gaol when Helldorf was there; he had some presence above most of the others, at least he was, and considerable field of foreign policy; palace of the Reich since the July election on the first floor trying immediate effect, and, as usual, said: "I went into melodies out of the sky to start three times to the east, over, Ribbentrop came to a standstill, you have brought me to a standstill."

The top floor of the building had now been taken over by the new headquarters. I can remember the top of a bunch of old bus recent meetings and brought him, or his was frightful, like but was also Goebbels' talk at the Kanzlerplatz in the Reichstag. He was convinced that the K. Communists who were won his heart by promises were brought over to the other side.

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Hans. 1932

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LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

191

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It was also about this time that I first made the acquaintance of Ribbentrop, who was a very late-comer in the Nazi hierarchy. He was a friend of Count Helldorf, the S.A. leader in Berlin, with whom he had ingratiated himself by sending crates of champagne into the gaol when Helldorf was temporarily detained. I took to him because he had some presence, spoke French and English and seemed a cut above most of the mental breast-stroke swimmers near Hitler. At least he was, and continued to be, an antidote to Rosenberg in the field of foreign policy. My first clear recollection of him was in the palace of the *Reichstag* President, which Goering had occupied since the July elections. Hitler was up with Hugenberg in the library on the first floor trying to get more money out of him, without immediate effect, and came down completely worn out. He saw me and, as usual, said: "Hanfstaengl, play me something," so I launched into melodies out of *Tosca* which I had in my head, although I had to start three times to find the right key. When the performance was over, Ribbentrop came over to me and said pompously: "Hanfstaengl, you have brought the Führer through a difficult hour."

The top floor of the Kaiserhof Hotel in the Wilhelmstrasse had by now been taken over more or less completely as the Nazi operational headquarters. I cannot say its atmosphere was thereby improved. Whenever the top echelon were there for meals they behaved like a bunch of old buskers. Each one would boast of his successes in recent meetings and how many bouquets of flowers had been brought him, or his success in dealing with Communist hecklers. It was frightful, like being in the green room of a music-hall. Berlin was also Goebbels' territory. They had a big flat out on the Reichskanzlerplatz in the west of the city, and once when Hitler was convinced that the Kaiserhof kitchen staff had been infiltrated by Communists who were putting poison into his food, Magda Goebbels won his heart by preparing delicate little vegetarian dishes which were brought over to the hotel for him in heatproof containers.

This was the period when Goebbels really began to gain ground. Hitler would often ride over and spend the rest of the evening with

them and I was usually dragged along for my final piano act. My marches were high in favour and I had a relatively new one called *Deutscher Föhn*, which appealed to Hitler. "This is what we will have the band play when we march into Berlin," he used to proclaim, but the Goebbels were jealous. This ability gave me a special access to Hitler which they resented and they took to having all the radios on at full blast when we arrived, so that I could no longer compete. Goebbels soon found an even better answer. He had taken recordings of some of Hitler's more successful speeches and used to turn these on. Hitler would curl up in a big Morris arm-chair and semi-doze to the sound of this phonetic super-reflection of himself, drowning in his own narcissistic sound-image. They would follow this up with one of the Wagner recordings, just to outsmart me, because they knew that if he listened to my piano-playing it was sometimes a prelude to his listening to me, and that was something to be prevented at all costs.

About the only thing which reconciled me to the Goebbels was their unashamed enthusiasm for finding female companionship for Hitler. I was all in favour of this. I thought if he could find another woman it would be the best way of taming him and making him more human and approachable. One of their offerings was a vivacious blonde named Gretl Slezak, whose father, Leo, was the famous opera singer, and she herself had a very pleasant voice. She was not all that young, probably about 27 or 28 at the time, but she was a professional *ingénue* and asked the most delightfully asinine questions about the Nazis and what Hitler stood for and did he really mean to be beastly to the Jews, and so on. In fact she had a Jewish grandmother, so the question was not entirely without point. Hitler responded very well and tossed back her remarks by telling her not to bother about such matters and that the most important thing was to spend a pleasant evening. The Goebbels deliberately shut off their radio-sets and egged me on to go and strum at the piano. I felt rather like the man must feel who plays incidental music in a brothel. However, I thought this was all in a good cause and if only we could keep him interested, who knew what might come of it.

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door, and I assumed they were fondling each other, so I kept my foot off the loud pedal and hoped fervently that this would really be the start of a beautiful friendship. After three-quarters of an hour or so we all took our leave of the Goebbels—needless to state, Brückner and company were also along—and left for the Kaiserhof, by which time it was about one o'clock in the morning. "I must take this young lady home," said Hitler. If she brings you round to some sort of normalcy, I thought, she will be doing us all a service. The rest of us had a last drink in the hotel as a sop to our consciences for leaving him unguarded, and when I went to my room, sure enough Hitler's jackboots were the only ones missing from outside his door in the corridor—it was quite near mine. Well, well, I thought, this is really an auspicious beginning. I believe, in fact, that he returned quite late, but there was no clue to be obtained from his behaviour next morning as to what had happened. Gretl Slezak continued to be seen around and I got to know her very well. One day she was in a confidential mood and I asked her what had been going on. She just looked up at the ceiling and shrugged. It was all I needed to know.

Leni Riefenstahl was another of the Goebbels' introductions. She was in their apartment one night for dinner. It was considered, I might say, the acme of luxury, but in fact conformed to the early Pullman taste of all these top Nazis. I do not want to be too malicious, but, after all, these people came from nowhere and the only spacious furnishings they saw were in the hotels in which they stayed, so they came to accept the style as the height of breeding and sophistication, instead of the dreadful *kitsch* it was.

Leni Riefenstahl was a very vital and attractive woman and had little difficulty in persuading the Goebbels and Hitler to go on to her studio after dinner. I was carried along and found it full of mirrors and trick interior decorator effects, but what one would expect, not bad. There was a piano there, so that got rid of me, and the Goebbels, who wanted to leave the field free, leant on it, chatting. This isolated Hitler, who got into a panic. Out of the corner of my eye I could see him ostentatiously studying the titles in the book-cases. Riefenstahl was certainly giving him the works. Every time he straightened up or looked round, there she was dancing to my music

Jan 1933

Hans.

194

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

at his elbow, a real summer sale of feminine advance. I had to grin myself. I caught the Goebbels' eyes, as if to say, 'If the Riefenstahl can't manage this no one can and we might as well leave.' So we made our excuses, leaving them alone, which was all against his security regulations. But again it was an organized disappointment. The Riefenstahl and I travelled in a plane a day or two later and once more all I got was that hopeless shrug. However, she had made her mark and obtained quite a lot of privileges from Hitler for her film activities.

A third woman also appeared about this time. There is an entry in my guest-book dated January 1, 1933, signed in our Pienzenauerstrasse house by Schaub, Heinrich Hoffmann, his then sweetheart Erna Gröbke, whom he later married, Brückner and his girl friend Sophie Stork, Rudolf Hess and his wife Ilse, Ingeborg Groen, who presents no picture to my memory, Hitler—and Eva Braun. They had all come on for coffee after a performance of *Meistersinger* at the Hof Theatre. We may even have had dinner at the Four Seasons Hotel first. It was not my first sight of Eva Braun. She was a pleasing-looking blonde, the slightly helpless type who appears to need protection, well built, with blue eyes and a modest, diffident manner. I had seen her working behind the counter at Heinrich Hoffmann's shop some months earlier, and had certainly registered the fact. She was friendly and personable and eager to please. We had no sense that evening that she was there in any particular capacity, but rather as a friend of one of the other girls in order to make up the party.

Hitler was in his most benign mood. It took us right back to the 'twenties when we had first met him. The conductor that evening had been Hans Knappertsbusch and Hitler had not liked his *tempi* and interpretation and was expatiating on the subject. He could really do so with good sense and would hum or whistle many of the passages, the words of which he knew by heart, in order to show what he meant. We had refashioned the house by then and the studio he remembered from his early days had lost its height due to the necessity of putting in additional rooms. He thought it was a pity and said we should have built outwards and left it as a lofty room for receptions. I could not help thinking that if I had had my

thousand dollars another thing and reminisced charming pleasant party. I this mood.

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Three weeks later journalist friends in the Lustgarten the State of Lippe I am Dr. Hanfstaengl and these gentlemen him in exasperation said stubbornly. In another week not to be moved then," he said. By

Jan 1933 Hays.

LOHENGRIN PREVAILS

195

thousand dollars back when I needed them it would have been another thing and that it was all very well for him to talk. But he reminisced charmingly about the old days and it was really a very pleasant party. I think it was almost the last time that I saw him in this mood.

The conversation kept coming back to the *Meistersinger* we had seen. It was probably Hitler's favourite opera and he was, of course, a completely Wagnerian figure himself. It would take three or four of the characters to make up his. There was a lot of Lohengrin, with its German connotations of impotence, something of the Flying Dutchman and a mixture of Hans Sachs and Walter von Stolzing. I could not help thinking, while he talked, of the Hans Sachs line about: '*ein Glühwurm fand sein Weibchen nicht, das hat den Schaden angericht* [a glow-worm did not find his mate and that was the cause of all the trouble].' Hitler never did find his mate. Eva Braun was no answer to the problem.

Before they left, Hitler signed his name with the words, 'on the first day of the New Year'. He looked up at me and said in a tone of suppressed excitement: "This year belongs to us. I will guarantee you that in writing." On January 4 came the famous meeting with von Papen at the house of the Cologne banker, Kurt von Schroeder, the final step in his path to power.

Three weeks later I was back in Berlin trying to get my foreign journalist friends through a police cordon into a Nazi mass meeting in the Lustgarten. It was just after the new Nazi electoral success in the State of Lippe. The policeman would not let us through. "But I am Dr. Hanfstaengl, the foreign press officer of the Nazi Party and these gentlemen have got to see this to file their stories," I told him in exasperation. "My orders are not to let anyone through," he said stubbornly. "But for heaven's sake, man, don't be so difficult. In another week we shall be in power, anyway," I shouted. He was not to be moved. "Come back in a week and I'll let you through then," he said. By that time my statement was true.

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CHAPTER XI

DISILLUSIONMENT AT NUREMBERG

Neurath versus Rosenberg—First brush with Goering—Reichstag fire fever—Goebbels at Potsdam—The one-man revolution—Interventions with Himmler—Hostages for a policy—No make-up for the Mitfords—The shape of things to come.

I FELT singularly unmoved by the clamour and hysteria of that January 30 in 1933 when the Nazi Party came to power. Certainly it was an exciting moment, but I had too many reservations concerning the dangerous turbulence of the radicals to feel unduly confident about the possible march of events. We were all standing around in the Kaiserhof while Hitler was with the President. He came back through shouting crowds and up in the lift to the first floor. "*Jetzt sind wir so weit*," he announced in a state of euphoria. We all crowded round, waiters and maids alike, to shake his hand. "Well, *Herr Reichskanzler*," I said, "at least I am not going to have to call you *Herr Oberregierungsrat* any more." Ribbentrop was there, already trying to put on Bismarckian airs, and Goering, of course, here, there and everywhere in his most resplendent uniform. I missed most of the junketing because I was pinned in my room by the foreign press and answering telephone calls from scores of acquaintances all over Germany, who suddenly remembered that they had been to school with me or had known my father and wanted to make their number with someone near the centre without delay.

That evening there was a big S.A. parade. They even played my march, *Young Heroes*, as they stamped down the Wilhelmstrasse, but any feeling of identification was rudely shattered the next morning. The offices in the Chancellery were somehow not yet ready for occupation and a wild flurry of discussions was still being carried on in the Kaiserhof. I was sitting down in the corner of one of the big

reception-rooms, as with Frick. As I had been speaking, Hitler said: "The but put him as State Sec

I felt as if I had Hitler proposed to intention to me con for him in the Go Beobachter would something immedi down to the Foreign never met him in n upstairs. "Your Ex the utmost import you are the foreign me and I must ask ourselves." "Of co come from the Ka going to put Rose it is only a step to the alarm here. Ge stopped at all cost "I do not know h you are one of the I am," I replied, there are limits ar moved fast, becau berg found himsel head of the foreig restricted his influ and we afterwards

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DISILLUSIONMENT AT NUREMBERG

197

reception-rooms, and diagonally opposite Hitler was in conversation with Frick. As I have found many times in my life, I was, acoustically speaking, strategically placed. Imagine my horror when I heard Hitler say: "The best thing to do with Parteigenosse Rosenberg is to put him as State Secretary in the Foreign Office."

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I felt as if I had been seared with a red-hot iron. This was how Hitler proposed to implement his countless evasive statements of intention to me concerning Rosenberg. How there would be no place for him in the Government, how his importance as editor of the *Beobachter* would diminish in the national scene. . . . I had to do something immediately. Almost running out of the room, I tore down to the Foreign Office and demanded to see von Neurath. I had never met him in my life, but after a short pause I was accompanied upstairs. "Your Excellency," I said, "I must tell you something of the utmost importance. You know who I am, I hope." "Yes, yes, you are the foreign press chief." "This is a very delicate matter for me and I must ask you to keep our conversation absolutely between ourselves." "Of course," he said, surprised and puzzled. "I have just come from the Kaiserhof, where I heard Hitler say that they are going to put Rosenberg in here as your State Secretary. Of course it is only a step to making him Foreign Minister. I beg you to sound the alarm here. Go and see the President, if necessary. This must be stopped at all costs." Even the phlegmatic Neurath was astonished. "I do not know how to understand you, Herr Hanfstaengl. Surely you are one of the better-known members of the Party?" "Certainly I am," I replied, "but where the good of Germany is concerned there are limits and this I will not stand for." Neurath must have moved fast, because the scheme came to nothing. As a sop, Rosenberg found himself set up in a sumptuous villa in the Tiergarten as head of the foreign policy section of the Party, which mercifully restricted his influence. Neurath was grateful for my intervention and we afterwards became close associates.

It had been a bad start. Hitler had been very difficult to deal with for weeks. With power almost within his grasp, he listened only to suggestions which fed his mounting exaltation and swept aside any ideas of mine to give his coming assumption of office a more propitiatory air. There had been a very influential French journalist

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I then took an apartment for a short period in the Genthinerstrasse, and in the late autumn of 1933 moved into a charming house, almost a miniature *palais*, on the Pariser Platz, just by the Brandenburger Tor. That remained my Berlin home until the end.

I also found it expedient to appear in the Party uniform for the first time. I had always considered the dun-coloured affair the S.A. wore a monstrosity, so I took the liberty of designing my own. I sent for a superb length of chocolate-brown gaberdine from a London tailor and had it made up with a delicate little gold epaulette. Hitler had offered me a shirt and trousers out of the Party clothing-store, but if it was going to be tactically necessary to get out of my civilian clothes, I intended to do so on my own terms. My first appearance in it at a party given by Louis Lochner, the Associated Press correspondent, was, needless to state, the talk of the town.

If I interpose such minor details in a period of major revolution, it is not an attempt to dissociate myself from events. The Nazis had come to power with the declared intention of cleaning out the Augean stables of economic disaster, unemployment, corruption, Communism, the futile and purposeless haggling of 32 parties in the *Reichstag* and restoring national dignity and honour. That is what I believed in as a member of the Party, and I will not attempt to justify in hindsight the fact that I went along with many of the draconian measures introduced. I will risk Anglo-Saxon prejudice by saying that I compared the process to the hacking out of underbrush so that trees could grow again. What I did, as one individual, within the measure of the possible, was to intervene to the best of my ability wherever the impetus of revolution produced unpleasant excesses. Many others did as much and more than I did, and I at least escaped in the end with my life. To do these things at all I had somehow to retain my place at Hitler's elbow.

My first brush came with Goering. I had been hearing from Lochner and people in the diplomatic round stories about unpleasant goings-on at the Columbia House, down near Tempelhof airfield. The S.A. were said to have taken this over as a private prison and interrogation centre for political enemies, whom they were alleged to be beating up. Then a Graf Schönborn, whom I knew, called on me at the *Reichstag* President's palace and confirmed the story with

specific details. I tackled Goering about it over breakfast. First of all he denied the whole thing. Then I suggested that we satisfy ourselves by a personal visit. Goering was evasive, then truculent, and finally demanded to know who had told me the story. I was unwilling to do so, but after extracting a promise that nothing would happen to the informant, named Schönborn. I should have known better, but then there was a lot I yet had to learn. Schönborn disappeared and was detained for several weeks. He was naturally not exactly grateful to me, but I had raised such hell that I had probably helped to get him out as much as I had to put him in. It was my first taste of how different things were to be from what many of us had hoped. Over the next three years I voiced my protests whenever I could. But no one should suppose that the rôle of King Canute is an easy one to play.

It was necessary often to work by the most devious means. When the Communist headquarters in the Liebknecht house was raided on February 24, Goering, as Prussian Minister of the Interior, had a flamboyant communiqué issued about the barrels of incriminating material concerning plans for world revolution which had been discovered. Harried by the press, I could get no details out of him. The next day I had lunch with Sir Horace Rumbold, the British ambassador. "If these suggestions are true, which I doubt," I told him, "surely one way of getting at the facts would be for the British Government to request details, especially as some of the territories in their Empire are alleged to be affected." Whether he took my advice or not I do not know as, two days later, the anti-Communist campaign reached its most spectacular peak.

It must be remembered that we were in the middle of a last great election campaign. On February 26 I accompanied Hitler on a wild twelve-hour plane flight during which he spoke at three widely separated cities. Late that evening we dined with Prince Viktor zu Wied and his wife at their home in the Kurfürstenstrasse. I could feel a cold coming on and before we left the Prince gave me a bottle of aquavit, with the advice to drink myself into a fever. I was so dog-tired that night that I did not start the cure, but the following afternoon I felt so shivery that I decided to go to bed in my room in Goering's palace and sample the remedy. The Goebbels had

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1933 Hanp.

little gnome wanted know, was it nothing I could tell him to pass on? In the end I lost patience: "Tell him the *Reichstag* is on fire." "Hanfstaengl, is this one of your jokes?" Goebbels answered rather curtly. "If you think that, come down here and see for yourselves," and I hung up. I then called Sefton Delmer and Louis Lochner. No sooner had I put the receiver down when the bell shrilled again. It was Goebbels back: "I have just talked to the Führer and he wants to know what is really happening. No more of your jokes now." I lost my temper with him. "I tell you to come down here and see whether I am talking nonsense or not. The whole place is in flames and the fire-brigades are already here. I am going back to bed."

My room became like a railway station. Auwi came in, and then the Prince of Hesse. They were both staying in the palace. All I knew was that I was very annoyed at the ruin of my cure. "That's the end of that gas-works, anyway," I said. I suppose it was a callous remark, but I had always considered it an architectural abortion. The next day, of course, the Nazi newspapers came out with banner accusations that it was all the work of the Communists, and the notorious *affaire* was launched.

I am afraid this anecdote provides little new evidence of value. It was suggested later that I was one of the people who knew the whole story. Not only did the outbreak catch me in bed with a fever, but neither I, nor any of the other guests, nor any of the servants were aware of, or had noticed, any activity in the house to substantiate the theory that Ernst and his S.A. arsonists had entered the *Reichstag* through a tunnel from our cellars. On the other hand, it was a large building, they may have had a key to the coal-hole and worked completely unnoticed. What is not without interest, however, is the attitude of Goebbels and Hitler.

The little doctor was, of course, an accomplished liar, but if ever annoyance and suspicion were genuine in a man's voice, they were in his on the telephone that evening. For what the supposition is worth at this period of time, it would not surprise me in the least, on the strength of the evidence now available, that Goering planned the whole thing himself, necessarily with Hitler's knowledge, as a means of wresting a piece of initiative from his hated rival, Goebbels.

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My own suspicion year, the transcript associates. I had been of those implicated in for libel through a became my good friend the evidence produced. Brown to call off the climbed down anyway.

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1933 Hamp.

DISILLUSIONMENT AT NUREMBERG

203

Whether Goering was in his palace that evening or not I have no idea. I did not see him.

My own suspicions did not grow until I read, much later in the year, the transcripts of the trial at Leipzig of Dimitroff and his associates. I had been named in a book published in London as one of those implicated in the *Reichstag* fire plot. I instituted proceedings for libel through a solicitor named Kenneth Brown, who later became my good friend. I was so appalled at the flimsy nature of the evidence produced at the trial that I flew to London to tell Brown to call off the action, but by that time the publishers had climbed down anyway.

The Leipzig trial injured Goering's prestige badly. He was furious. At lunch one day in the Chancellery he trumpeted: "*Mein Führer*, it is an absolute disgrace the way these High Court judges are behaving. You would think we were on trial, not the Communists." Hitler's answer was revealing: "*Mein lieber Goering*," he said, "it is only a question of time. We shall soon have those old fellows talking our language. They are all ripe for retirement anyway, and we will put our own people in. But while *der Alte* [Hindenburg] is alive, there is not much we can do about it."

I claim a small share of the credit for the fact that Dimitroff was able to leave Germany alive after he had been found not guilty. In response to President Roosevelt's message, I kept in close touch with the American ambassador in Berlin, William E. Dodd. In many ways he was an unsatisfactory representative. He was a modest little Southern history professor, who ran his embassy on a shoe-string and was probably trying to save money out of his pay. At a time when it needed a robust millionaire to compete with the flamboyance of the Nazis, he teetered round self-effacingly as if he was still on his college campus. His mind and his prejudices were small. The fact that I was a former Harvard man made him regard even me as a Goddam-Yankee, but I did my best to help him exert what influence he had. On one occasion I even arranged for him to have a private interview with Hitler, without a member of the Foreign Office present, which was, of course, contrary to all protocol. Neurath, whose friendship I valued, was distinctly annoyed when he heard of it, and indeed I might have saved myself the trouble.

of 'ah, young so-and-so. . . I know his poor mother well'. I found the *Horst Wessel Lied* running through my head: '*Kameraden, die Rotfront und Reaktion erschossen . . .*'—the Red front had been liquidated. The Minister of Propaganda was already conditioning his master's mind for the coming fight with the 'forces of reaction'.

Hitler's mood on his arrival at the church had been determined for him. I do not need to describe the scene in detail, the empty Imperial throne, the Crown Prince, Hindenburg, old Field-Marshal Mackensen in the uniform of the Death's Head Hussars. . . . This was the 'reaction' in full regalia. Hitler paid lip-service to the fusion of the old and the new, as for the time being he knew he must, but for the connoisseur there was a fresh note in his speech. I was standing with Hess not twenty feet away from him. "Now it is the heroic Weltanschauung which will illuminate the ideals of Germany's future. . ." I pulled myself together with a start. What was this? Where had I read that before? This was not Schopenhauer, who had been Hitler's philosophical god in the old Dietrich Eckart days. No, this was new. It was Nietzsche.

I thought back only a few months earlier to a visit he had paid during one of the election campaigns, while travelling from Weimar to Berlin, to the Villa Silberblick, where Nietzsche had died and where his widowed sister, aged 86, still lived. The rest of us had waited outside, for nearly an hour and a half. Hitler had gone in carrying his whip, but, to my astonishment, came tripping out with a slim little turn-of-the-century cane dangling from his fingers: "What a marvellous old lady," he said to me. "What vivacity and intelligence. A real personality. Look, she has given me her brother's last walking-stick as a souvenir, a great compliment. You should have been there, Hanfstaengl"—which was his form of evasion when he had excluded me from anything.

The episode had clearly caused a deeper impression than the immediate involvement in the election campaign had permitted me to appreciate. Hitler's mind was a deep-running river. You could never tell when something it had absorbed would bob to the surface again. From that day at Potsdam the Nietzschean catch-phrases began to appear more frequently—*Wille zur Macht*, *Herrenvolk*, *Sklassenmoral*—the fight for the heroic life, against formal dead-

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Hamp. 1933

DISILLUSIONMENT AT NUREMBERG

207

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buried for ever, and the Gaulciters started to take their inspiration
from a savage bowdlerization of Nietzsche. The guillotine twist
which Robespierre had given to the teachings of Jean-Jacques
Rousseau was repeated by Goebbels, Hitler and the Gestapo in their
political simplification of the contradictory theories of Nietzsche.
Nor was that the only milestone reached at Potsdam. Until this
formidable display by the representatives of the old régime, Hitler's
historical hero had always been Frederick the Great. When, under
Goebbels' prompting, he appreciated the risks and restrictions which
a coalition with these traditional forces would entail, his allegiance
subtly changed. From this time on, Napoleon emerged more and
more as his model. The inspired sense of the art of the possible which
had characterized the great Prussian king became submerged in the
limitless lust for universal power of the Corsican.

No single man could halt the whirlwind of the revolution's pro-
gress. The political parties were banned, the trade unions seques-
trated, pressure put on the *Stahlhelm*, but many pillars of the
establishment remained, the Presidency, the *Reichswehr*, the Foreign
Office, the Civil Service. Those of us on the conservative side of the
fence had expected the agitation to diminish, not increase, but there
still seemed ample safeguards left to provide a fire-brigade once the
immediate conflagration had run its course. It should not be sup-
posed that these measures were thrashed out in conference or in the
cabinet, or that there was any real previous discussion in the party
concerning them. Most of us literally read about them in the news-
papers as they occurred. Hitler had his Enabling Law and was
acting with the powers it granted him. The whole thing was run like
the Grand National steeplechase. There was simply no occasion to
hear what one jockey said to the other as they came to each
hurdle.

In matters of policy the only field in which I dug in my heels was
that of foreign affairs. I was an ally of Neurath and an opponent of
Rosenberg and all he stood for. I also tried to maintain a measure
of sanity in religious affairs. If I attempted to criticize Hitler's other
coups to his face he would tell me it was none of my business and

Hamp. 1953

DISILLUSIONMENT AT NUREMBERG

209

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him it was clear that there would be a first-class international outcry unless the man was freed. Himmler gave me a name and number to ring, and it was fixed, just like that.

In another case, a Socialist deputy named Gerhart Seger had escaped to Scandinavia, but his English-born wife and child could not get an exit permit. Mrs. Mavis Tate, a British M.P., took up the case and even presented herself in my office. Again I settled the matter through Himmler. My only tangible reward, years later, when I was a British internee, was to learn that Mrs. Tate had stood up again in the House of Commons and opposed my release. There were scores of similar instances. One which Diels himself mentions, in his post-war memoirs, was State Secretary Pünder, the brother of a Cologne lawyer now prominent in the Bonn Federal Government. Other names which come to my mind are the family of Ganghofer, the Bavarian novelist, and Ludwig Wüllner, the *Lieder* singer.

Another man I was happy to help was Fritz Kreisler, the violinist. He was a Jew, but not in immediate danger. In fact Hitler was a great admirer of his playing. We were good friends and he had not only helped me with the orchestration of some of my marches, but worked up a melody of mine into one of the items in his repertoire, called *Canzonetta*. He read the shape of things to come and considered it prudent to emigrate to the United States. Through Schacht and Neurath, I was able to arrange for the transfer of his considerable fortune. Those of us who were in a position to help did what we could.

The pathetic thing was that many of us thought these embryo concentration camps were only a transitory manifestation. This was the version available even to those as near the inner circle of the Party as myself and information was so sparse it was difficult to disbelieve it. I took Philip Noel-Baker, a visiting British M.P., in to Hitler one day to broach the subject and myself brought up the suggestion that the agitation abroad might be stilled if one of the resident foreign consuls, in rotation, were permitted to report on the conditions under which such suspects were being held. Hitler took it quite calmly and said that it was a curious idea. He was not asking any of his consular personnel in England to visit British penitentiaries. The next time I was in the Chancellery, of course, I got hell.

Hamp. 1933

DISILLUSIONMENT AT NUREMBERG

211

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delighted. Then I saw Schacht. He was enthusiastic. With this back-
ing I decided to approach Hitler. I caught him after lunch one day
and we walked up and down diagonally across the terrace of the old
Chancellery, where coffee used to be served on fine summer and
autumn days. His response appalled me: "*Mein lieber Hanfstaengl*.
The die is cast. Events are taking on quite a different shape." "But
Herr Hitler," I protested, "this is our finest chance to deal with an
insoluble problem." "Do not waste my time, Hanfstaengl," he
answered sharply. "I need the Jews as hostages."

Trying to keep one's foot on the soft pedal had more of the quality
of asking a pile-driver not to make a noise. Nevertheless, I sought
allies wherever I could. One of these was General von Reichenau,
whose reputation as a rabid Nazi was not entirely deserved. He had
certainly been one of Hitler's most senior advocates in the *Reichs-
wehr* and, although he had been called to a high post in the War
Office, the excesses of the first year of power quickly disillusioned
him. I had known him for the best part of ten years. We had first
met with my young American military attaché friend, Truman-
Smith, when Reichenau was still a major. Now I returned the com-
pliment by persuading Reichenau to arrange for the return of
Colonel Truman-Smith to Berlin as American military attaché. I felt
every step to strengthen pro-American sentiments in Germany was
justified.

Reichenau and the *Reichswehr* were not only shocked by the
S.A.'s excesses, but increasingly perturbed at Roehm's pretensions to
incorporate them in the Army with himself as Defence Minister.
Nor was he impressed with the S.A.'s military potentialities. Some-
one had compared them with the freedom levies of 1813 against
Napoleon, but Reichenau was scornful: "I can assure you that the
Battles of Leipzig and Waterloo were won by the regular Prussian
infantry," he snapped. I found this a very useful argument on which
to play and was always giving Reichenau information from within
the Party on which the Army was often able to act with some success.
In return he passed on reports of his own in case I had the oppor-
tunity of working on Hitler. I was still closer to him than any of
them, although Hitler was annoyed to discover that I knew the
general so well: "The extraordinary thing about Hanfstaengl is that

Haup. 1933

he seems to have friends and relations everywhere," he complained once in front of me. Having come from nowhere, it was something he could barely grasp. Another instance of the same sort of thing occurred when we all attended the inauguration of the Tannenberg memorial with Hindenburg in East Prussia. The old gentleman was very civil to me and talked in his deep bass voice about a cousin of mine of the same name whom he had known in Potsdam as an officer of the Guards Grenadier regiment. We stood tracing back genealogies for several minutes, to the utter fury and jealousy of Hitler's entourage.

Neurath was another prominent figure who responded to my confidences with his protection. He took me with him to the London economic conference in the summer of 1933, and helped me with currency through the Foreign Office on several other visits I made to England. These, I might say, were carried out entirely at my own expense. I wanted to give Hitler a true picture of opinion there and produce arguments which might at least induce caution in the field of foreign policy. I even tried to persuade him to arrange for an exchange of visits between the heads of State. Anything, I thought, to get him out, and try and normalize his viewpoint. The only immediate result was that Goering laid claim to the first invitation. If he was received by the King he thought he might get a British decoration to add to his collection.

I do not need to stress the point that important groups abroad, as well as within Germany, regarded Hitler at this time with distinct benevolence. Even Lloyd George, on whom I called, was no exception. He gave me a signed photograph to take back, on which he had inscribed: "To Chancellor Hitler, in admiration of his courage, determination and leadership." There were plenty of people prepared to acknowledge the new power which had arisen in Germany. During one visit to Berchtesgaden in the late summer I was detailed to help entertain Sir John Siddeley, the industrialist, and his wife. To this day I retain the memory of how he and Goering sat out on a balcony with great illustrations and blueprints of British military aircraft it was hoped Germany would buy. All, I might say, in flat contradiction to the terms of the Versailles Treaty.

It was during the same visit—I think it was when I went down to

get Hitler's approval another example of take in the brutality Egon down with it was playing round and Goering: "Me had to sign twenty were very satisfied reported to me. It was clemency was exercised

If I needed furthering, a conversation the open door of needed: "As long as Hitler's voice, "then the Foreign Office." "As far as that Pot only one way to deal and mow them down straight round to see

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4 Aug 5. 1933

DISILLUSIONMENT AT NUREMBERG

213

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get Hitler's approval for my book of caricatures—that I was given another example of the pleasure which the Party leaders appeared to take in the brutality with which they wielded power. I had taken Egon down with me, by now an intelligent boy of twelve, and he was playing round in the bushes when he came up just behind Hitler and Goering: "*Mein Führer*," Hermann was saying, "I have just had to sign twenty-two death sentences for your approval." They were very satisfied with themselves, rubbing their hands, Egon reported to me. It had obviously become a matter of routine, and no clemency was exercised.

If I needed further indication of the way their minds were running, a conversation between Hitler and Goebbels, heard through the open door of the dining-room in the Chancellery, was all I needed: "As long as the old gentleman [Hindenburg] is alive," came Hitler's voice, "there are two things I cannot touch: the Army and the Foreign Office." Goebbels was quick to give a turn to the knife: "As far as that Potsdam bunch is concerned, *Mein Führer*, there is only one way to deal with them—line them up in rows against a wall and mow them down with machine-guns." So, of course, I went straight round to see Reichenau and told him the story.

It was the experience of power which turned Hitler into an irreconcilable fanatic. It took me most of 1933 to realize that the demon had entered into him. Even then many of us did not believe that the point of no return had been reached. We thought the impetus of the movement could be braked, the direction altered, even reserved. Whenever I saw Neurath, Schacht, Gürtner or General von Reichenau, which was frequently, we talked in the same tone. None of them had the *entrée* to Hitler which I still had, and in spite of my growing distaste, they begged me to remain where I was. Hitler had still not reached the point where he no longer talked over matters with those who enjoyed his confidence. The final decisions of a man in that position are often, in the last resort, taken in a matter of minutes, and if I happened to be there at that crucial moment there was always the possibility that the views I presented would prevail. The drawback was that the voice of reason was beginning to find less and less echo in his mind.

The final realization that Hitler and his movement had deceived

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Haus. 1933

CIRCUS AT THE CHANCELLERY

217

to Hitler in an intelligent, constructive fashion. They were like the famous cavalry of Murat under Napoleon, which flew round the enemy like wasps without fighting. They would interrupt the middle of a conversation to show him a picture or bring him a piece of paper, or Hoffmann would intrude, taking his photographs.

It was the same with almost everybody, but particularly with anyone who was not a member of the old Party gang. It was the same in Berchtesgaden as it was in Berlin. Neurath complained to me one day: "I have just been down to the Berghof to try and get the Führer, but you know, Hanfstaengl, it is impossible to talk to him alone for more than two minutes on end. One of those louts is always barging in." Schacht said the same. And for me, who, in those first two years, was the only other person who was there almost every day, it was worse. Even Goering began again to call me the 'Questenberg in the camp', a phrase he had invented in 1923, which was a reference to the character in Schiller's *Wallenstein*, who is always recommending caution and delay and taking a long view of things. They had heard me complain time and time again about the S.A. and its excesses, about illegal goings-on which had been drawn to my attention and the necessity for discipline and consolidation. So they ganged up on me and in the end it became hopeless.

Hitler was as unpunctual and unpredictable as ever. There were no set hours. Sometimes he would appear at breakfast and sometimes he would not, filling himself up in his suite first with hot milk and gruel and digestive powders. Then he would come down for a few minutes, and if I had something on my mind this was often a good time to catch him. The day would start with reports from Lammers, who was head of the Chancellery, and Funk, who at that time was Goebbels' right-hand man in the Propaganda Ministry and gave him a review of the morning's news. Funk was committed after the war to the Allies' Spandau gaol, but he was a gifted fellow whom I never considered particularly dangerous. He had been a very good financial journalist in his time, and stood high in my estimation because he had a professional's contempt for Goebbels. He was quite influential because he knew a lot of the industrialists and had, in fact, found the funds which had paid the bills at the Kaiserhof. His weakness was drink. It ran in the family. An uncle of his, Alfred

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CIRCUS AT THE CHANCELLERY

219

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superficial varnish to the party. It became a constant strain to guess who was going to be there and what they were going to talk about. I used to wait for some dangerous piece of nonsense to get started and then try and put forward a more responsible point of view. But to achieve any result I had either to make a joke or play the *enfant terrible* with a mixture of flattery and insolence. One never knew when Hitler was going to break into some tirade. In the end I found it too difficult to keep up day after day. There were only two people I ever saw who could get Hitler aside alone. The first was Goering, who, if he had something on his mind when he came to lunch, would say, "Mein Führer, I simply must speak to you in private." The other one was Himmler, who used to saunter in, and the first thing we knew he had spent half an hour alone with Hitler in his down-stairs reception-room.

The environment of power had its contributory effect on Hitler's character. He sat in the inner circle of authority, surrounded by three rings of guards. The adulation involved in the Führer principle would have turned steadier heads than his. His information was filtered and he was exposed the whole time to the influence of Goebbels and the congenital radicals. He lost whatever contact with the ordinary people he had ever had. His public speeches became fewer and farther between, and where he had once synthesized the feelings of his audience he now preached to the converted. He was denied even that outlet. He did not really know what was going on in the world and used to call for all the German newspapers, overlooking the fact that they all came out of the one sausage factory, and read them all through, looking for the one thing he could not find, which was reality.

People who have read the collection of his remarks at table assume that he kept up this running fire of comment and commentary the whole time. It is simply not so. During my years at the Chancellery he would rail against the enemies of the régime in his old propaganda style, or talk about past campaigns, but there was no discussion of the progress of his revolution. It was only after the war had started, when there were no more meetings to rant at, and he had a new audience of generals, that he produced for posterity, probably at the suggestion of Bormann, the pearls of wisdom by which he

Hamp. 1933

wished to be remembered. It was done for deliberate effect and came long after my time.

Hitler's reaction to the old Bismarckian Chancellery—it was not rebuilt to look like Grand Central Station until later—was to denigrate his great predecessor. "He had no idea about architecture and the proper use of space," Hitler used to complain. "Imagine having the kitchens put into the ground floor." He would try systematically to reduce the stature of the Iron Chancellor, and on the most extraordinary grounds: "Old Bismarck had simply no idea how to deal with the Jewish problem," he said at table once. The entourage had, of course, no feeling for tradition or their surroundings at all. Schaub and Sepp Dietrich were indulging in some piece of uncouth horse-play on one of the old brocade sofas when I lost patience with them: "Can't you realize that Bismarck probably sat there," I told them. "You might at least try and behave properly." Hitler was in the room, but he just looked away and bit his nails.

The intellectual level was nil. To give an example: Schaub one day had come across some nude pictures of Mathilde Ludendorff, taken when that eccentric lady was attending a nature cure of some sort, and these were handed round with appreciative guffaws. In the evening things were a little better, as even Hitler had to do a certain amount of official entertaining, and occasionally I was called upon to do my act at the piano. It was no longer as frequent as it used to be, or as often as people in Berlin assumed. This was probably due to the fact that I had been giving a party in my own house once when Rudolf Hess rang up from the *Reichskanzlei* saying that the Führer wanted me to come and play for him. So I left my guests and went. It was the sort of sacrifice you had to make to keep in with the man. They knew perfectly well I was having a party myself and I am sure they did it deliberately.

The evening company had not yet degenerated, as it did later, when Goebbels brought his actress friends, and no decent woman would go there. Nor were the guests fully *gleichgeschaltet*. There was a very characterful elderly lady named Frau von Dirksen, who was, I think, the stepmother of the ambassador to Tokyo, who said to Hitler once in my hearing: "You must realize that I am and remain a monarchist. For me Wilhelm II is still the Kaiser." It

Hamp

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His taste in literature bookcase in the Thiergarten some occasion when lunch to find Hitler. They were in the picture Hitler was holding and I immediately writing. "So Ludwig, do you know who that the hand was K. mann had come across suggesting that Hitler's sexual love-letter to He was reading it then to be deriving some

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Hamps. 1933

CIRCUS AT THE CHANCELLERY

221

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hancellery—it was not until later—was to do about architecture or complain. "Imagine floor." He would try on Chancellor, and on which had simply no idea to sit at table once. The opinion or their surrounding indulging in some piece of faded sofas when I lost Bismarck probably sat and behave properly."

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required quite a lot of courage to say that sort of thing, even in 1933. Hitler had annoyed her with a long philippic about the reactionaries and how the time was coming when he would clean out the augen stables of the foreign ministry.

The whole place was always a blaze of lights. It looked like a film set. I would sometimes go round trying to turn off some of the switches, but Hitler would have none of it. Shop-window lighting was his ideal. It may have had something to do with the fact that his sight was weaker than he ever admitted, as a result of being gassed in the war, but it was also true that he had no sense of colours and was completely insensitive to the effect of lights on them. For him a good photograph was better than a Leonardo da Vinci. What he really still liked in the evening was watching a film. He would have one shown almost every night in his private cinema. One of his favourites was *King Kong*, which he had run two or three times. It was, it may be remembered, the story of a gargantuan ape which developed a Freudian tenderness for a human female not much bigger than its hand, and then went berserk. A frightful story, but it had Hitler absolutely spellbound. He talked about it for days.

His taste in literature still reminded me of the bottom shelf of the bookcase in the Thierschstrasse. We were down in Munich again on some occasion when I walked into the Osteria Bavaria restaurant for lunch to find Hitler and the entourage installed at one of the tables. They were in the *patio* outside, so it must have been in the summer. Hitler was holding a letter in his hand on heavy parchment paper, and I immediately recognized the bold and unmistakable handwriting. "So Ludwig II has sent you a letter," I chaffed him. "How do you know who wrote it?" he asked, nonplussed. So I explained that the hand was known to any student of Bavarian history. Hoffmann had come across it at some antique dealer's and probably was suggesting that Hitler should buy it. It was a superbly written homosexual love-letter to a manservant, and Hitler was fascinated by it. He was reading it through and gloating over the phrases. He seemed to be deriving some vicarious satisfaction from the text.

My position was not easy. Hitler kept me around because he felt I was the one person of long acquaintance who could deal with the foreign press correspondents on terms of equality and keep them out

Hanjs. 1933

of his hair. He never understood their requirements or psychology or why I could not discipline them as Goebbels and Dietrich disciplined the German press. He thought they had only to be threatened with sanctions or expulsion to bring them to heel and somehow never comprehended that they could work perfectly well in any other country. I spent half my time protecting them, and in one case, with the help of Funk, managed to thwart a serious attempt by Goebbels to expel Knickerbocker. Hitler still listened to me from time to time, but was always careful not to give the *camarilla* the impression that he was taking my advice. He still regarded me in a way as his American expert, although he never absorbed the things I kept trying to tell him.

Once when there was a lunch for all the *Reichsstatthalter* at the Chancellery he suddenly dredged up from the past my suggestion of 1925 about a world tour. He had been giving one of his interminable résumés of the history of the Party, his favourite subject, and the appalling difficulties he had met in rebuilding it after Landsberg. "And what did our Mister Hanfstaengl suggest at the time, gentlemen? That I should abandon Germany and improve my mind abroad." This, of course, brought a great salvo of mocking laughter, so I expostulated and said what valuable experience it would have been for the post in which he now found himself. "What is America but millionaires, beauty queens, stupid records and Hollywood . . ." he broke in. "I see America from where I sit much more clearly than you have ever known it." The purest megalomania. Of all the guests, only von Epp gave me a slight understanding shrug. It was no good; Hitler never learnt. You could never get him alone, and as long as Schaub, or a Gauleiter, or a *Reichsstatthalter* was there, he started to bray as if he was at a public meeting. It was the only tone and milieu in which he felt at home.

His intransigence concerning foreign countries was almost pathological. Some time during 1933 Neurath had proposed that a useful service might be rendered by returning the famous head of Queen Nefertiti to the Egyptians. It had been found by German archaeologists and its restoration had, in fact, been called for in the Versailles Treaty. I supported the plan as a means of improving relations between Germany and the Middle East. "There you are,

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other difficulty was pressure on Hitler from Goebbels, who wanted to take over the foreign press section himself. I had reached a *modus vivendi* with Otto Dietrich and had a friendly arrangement with Neurath's people in the Foreign Office. There were occasional forays from Rosenberg and, of course, from Bohle, who was building up his *Auslandsdeutsche* organization, but most of the trouble came from Goebbels. Of course, Hitler delighted in this sort of jockeying, which went on at all levels and enabled him to keep control.

The evil genius of the second half of Hitler's career was Goebbels. I always likened this mocking, jealous, vicious, satanically gifted dwarf to the pilot-fish of the Hitler shark. It was he who finally turned Hitler fanatically against all established institutions and forms of authority. He was insolent, intimate and infinitely pliable. He had those liquid eyes and a wonderful voice and a constant flow of malicious novelties. He was the incarnation of the suspended Socialist press, with a nationalistic varnish. He supplied Hitler with all the information he couldn't read in his own newspapers and nasty little stories about enemies and friends alike. His inferiority complex came, of course, from his crippled foot, and I am probably one of the few people alive today who have seen it without a shoe. It was in their Reichskanzlerplatz flat. We had come in out of the rain, I cannot remember the circumstances exactly, and were discussing something hurriedly when Magda called me into his dressing-room with them. There was his right foot with a sock over it, looking like a fist, awful, and that, of course, was Goebbels in a nutshell. With his right foot he gave the Communist salute and with his left the Nazi *Gruss*. He was not only schizophrenic but schizopedic, and that was what made him so sinister.

He was the other really great orator in the party, and his horizon, like Hitler's, was as wide as the Sportpalast. He saw only his audience and thought that if he could get them drunk with his words, the whole country would get drunk and that this drunkenness could be translated into English, French, or any other language, and be exported as a ready-made frenzy. I used to call him Goebbels-pierre, which he later heard about and hated me for, because, I swear, many of the passages in his speeches came straight out of Robespierre.

Hamp.

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Shakespeare's phrase in *Macbeth* is the best description of him: 'There's daggers in men's smiles.' Goebbels worked with an equipment of superficial smiles and false bonhomie, getting his enemy in a web of ridiculousness and then suddenly exposing him in some discreditable light. "He's such a nice fellow really, but you know he said something the other day rather silly, ha-ha!" was the line with which he used to tantalize Hitler. And Hitler would say, "Well, what was it, then?" with Goebbels playing the mock friend and going on, "I ought not really to tell you, but. . . ." Then, of course, Hitler would explode, and when Goebbels had him fairly crawling up the wall he would start defending the man against this outburst, knowing full well that this would add fuel to Hitler's flames. I saw him take over the press division of Görtner's Ministry of Justice just that way.

Even Magda, whom he led a dog's life, was not spared his complexes. He had a private cinema-show in his house one time, and just as he was on his way out, up some highly polished wooden steps, to stand and greet his guests as they left, he slipped on his club foot and all but fell down. Magda managed to save him and pull him up beside her. After a moment to recover and before the whole company, he gripped her by the back of the neck and forced her right down to his knee and said, with that sort of mad laughter, "So, you saved my life that time. That seems to please you a lot." Anyone who did not witness the scene would never believe it, but those who did caught their breath at the depth of character depravity it revealed. I remember I had helped him once in similar circumstances at a public meeting when I was walking just behind him with Prince Auwi. You would have expected him to be grateful but, of course, it just fed his hatred.

With the rise of Goebbels, the importance of Rosenberg as a person waned, although there was little cause for consolation in that. He had set himself up in a sumptuous villa on the Tiergarten in charge of the foreign affairs section of the Party, ready to jump into Neurath's shoes. He paid a visit to London with great *réclame* and, praise be, made an awful fool of himself. After ostentatiously laying a wreath at the Cenotaph, someone threw it into the Thames for his pains. I only wish he had been thrown in after it. Hitler, who

power. Hitler felt he could rely on him: "He is one of those people who do their duty with icy determination," he commented to me once. Himmler's background as an agricultural student explains much. You will seldom find country-people looking at the landscapes in the Munich Pinakothek, but they will go in droves to spend hours at the German museum of technical inventions. Instead of gazing at gold-framed landscapes by van Gogh, they would rather finger through the pages of the newest International Harvester catalogue and look at illustrations of new threshing-machines. Heinrich Himmler was of that type. To him Germany was nothing but a big estate, with himself in charge of its safety precautions. If something was deteriorating it had to be improved or discontinued, if something was sick it had to be quarantined, if it spread contagion it had to be sterilized or liquidated. Suffering beasts do not perturb a farmer overmuch. As a rule they do not belong to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Himmler inverted Darwin's theories as justification for turning human beings back into animals and saw himself as a sort of universal horse-doctor responsible for their selective breeding.

Himmler's prime virtue in Hitler's eyes was his unflinching loyalty. On some occasion I referred jokingly to him in his presence as 'our Fouché'. Himmler quite politely declined the allusion: "No, please, not that." He obviously felt that Fouché was too much the type of the political turncoat to be mentioned even jokingly in connexion with any man of honour.

Hess, in his ill-defined capacity as head of the Party liaison staff, tried to act as Hitler's middleman. His actions were disowned by Hitler so often that in the end he never took a decision, but put people off with vague promises of looking into the matter. Exasperated regional leaders coined a phrase to describe his attitude: 'Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will do nothing.' Hess was already becoming highly peculiar and went in for vegetarianism, nature cures, and other weird beliefs. It got to the point where he would not go to bed without testing with a divining-rod whether there were any subterranean watercourses which conflicted with the direction of his couch. His wife used to complain: "I have as much experience out of our marriage as a

candidate for conf was tidy, modest a he and Hess waged Party, and Bormar became a nobody, me of his capacity over from me. I w the Party."

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Mussolini nodded. "That I understand. It is not easy. But Herr Hitler is a superb organizer and must tame his party zealots. You cannot allow *soldateska* to run a nation's foreign politics. A State means law and order and where there is a leader there must be discipline. There are always people who are useful in making a revolution, but when victory has been achieved they are dangerous and they have to be got rid of." I wondered if he was thinking of Roehm.

In his fluent but fascinatingly accented German, Mussolini was being very frank and saying just the things I wanted to hear. I decided to come to the point. "Your Excellency, it seems to me essential that you and Herr Hitler should meet. You are both admirers of Wagner and that will give a common starting-point. Think what it would mean if you invited him to the Palazzo Vendramin in Venice where Richard Wagner died. He would gain the benefit of your long experience and obtain much-needed insight into the problems of Europe as seen from outside Germany." To my delight Mussolini accepted the idea and I undertook to win Hitler over. I could hardly believe my good fortune. At last Hitler would hear from an equal some of the political facts of life he did not seem prepared to grasp. Moreover, he would hear them in his own language and they could meet alone. It would not even be necessary to have an interpreter.

As I got up to leave I asked Mussolini if he would sign a photograph, to which he agreed in high humour. Then I slid him a second one. He hesitated a moment, "Who is this one for?" he asked suspiciously. "It would help if I could take your greetings to Herr Hitler," I said. He bent over again and wrote: "*A Adolfo Hitler—Benito Mussolini, Roma, Febbraio 1934.*" I slipped open my briefcase again and brought out a copy of a short memorandum I had written—no diplomat could have worked on this plan more carefully than I had—which contained suggested arrangements for the meeting. "I will give the other copy to Herr Hitler when I get to Berlin," I said. "When are you leaving?" Mussolini asked. "As soon as possible," I replied, eager to attack the other half of the problem. "*Va bene dottore,*" Mussolini saluted me, "give the Führer my best wishes."

I was still in a state of euphoria when I got back to Munich, only

to be brought back for a taxi to take me into two old friends. "Thank heaven you over the German-A to make a Hitler. Poor Dr. Pfeiffer is to help him." Oh! worse than ever. I found my taxi to stop. I got hold of this would have or rescinded. The dirty people I helped in who not only did trouble. On my return my break with Hitler made to seize the United entirely thanks to I see reason.

As soon as I got I left for the capital the first person I saw as ever and or did not like the soul I had been up to, was so booked up private. Fortunately self came in. He said, "staengl, where have news for you, Herr shutters narrowed I tell you." I could "Well, what is it, then?" "Herr Hitler, I realize well, then, if it is so the corridor with n

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CHAPTER XIII

A MURDERER'S WELCOME

Palm Court interlude—Disguised departure—Shock on the high seas—Harvard, class of '09—The liquidation of Roehm—Assassin at bay—The mad hatter's lunch party—The Flying Dutchman.

IF HITLER did not want to tell you anything, wild horses would not drag it out of him. During the spring I tried several times to find out what his intentions were concerning the proposed trip to Italy, but he always found some airy circumlocution. I did not even know whether he had written a letter of thanks for the photograph. Not only was there no sign of any decrease in the hostility and suspicion in Germany's European neighbours, but there was a general, indefinable rise in the internal temperature. The jealousies and conflicts between the Party leaders grew more acrid and seemed to polarize round Roehm and Goebbels on the one hand, with their constant demands for greater rewards for the old Party fighters and S.A., and Goering and, to a certain extent, Himmler on the other, who represented the group more satisfied with their share of the spoils.

I was sitting in my office one afternoon when Otto Dietrich came on the line: "Hanfstaengl, you must come over to the Kaiserhof at once. There is no one to have tea with 'him'. Everyone else is away somewhere and I simply cannot make it." I groaned. It seemed that I had sunk to the position of Reichs stop-gap. I found Hitler sitting in his favourite palm court corner, not far from the pseudo-Hungarian orchestra. I assumed he wanted to be entertained, so we sat and talked about Wagner and Ludwig II, Strauss waltzes and what a pity it was he had never learned to dance, while Hitler beat time to some of the melodies. The lounge had in the meantime filled up. Word that Hitler was in the hotel always got around quickly and I believe more than one waiter even earned extra tips for spreading the news by telephone.

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A MURDERER'S WELCOME

241

I cannot say that the public was of the best class. There would be a few provincial visitors, who doubtless carried a highly coloured tale home with them, but most of the clientele seemed to consist of overdressed women, not entirely *demi-monde* and not entirely respectable, either, who flounced in with furs and just that too much French perfume. You did not see any of the women, often of quite good family, who had identified themselves, from idealistic motives, with the Hitler movement during the last couple of years before it came to power. The Kaiserhof parade was made up of that fickle and feckless strata of society which always finds it convenient to associate itself with success. I thought back on his propaganda catch-words about the spartan life and how the true German woman was the home body who did not smoke, drink, or use cosmetics. The reality had proved otherwise. Hitler looked up at these women as they walked by with eyes that would have been lecherous if there had been any capacity to back them up.

"*Die blonde Front* is well represented today," I remarked rather sourly. The place looked like a metropolitan version of the Venusberg. Hitler snapped back into his tragic Tannhäuser role: "*Mein lieber Hanfstaengl*, I have ceased to have a private life," he said. More is the pity, I thought. There was certainly no evidence that his tastes had become any less bizarre. It was around this time, or maybe somewhat later, that Party intimates were beginning to talk about two little ballet-girls, introduced by the egregious Goebbels, who from time to time were let out of a back gate of the *Reichskanzlei* in the early hours of the morning. They were sisters and always together, and the stories concerning them certainly did not indicate that Hitler was becoming normal, quite the contrary. Later, about the time I escaped, he developed a taste for watching the female cabaret artistes and acrobats at the Scala music-hall, and the less clothing they wore the better Hitler was pleased. I met one of them during my exile in London, of whom the best description would be that she was an experienced cynic: "You know, your Mr. Hitler is just an old *voyeur*," she said with a grimace.

My remark seemed to have brought him back to his public personality again. It seemed a good opportunity to bring up the subject of Venice. I could get little response. "I don't see how anything can

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come out of the idea, Hanfstaengl. I have too much to do here and cannot possibly get away. The way things are building up. . ." He broke off in mid-sentence. What has he got on his mind, I wondered. He gave no further sign and started to turn absent-mindedly the pages of one of the illustrated papers. I decided to broach another problem of my own: "If that is the case, Herr Hitler," I said, "you will not be needing me here. Have you any objection to my taking a short trip to the United States?" Hitler looked at me suspiciously: "What do you want to do there? Sell that film of yours?" "No," I answered, "this year is the twenty-fifth reunion of my Harvard class and it is more or less a point of honour to attend. It would be a good opportunity to talk to old friends; some of them are very influential by now. I may even see President Roosevelt." Hitler put on his mock sleepy act, rubbing his eyes with his knuckles: "Well, yes, as far as I am concerned. I have no objection." No messages, no instructions, nothing but a feigned disinterestedness.

My acceptance of the invitation leaked to the press in the States, and many of the newspapers conducted something of a campaign against my visit. I was sitting at home in Munich practising a Chopin *étude* which has always eluded me, when our dyed-in-the-wool Bavarian cook knocked on the door of the studio and announced: "*Herr Dokta, Botsdam* is on the line." I was cross at being interrupted, the more so because I suspected the call was not even for me. We had had Prince Auwi staying with us for a few days and he had only just left, so I assumed that this was one of his contacts a bit behind the times. Instead, a female voice said through a cloud of atmospherics: "This is Boston. Is that Dr. Hanfstaengl?" She put me on to Elliott Cutler, our class president, who had very kindly rung me up to warn me about the press campaign. When I said that it would probably be better if I did not come after all, he would not hear of it, but suggested that it would be better if I came in a purely private capacity without too much fuss.

To camouflage my departure I held a garden-party at my Pariser Platz house in Berlin the day before I left. Everyone who was anyone in the capital was there, with the exception of Hitler, Goering and Goebbels, although the wives of the last two put in a formal appearance. The big Nazi trio cried off rather ostentatiously, with Hitler

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people I knew, including even Count Helldorf, the Berlin chief of police, which proved to be an error. "Not here—later—outside," I managed to mutter, and then almost felt my knees give way. The orchids, rhododendrons and roses swam before my eyes. I dimly heard the priest saying, "Will you, John Jacob Astor. . . Will you, Ellen Tuck French. . ." and the dull boom of the organ.

I racked my brains. For years my contact with Roehm had been minimum and formal, although he was always polite and even friendly and had seemed to regard me as a possible channel into the *Reichskanzlei*. He had even tried to persuade me that the accusations against him of homosexuality were invented by his enemies, although he must have been pretty desperate to try and bluff me. I had sensed the rising tension within the Party, knew of the aversion of Reichenau and the Army to the S.A. and was aware that Roehm and his brownshirts felt that they had been baulked of what they considered a fair share of the spoils of power. At the Nuremberg Party rally in the autumn of 1933 there had been a tremendous row between Streicher and Roehm when the latter refused to carry out Streicher's arrangements for the ceremony. "No one is going to dictate to the S.A.," Roehm had ranted, and had then drawn up separate plans of his own for the march past.

The night before I left for the States I had received an invitation to a social evening and cabaret show at his S.A. headquarters in Berlin's Standartenstrasse. I thought I would put in a brief appearance and arrived in the foyer very late to find the entertainment well under way. My intention was to excuse myself and disappear, so I sent word in to Roehm and waited. I stood looking at the opulent *décor*, Gobelin tapestries, valuable paintings, superb crystal mirrors, thick pile carpets and gleaming antique furniture. It looked like a millionaire's brothel. From the big hall inside came the clink of glasses and a roar of applause and conversation, with an unpleasant overtone of falsetto screeching.

The main door flew open and Roehm lurched out, his plump cheeks shining, a fat cigar in one hand and obviously drunk. Barely greeting me, he immediately launched into the most extraordinary tirade I have ever heard, cursing, shouting, threatening, and, as far as I could make out in the flood of words, concentrating his fury on

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Hamp. 1934

A MURDERER'S WELCOME

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General von Reichenau: "Tell that friend of yours that he is a swine" was more or less the tenor of his remarks. "He has got Hitler on his side and does nothing but threaten me and the S.A." "Perhaps he is afraid of the effect of so many S.A. demonstrations on international and particularly French public opinion," I tried to interject. This brought another outburst. "But what does that matter? It is time the French learnt their place," he shouted. He was raving like a maniac. "For God's sake, Roehm, watch what you are saying," I implored, and in the end managed to extricate myself and take my leave. I could make neither head nor tail of what he had been saying and wondered what dark game was going on behind the scenes.

Now Roehm was dead. I managed to get rid of my newspaper acquaintance and his colleagues in some way by declaring in all honesty that I had not the faintest idea what had happened. The reports of an intended uprising made no sense at all, and made even less when further names were added: Schleicher, Strasser, Bose in Papen's office. The thing did not add up at all. I wondered for a moment whether I should return, but my family was still there, so I sent a guarded message to Neurath through the German Consul-General in New York and he indicated in reply that I should come back at all costs. The sailing dates so coincided that I found myself on board the *Europa* again.

In the English Channel we heard on the wireless Hitler's apology before the *Reichstag* for the action he had taken. As probably the only man on board with real inner knowledge I was totally non-plussed and more angry than ever. The most extraordinary aspect was Hitler's claim to have been surprised and disgusted by the evidence of Roehm's homosexuality. This I knew to be a flat lie. As far back as the summer of 1932, in the middle of the *Reichstag* election campaign, a journalist named Bell, who had ingratiated himself with Roehm, had produced very precise details of the life the S.A. chief was leading, which had been splashed all over the opposition papers. I remember Hitler sitting on a folding chair in some beer-garden or other looking stonily at these reports and biting his small finger-nail, the sure sign of an impending storm.

We had all gone on to the Brown House, where Roehm was waiting, and the two of them disappeared into Hitler's office. The row

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Harp. 1934

A MURDERER'S WELCOME

249

said the only too well-known voice, and there was the little cripple in flannels, for all the world like a rich paterfamilias greeting an old family friend. I must see Hitler, I thought, or I shall go mad.

"If you can come up now, Herr Doktor, the Führer can see you," the manager said on my return to the hotel. It was not a private interview. As usual, we were interrupted by the continuous to-and-fro of his ubiquitous immediate entourage. But for our greeting we were alone. He was sitting by the window, turning over mechanically the sheets of the daily press report that Goebbels now prepared for him. He looked up at me with a hostile glance and said—psychologists please note: "*Da sind Sie ja, Mister Hanfstaengl! Hat man Sie denn noch nicht totgeschlagen?*"—"So there you are. Haven't they done you in yet?" He pronounced my name in the High German fashion, with 's' like an English 's'. This was always a storm signal. If he used the normal German 'sh' sound I knew that things were more or less normal.

I really think I got black spots before the eyes. There was the 'Mister', too, a deliberately offensive reference to my Anglo-Saxon outlook. It was one of those moments when the impressions of a lifetime flash across one's inner mind like a speeded-up film. I suddenly saw a picture of his untidy little flat in the Thierschstrasse and the haggard-looking orator of genius who stood there in the hall, hungry for the beauties and success of life. The long years in between dissolved again into the livid face in front of me. I realized it was the contorted face of a murderer defiantly at bay, a pathological murderer who had tasted blood and acquired an appetite for more. Through the window came the vague and familiar sounds of a seaside resort. I pulled myself together with a shudder. What does one answer in such circumstances? I decided to put on a bold front.

"No, Herr Hitler, the Communists in New York did not get me after all," I answered, handing him over a bunch of press photographs and news clippings. Hitler seemed to take a moment to readjust himself. "Oh, that," he said. "I cannot believe that was so dangerous. We did away with that sort of demonstration in Germany some time ago." He flipped idly through the pictures and stopped at the one showing me with the Jewish judge at Harvard:

Hamp. 1934 D.T.

250

HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

"Nice friends you have," he commented. "What sort of propaganda is that for the Party when the foreign press chief fraternizes with a Jew?" I tried to explain that the Jewish population in America was very large and that they were respected members of the community, but he cut me off short.

There was a moment's pause. "Hanfshtaengl [that started to sound a little better], you ought to have been there." What was he trying to say? He had used the more familiar pronunciation of my name, but what was he getting at? That I should have been on the June 30 list? "Have been where . . ." I stammered. "In Venice, of course. Mussolini would have been pleased to see you again." His bad conscience has caused him to improvise a crass lie, although the old catch-phrase made it clear that the meeting had been a failure. "Well, that was hardly my fault," I answered heatedly. "I kept in touch with you about it right up until the moment I left. . . ." "I know, I know," he said, "but it was all arranged in a hurry at the last moment and by that time you had gone." Who on earth is he trying to fool, I thought.

It was quite clear he was not going to allow me to bring up the matter most on my mind. The door started to open and shut, his people came in and out, and soon we all moved in a body down to the dining-room. It was really like something out of Lewis Carroll, a mad hatter's luncheon party. With the whole of Germany groaning under this atmosphere of murder, fear and suspicion, there was Magda Goebbels doing the honours in an airy summer dress, with several other young women at the table, even one or two from the aristocratic families for whom Heiligendamm had always been the summer resort.

Hitler had undergone a sea-change. He was the jovial, light-hearted charmer, the man of affairs relaxing away from the cares of the world. I was still shaken to the roots by the greeting I had received and responded but dully to his chatter about 'here is our Hanfsstaengl again', as if the years had rolled back and I was still the personal friend who had opened for him the doors to the world of art and society. I looked round at the other guests in the room and thought how they would be writing home: "Our table was quite near the Chancellor's. His guests were always in high spirits and all

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this talk about a crisis in the Party must be complete nonsense. Even Dr. Goebbels is enjoying himself and is out on the beach every day with his wife and children."

Goebbels sat across the table from me, and when someone brought up the subject of my trip to the States he was ready: "Yes, Hanfstaengl. You must tell us how bravely you avoided that Communist demonstration on the pier," he said with his mock gay laugh. I knew it, I said to myself; he has been at Hitler about this. I was in no mood for trifling. "Herr Doktor," I said, "how do you imagine I was to get through that mob alone? In any case, I was a guest in the country and had to conform to the security precautions the authorities had arranged for me." He was not to be put off so easily: "Well, no one can say that your arrival in the Jerusalem of the New World caused a very heroic impression," he went on. "You seem to have forgotten what great care you took during all the election campaigns to drive through back streets and avoid the Communists," I retorted tartly. Someone smoothed over the imminent quarrel. In any case, I was only wasting my breath. By now I was firmly classified as expendable, an unwelcome conscience against whom Hitler's mind was to be systematically poisoned. I learned that after the lunch he had returned to the subject with Hitler and described my arrival in New York as showing a lack of Party spirit and courage in front of the enemy. He even suggested that I should have accepted the challenge and tried to fight my way through. Hitler had just shrugged his shoulders. Such were the conceptions of international relations with which the Nazi leadership sought to impose themselves on the world.

During the afternoon I wandered round disconsolately. Clearly I had reached the point of no return. My last illusions were shattered. Instead of regenerating Germany, we had brought to power a bunch of dangerous gangsters who could now only survive by maintaining the momentum of their ceaseless radical agitation. What on earth were people like me to do? I was a German. My family and my whole thread of life was bound up in its future fate. Did the solution lie in exile or must I still stick with this thing and see if there was any way of applying the brakes? At this time the worst of Hitler's Germany still lay in the future: the concentration camps in

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CHAPTER XIV

THE LAST CHORD

Aftermath of a purge—What happened at Wiessee—Austrian misadventure—Short shrift at Neudeck—A wheel comes full circle—Funeral March farewell—Analysis of a medium—The prophet and the caliph—The militant revivalist—Pinchbeck Pericles—The tragedy of an orator.

THE NEXT morning, when I got up early, the storm had cleared and I wandered down to the beach for a breath of air before driving to catch the train. On the boat pier about a hundred yards from the hotel I found Princess Viktoria Luise of Brunswick, the daughter of the Kaiser and sister of Auwi. "Your Highness, I must talk to you," I said. So we walked to the end of the pier and sat there for nearly half an hour, while I told her of my complete disillusionment and my conviction that the only thing left was for people of our conservative temperament to dissociate ourselves from this bunch of assassins.

She by no means shared my preoccupations: "Things will calm down again," she answered. "This is probably a turn for the better. At least we have avoided civil war and got rid of those dangerous brownshirts." That, of course, is why Hitler got away with what he had done. A great many people came to believe his explanation that civil war had been avoided. The Army and Right-Wing elements were prepared to overlook the defiance of law and the peripheral deaths of Schleicher and other non-Nazis because the bulk of the victims had come from the feared and radical S.A.

The same atmosphere greeted me on my return to Berlin. 'It was high time—a house-cleaning was necessary—the whole S.A. leadership was corrupt' were the sort of remarks I heard, and not only from Nazis. I was convinced the régime would never recover the prestige and international standing it had lost through its complete disregard of legal processes, whatever the crimes ascribed to the

victims. I fully intended to write Schacht, Neurath and continue to voice reasons. The movement ran. The way if you have jumped a decisive touch who had much because he was a over his Ministry is no good, Hans! "Now this is over"

I made a attempt to compile a proper balance between those for and those who revenge. I pestered Körner, Goering to all the old Party shrugs or braze ashamed of what in the Chancellery even suggesting been lucky to escape

I even attempted to found ourselves Embassy and I the end of the said, "this matter referred to in order do you not get would then have what is true and give me any insight something of the German Government in fact, implicated

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254

D.T. Now is the time to get Schleicher

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THE LAST CHORD

255

victims. I fully intended to resign my post, but was implored by Schacht, Neurath, his State Secretary Bülow and others, to remain and continue to try to use my position near Hitler as one of the voices of reason. Politics is very much like a sailing-race, their argument ran. The wind can change from one moment to the next and if you have jumped out of the boat, you are no longer there to give a decisive touch to the helm. Even Gürtner, the Minister of Justice, who had much to answer for in his attitude, hung on to office because he was afraid that if he left, one of the wild men would take over his Ministry and the whole judicial system would collapse. "It is no good, Hanfstaengl, we have got to be patient," he said to me. "Now this is over we must just try to put the pieces together again."

I made a thorough nuisance of myself everywhere, trying to compile a proper list of the victims in an attempt to classify them between those for whose death there had been some sort of authority and those who had just been murdered out of personal spite or revenge. I pestered the other people in Hess's liaison office, talked to Körner, Goering's State Secretary, and tried to put my point over to all the old Party members I knew. All I got was disinterested shrugs or brazen effrontery. The survivors were not in the least ashamed of what had been done. I heard Amann boasting at table in the Chancellery: "Well, we cleaned that lot up all right," and even suggesting that Hühnlein, head of the Nazi motor corps, had been lucky to escape as he did. That was the atmosphere.

I even attempted to enlist the assistance of François-Poncet. We found ourselves at lunch together with Sir Eric Phipps at the British Embassy and I accompanied him on his afternoon constitutional to the end of the Unter den Linden and back. "Your Excellency," I said, "this matter has got to be cleared up. You are quite obviously referred to in connexion with Roehm in Hitler's radio speech. Why do you not get your Government to demand an explanation? Hitler would then have to put his cards on the table and we would know what is true and what isn't." He was far too old and wise a hand to give me any immediate encouragement, but he must have done something of the sort, although the only result was a statement by the German Government that investigation had shown he was not, in fact, implicated.

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I had several talks with von Reichenau and his *Reichswehr* colleagues, under the impression that the death of Schleicher would produce on their part a demand for a full inquiry. But even they were prepared to be put off, or put me off, by assurances that all illegal acts during the purge would be brought before the courts. We waited for weeks and months and, of course, nothing ever materialized. I thought Helldorf might be a possible ally and pulled him into my office once out of the corridor to ask what he knew. I told him how in America I had read in the first reports that he was one of the victims. Helldorf was a good friend of mine and one of the more reasonable Party people, as his tragic rôle ten years later in the July 20 plot was to prove. At this earlier juncture he preferred discretion, and a warning, "Let me give you some advice, Hanfstaengl," he said. "Stop being so confoundedly inquisitive. People are beginning to resent it. I will tell you something more. I saw one of those lists they drew up. Your name was on it!"

As I recall, I only saw Hitler once in Berlin during July. He had gone straight from Heiligendamm to Berchtesgaden and was keeping well away from the capital until some of the dust had settled. He slipped in one evening and I managed to catch him the next day after lunch. "Well, Hanfstaengl," he said with a sort of mock joviality, "all this uproar in the foreign press seems to be dying down a bit." "That may be so," I replied, "but I can tell you that their correspondents are still in my hair day and night. Unless you let me give them the true facts and proper justification for all that has happened, the outcry will go on. You must not forget that many of them have been here for a long time. They knew many of the people involved and will continue to draw their own conclusions."

"I ought to send the whole bunch of them packing," Hitler exploded. "They have plenty of dung-heaps to rake over in their own countries and have to turn every mole-hill in Germany into a mountain. They are nothing but a danger to us." I was not going to let him off so lightly and returned to the attack: What was the truth about Roehm's foreign connexions? Who was the ambassador to whom he had referred? In the end he lost his temper. "*Die Akten über den Fall Roehm, mein lieber Hanfstaengl, sind längst geschlossen*"—"The files on the Roehm affair have long been

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Hanf. 1934

THE LAST CHORD

257

closed," he shouted, and apart from vague accusations that Roehm and Strasser had been plotting with Schleicher and the Austrian Prince Starhemberg, that was all I ever got out of him.

* * *

There is still, twenty-odd years later, so much conjecture concerning the background to and details of the Roehm purge that a firsthand version I heard quite recently may not be without interest. As far as I know practically no documentary evidence has survived, but my account comes from Dr. Emil Ketterer, who was a *Gruppenführer* in charge of the S.A. medical services and Roehm's personal physician at the time. He had been a close associate since the Ludendorff Putsch days, when he had been a member of the *Reichskriegsflagge*.

During the period preceding his death Roehm was receiving treatment for a severe form of neuralgia from which he was suffering. This consisted of a course of injections and on the evening of June 29, 1934, Ketterer arrived at the Pension Hanslbauer in Wiessee, where Roehm was staying, to give him the last injection of the series. Ketterer, Roehm and S.S. *Gruppenführer* Bergmann had dinner together and then settled down until about 11 o'clock at night to play Tarok, the Bavarian three-handed card game. Roehm then went to bed, was given his injection and Ketterer was about to return to Munich when Bergmann suggested that he should stay the night.

There was, as Ketterer recalls, to be a meeting of S.A. leaders the following day, to be attended by Hitler, at which Roehm was to give an address on the subject of turning the brownshirt formations into a militia as a *Reichswehr* reserve. This plan had already been discussed at a previous meeting of the S.A. leaders in February 1934 at Friedrichsroda in Thuringia. However, at a conference shortly thereafter in the Propaganda Ministry with Goebbels and Roehm, Hitler had turned it down. He gave as his reason the undisputed right of the *Reichswehr* to organize the coming expansion in the German armed forces, and their military authority to do so was to remain unimpaired.

1934 Hamp.

Roehm had been greatly incensed, had refused to drop the idea and told his brownshirt leaders that if Hitler refused to accept even a modified form he would resign his post and emigrate to Bolivia again. The plan was one which he had discussed with Hitler in outline over a number of years and he attributed Hitler's unexpected opposition to the influence of Blomberg, Reichenau and the *Reichswehr* officers. The meeting planned for June 30 was designed as an attempt to oblige Hitler to change his mind under the combined influence of all the senior members of the S.A. If this had failed, and Roehm had resigned, the bulk of them, led by *Gruppenführer* Willy Schmidt, who had formerly been the chief of the personnel division, were prepared to resort to force and obtain their demands by means of a second Putsch. They wanted the S.A. to be divorced from the Party and, with their formidable strength in the country, could probably have carried the day, forcing Hitler's resignation if necessary. How far the action was intended to be imminent is, of course, not clear, but both Roehm's state of health and his declared intention to resign hardly suggest that he was preparing an immediate coup.

Ketterer was found a bed in the adjutants' room on the first floor, but he remained in the lounge until about one o'clock in the morning. Half an hour earlier *Obergruppenführer* Heines arrived from Breslau and wanted to see Roehm, but Ketterer prevented him by saying that he should be allowed to sleep off his injection. Ketterer also flatly contradicts the stories that the Hanslbauer was the scene that night of a homosexual orgy. Count Spreti, who was Roehm's acknowledged boy friend was staying in the *pension*, but apart from Heines, Bergmann and the two adjutants and two drivers, there was no one else in the place.

About five o'clock in the morning, Ketterer was awakened by general shouting and uproar and shortly afterwards found two civilians by his bed whom he describes as plain-clothes detectives. A little later S.S. *Standartenführer* Höflich, the adjutant of Gauleiter Wagner of Bavaria, an opponent of Roehm, came in to tell the two detectives that they could leave, as, by the order of Hitler, Ketterer was not to be arrested. He got up, put on his uniform, went down the stairs in some agitation and at the bottom saw Hitler and Lutze,

who succeeded Roehm in speaking to Hitler and telling him that Roehm was vigorous, and that he never saw his part

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Our first reception at Neudeck, the President's estate, in the last days of July, was chilling. Only Hitler and Brückner, as his adjutant, were invited into the house and I can remember Otto Dietrich and myself sitting on a bench near the outbuildings without the slightest suggestion of hospitality being offered to us or indeed to anyone else. This, on an East Prussian estate with a feudal tradition of at least formal welcome and refreshment to travellers and visitors, was an indication of the mood in the President's entourage. Hitler was tight-lipped and uninformative as he came out and gave no hint later of

My next project concerning the press, Hindenburg before Hitler, (Chancellor, 1933) until the document suggesting that the care what that to satisfy then photographed and I can get work." Hitler's Mister Hanfstaengl was doing nothing wrong. Goebbels and the cellery, the sul had the feeli

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HITLER—THE MISSING YEARS

nation. No single aspect of his temperament was so firmly developed that it was possible in the long run to use it as a channel to influence his mind. He could sprawl for hours like a crocodile dozing in the Nile mud or a spider immobile in the centre of its web. He would chew his nails, look boredly into space and sometimes whistle. As soon as some person of interest—and there was no one he did not find interesting for a time—joined his company, you could almost see him mobilizing his internal machinery. The asdic pings of inquiry would go out and within a short time he had a clear image of the wavelength and secret yearnings and emotions of his partner. The pendulum of conversation would start to beat faster, and the person would be hypnotized into believing that there lay in Hitler immense depths of sympathy and understanding. He had the most formidable powers of persuasion of any man or woman I have ever met, and it was almost impossible to avoid being enveloped by him.

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It is popularly supposed that Hitler addressed everyone as if they were a mass meeting. This is only partly true. It is predominantly true of the period after 1932, when he started to use a microphone for his speeches. He became drunk with the metallic boom of his own voice, which of course was not his own voice. The loud-speaker amplifies the human organ of speech, but it completely denaturalizes it into the tones of a bull-frog. Then, when he came to power, the final deification of the Führer cult fed his paranoia to the point where he was incapable of carrying on a conversation as between equals. None of this was true of his early years, when he still retained the capacity to harness people as individuals and awaken in them the conviction that he was appealing to their best instincts.

Even so his power was the power of speech. He thought that if you talked long enough and vehemently enough, repeated your arguments a dozen times in a dozen forms, there was no obstacle, human or technical, which could not be overcome. The Nazi movement was a movement of orators, except for essential administrators like Himmler and Bormann, and people were useful to Hitler in direct proportion to their ability to move a mass audience to hysteria. No one without this gift ever played more than a secondary part in his régime. He thought the whole world was a slightly larger Hofbräuhaus or Sportpalast and could in the end be moved by the same

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Back in 1923, when I probably stood at my nearest to Hitler, he once outlined the appeal he was trying to make, the appeal which brought him to power, only for the ideals to be corrupted by the power which destroyed him: "When I talk to people," he said, "especially those who are not yet Party members, or who are about to break away again for some reason or other, I always talk as if the fate of the nation was bound up in their decision. That they are in a position to give an example for the many to follow. Certainly it means appealing to their vanity and ambition, but once I have got them to that point, the rest is easy.

"Every individual, whether rich or poor, has in his inner being a feeling of unfulfilment. Life is full of depressing disappointments, which people cannot master. Slumbering somewhere is the readiness to risk some final sacrifice, some adventure, in order to give a new shape to their lives. They will spend their last money on a lottery ticket. It is my business to canalize that urge for political purposes. In essence, every political movement is based on the desire of its supporters, men or women, to better things not only for themselves but for their children and others. It is not only a question of money. Of course every working man wants to raise his standard of living, and the Marxists have cashed in on this, without being able to proceed beyond a given point. In addition, the Germans have a feeling for history. Millions of their countrymen died in the war, and when I appeal for an equal sense of sacrifice, the first spark is struck. The humbler people are, the greater the craving to identify themselves with a cause bigger than themselves, and if I can persuade them that the fate of the German nation is at stake, then they will become part of an irresistible movement, embracing all classes. Give

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Handp. 1923 1933

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Handls. 1923 : 1933

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The contrast between the Hitler of the early 'twenties and the Hitler in power was that between a prophet and a priest, between Mohammed and a Caliph. In his early years he was the articulate unknown soldier who spoke for the millions of his dead comrades and tried to revive the nation for which they had fought. There was a revivalist quality about his movement; I write revivalist, because it might be blasphemous to say religious, but anyone who studies the organization of his movement will find many parallels to the Catholic Church militant. The Nazi hierarchy was organized after the fashion of Ignatius de Loyola—in which one can see again the influence of Goebbels, who had been educated by the Jesuits. Blind obedience to one's superior was the tenet of both organizations and, with the magnetism and fanaticism of Hitler at the centre, a direct comparison led through Goebbels, as general of the order, to the provincial Gauleiters who provided the next link in the chain.

To this must be added the incredible powers as an orator which gave Hitler his initial control over the masses. He knew that in a drawing-room or in ordinary society he was a relatively insignificant figure. The cross that he had to bear in life was that he was not a normal man. His fundamental shyness when confronted by individuals, particularly women, to whom he knew he had nothing to offer, was compensated by this titanic urge to win the approval of the masses, who were the substitute for the female partner he never found. His reaction to an audience was the counterpart of sexual excitement. He became suffused like a cock's comb or the wattles of a turkey, and it was only in this condition that he became formidable and irresistible. When he came to power he thought the same approach would dominate a country, and for many years it did, only for the edifice to collapse because the outside world was not subject to the same spell. He found relaxation only in the atmosphere which corresponded to his own psyche, in the erotic crescendos of Wagner's

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them a national and social ideal, and their daily worries will to a large extent disappear. It was Count Moltke who said that one must demand the impossible in order to achieve the possible. Any ideal must appear to a certain extent unrealizable, if it is not to be profaned by the trivia of reality."

The contrast between the Hitler of the early 'twenties and the Hitler in power was that between a prophet and a priest, between Mohammed and a Caliph. In his early years he was the articulate unknown soldier who spoke for the millions of his dead comrades and tried to revive the nation for which they had fought. There was a revivalist quality about his movement; I write revivalist, because it might be blasphemous to say religious, but anyone who studies the organization of his movement will find many parallels to the Catholic Church militant. The Nazi hierarchy was organized after the fashion of Ignatius de Loyola—in which one can see again the influence of Goebbels, who had been educated by the Jesuits. Blind obedience to one's superior was the tenet of both organizations and, with the magnetism and fanaticism of Hitler at the centre, a direct comparison led through Goebbels, as general of the order, to the provincial Gauleiters who provided the next link in the chain.

To this must be added the incredible powers as an orator which gave Hitler his initial control over the masses. He knew that in a drawing-room or in ordinary society he was a relatively insignificant figure. The cross that he had to bear in life was that he was not a normal man. His fundamental shyness when confronted by individuals, particularly women, to whom he knew he had nothing to offer, was compensated by this titanic urge to win the approval of the masses, who were the substitute for the female partner he never found. His reaction to an audience was the counterpart of sexual excitement. He became suffused like a cock's comb or the wattles of a turkey, and it was only in this condition that he became formidable and irresistible. When he came to power he thought the same approach would dominate a country, and for many years it did, only for the edifice to collapse because the outside world was not subject to the same spell. He found relaxation only in the atmosphere which corresponded to his own psyche, in the erotic crescendos of Wagner's

music. He could in what he could do nothing, a neuter.

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music. He could immerse himself in this torrent of sound and become what he could allow himself to be in no other circumstances — nothing, a neuter.

People often ask if Hitler was nothing but a demagogue. I have tried to show how much more there was to him than that, but he did possess to a remarkable degree the gift of all great demagogues, that of reducing complicated issues to fiery catch-phrases. He was a great admirer of British propaganda methods in the war, which the Germans with their long statements signed by fifty professors had never remotely matched. The danger of course lay in the fact that in the end he did not realize he was indulging in over-simplification. The shades of grey in an argument or situation naturally seeped into him, but what came out was always jet black or pure white. To him there was only ever one side of a question. Rosenberg, his most dangerous mentor, had developed the dilettantist theory of the superiority of the Nordic race to the point of caricature. Nevertheless, its directness appealed to Hitler and he swallowed it whole. My fight with him over the years was basically an attempt to prove that things were not simple but complicated. I used one simile, when I first started playing the piano for him, that it would be hopeless to try and play his beloved *Liebestod* using only the white keys. He looked at me half-amused and half-disconcerted, but the phrase stuck, and I used it from time to time over the years, when my advice became less and less welcome.

Hitler was not so much a distiller as a bar-tender of genius. He took all the ingredients the German people offered him and mixed them through his private alchemy into a cocktail they wanted to drink. If I can mix my metaphors he was a tight-rope walker as well, maintaining until he had beaten down all possible sources of opposition, a precarious balance between their conflicting demands. His so-called intuition was nothing but a camouflage for awkward decisions which might offend one or the other faction. His greatest strength lay in his one-track mind. A lot of us could become famous or illustrious or powerful if we only did what Hitler did. On Tuesday he did what he had made up his mind to do on Monday, and the same on Wednesday, all through the week and through the months and years. He got there, with all the mistakes and drawbacks such

an attitude embodies. The rest of us form a resolution over the weekend, wake up on Monday undecided, next day change our mind again and more or less undo what we did yesterday by a little inconsistency tomorrow or the day afterwards. Hitler kept to his course like a skyrocket, and got there.

It may be a source of astonishment, but Hitler's secret idol was Pericles. One of Hitler's many frustrations was his failure to become an architect, and the great Greek architect-politician was a sort of adolescent hero to him. I knew most of the books Hitler had read in his early days and one of them was a hundred-year-old tome called *Historische Charakterbilder* by A. W. Grube. It used to lie in the jumble of his Thierschstrasse flat, and he knew many of the details of this potted history by heart. To Hitler the council of the elders on the Areopagus hill, which Pericles had stormed, represented the corrupt bourgeois forces the Nazis had sworn to liquidate. In his blind devotion to symbols, Hitler could not even see that the parallels became pathetic. I suppose Anaxagoras, Pericles' mentor, was funny little Professor Poetsch, who had given Hitler instruction in Linz. If Phidias was Heinrich Hoffmann, then Zeno, the dialectician, was presumably Rosenberg. And there of course you ran out of names, for Hitler the Pinchbeck Pericles had no Aspasia.

Because Pericles carried thunder on his tongue, and the goddess of persuasion resided on his lips, Hitler thought words were all that Pericles had ever used and saw in himself the reincarnation of the rebellious agitator-soldier. But in his case the tragedy of an orator became the tragedy of his hearers.

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WILDERNESS AND FLIGHT

273

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The campaign to neutralize me was not without its ludicrous aspects. I had gone down to Nuremberg for the 1935 Party rally and tried to get the foreign press away from the prevailing atmosphere by holding a reception for them at the Germanisches Museum. I had put together a speech with which I was rather pleased. After all, it was my own subject. "Gentlemen," I said, "I am delighted to greet you in the city of that great painter Albrecht Dürer. . . ." What happened by the time Goebbels' ministry finished truncating its report? The passage read: "Dr. Hanfstaengl, the foreign press chief, yesterday welcomed journalists to the city of the Führer. . . ."

Out of sheer cussedness I renewed contact with some of the old Party stalwarts of the early years. Anton Drexler, disregarded and forgotten, was almost a cripple. His whole ambition was centred on a little invalid-car, which the grateful Party never saw fit to give him. He was in despair at the turn events had taken, but was wholly without influence. Hermann Esser had at last managed to find a sinecure as a Bavarian State minister, and I used to see him whenever I was in Munich. It was he who brought me up to date on the Eva Braun situation. She had gone to school with his second wife and they saw a lot of each other. It was clear that Eva was no more than a piece of domestic decoration in the dream world in which Hitler now lived. She could hardly leave Munich without Hitler's or Bormann's permission and one day appeared in tears at the Essers' to complain of her serf-like existence: "I am nothing but a prisoner," she blubbered, and then volunteered the telling information, "*Als Mann habe ich von ihm überhaupt nichts*" - "As it is I have nothing from him as a man."

Nevertheless, Hitler repaid her presence with his protection. She turned up unobtrusively at the Nuremberg Party rally in 1935 in a very expensive fur coat. Magda Goebbels, who thought she was the one woman to whom Hitler ought to pay attention, was ill-advised enough to make some disparaging remark, which aroused Hitler to a fury. Magda was forbidden to enter the Chancellery for months and went round imploring people to put in a good word for her, instigated doubtless by her husband, who could not bear to think of his hold over Hitler being diminished in any way. In the end she was received again, but there was always a rivalry between

Hans. 1936

the two women. One would not have to be a very good playwright to dramatize the emotions which led each of them to stay until the last in the besieged Führer-bunker as long as the other was there.

In 1936 I lost another early link with Hitler. My wife divorced me. Her distaste for Hitler and his followers had long preceded mine, although he continued to send her flowers on her birthday until she left Germany for the United States, where she spent the war years. Long absences and increasing incompatibility made our break inevitable.

My position in Berlin became more and more insecure. My staff at the office were being spied on and questioned about my general attitude to events. The Party organization challenged me to produce a genealogical tree to prove that with a grandfather named Heine I was not partly Jewish—yet another example of their purblind obsessions. Friends would try and warn me that my uninhibited comments were running me into trouble. I remember Martha Dodd telling me as early as 1934: "Putzi, your crowd doesn't trust you any more." A more direct warning now came from Rosalind von Schirach, Baldur's sister. She and her father were increasingly opposed to the brother's behaviour and she took her courage in both hands to come and see me. She recounted how Baldur had drunk a little too much at their home in Bavaria one evening and had told her to keep away from me as I was on the black list and would not be around very much longer. I began to see the writing on the wall and, at the suggestion of another friend, started to smuggle out gold and platinum objects to London to be ready for all eventualities.

I continued to intervene with Himmler when I could on behalf of individuals who had fallen foul of the Nazi system, and, at the instance of her American mother, managed to get a girl named von Pfister out of a concentration camp in Saxony, where she had been confined for making disparaging remarks about the régime. I railed against the turn of events to everyone who would listen, and one of my friends at the time, Edgar von Schmidt-Pauli, author of the book *Men Around Hitler*, testified for me in 1948 that it was more than anyone's life was worth to walk along the street with me and listen to my comments. It is a compliment I am happy to accept.

Everything I had believed in had been betrayed, but at least I was

Hans

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WILDERNESS AND FLIGHT

275

not alone. Frau Bechstein, a fellow-sponsor of Hitler a dozen years before, who had received from him a miserable bunch of flowers on her birthday, went up to him at a reception and called him 'a shabby sort of Chancellor' to his face. I take my hat off to her. I grew progressively more unguarded in my condemnation. At the beginning of 1937 I remember a party at the Swiss Legation in Berlin where I talked for a long time to General Joachim von Stülpnagel, who was at that time head of the Army personnel division and in 1939 became commander-in-chief of the reserve Army. Several members of his family were senior officers and among the most determined opponents of Hitler's military policies, although in the early days of power Goering had boasted of his friendship with them. We talked, probably with misguided frankness, about the gathering war-clouds. Hitler had marched into the Rhineland and the Spanish Civil War had broken out, with active German intervention on the side of Franco. "This can only lead to disaster," I said. "Only the *Reichswehr* can now step in and call a halt."

This sort of behaviour got bruited around, and the anti-Hanfstaengl mood in the Party hierarchy reached a dangerous pitch. During the year I had written the music and helped in the production of another film to be called *Volk ohne Raum*. I had been in London again at the end of 1935 and had seen Sir Robert Vansittart, the permanent head of the Foreign Office. The burden of my conversation with him had been that providing affairs in Germany showed signs of settling down the British Government would have no objection to discussing the problem of the former German colonies. It had seemed to me that if this possibility could be put over to my countrymen in a reasonable fashion it might divert their minds from more dangerous ventures and serve to relieve the internal tension.

The film was an attempt to achieve this, and the story was written by Hans Grimm, the poet. Some of the financial backing came from Schacht. I should have known better than to leave out of account the accumulated venom of the Minister of Propaganda. This time Goebbels banned the film without even seeing it and, in a final effort to discredit me, persuaded Hitler that I had drawn too large a sum in expenses during its making. The Hitler comment that was reported to me was that if I was allowed to earn too much money