

# FROM THE CRADLE TO THE CONCENTRATION CAMP

by C. K. Bliss.

On the 5th September, 1897, in a small peasant house on the outskirts of Czernowitz, the capital of the Bukowina, the Easternmost province of the old Austrian Empire, I made my first cry of displeasure of having been pushed out into a world of great misery. The first word I learned was the word which all babies learn in all languages. It is the word produced by the lips when munching (mamamamamam) the sweet milk that comes out of Mama's breasts. I learned much later that the Romans called the breasts mamae. Hence all animals who suckle their young are called mammals.

Laying in the cradle, I heard many words of various languages. The Bukowina is colonist territory. The Empress of Austria, Maria Theresia, acquired it from the Turks in 1775 and called for settlers from all parts of Europe. They came and brought their languages with them. As a baby in the cradle I heard my Mama and Papa speaking with the milkman in Ukrainian, with the grocer in Roumanian, with others in Polish, Russian and Yiddish. But the language of the authorities and of culture was German. And it was German I learned first and foremost as my mother's language, "meine Muttersprache". She read to me fairy tales and adventure stories in German and she taught me to read German long before I went to school in 1904.

Alas, going to school in winter was a bitter thing to do. Czernowitz is situated at the foothills of the Carpathian Alps, and therefore it is open to the vast Podolic plains of Eastern Russia (only 29 kilometers away). In winter the howling blizzards unloaded their snow which covered the town waist deep during the night. My parents were very poor and I was poorly clad. I shivered and froze, wading through the snow to unheated classrooms. I pitied the people who had to go out into the ice and snow to make a living. Indeed, all life around me seemed to turn upon one important matter: making a living. It was very hard, as most people were very poor. Many a night I woke up and heard Papa and Mama crying, because there was no money to feed their four children. Papa was an optician, a mechanic, an electrician, a wood turner, an umbrella maker and a jack of all trades, and often it was just not enough to still our hunger. The world seemed to me a "Jammertal" a valley of wails and woes - and often I wondered why I came into the world, and why we all come into the world for no other reason than to work hard from the cradle to the grave.

Then about 1908 a momentous event changed my life. The Austrian North Pole expedition of Payer and Wayprecht came home, having discovered Kaiser Franz Josefs Land, and having gone through a terrible winter in the Arctic. Payer came on a lecture tour to Czernowitz and Papa took me to see the lantern slides and hear of the ordeal in ice and snow. To me a new world opened up. I saw men who gave up the warmth of their homes, the security of their lives, and who went out into almost certain death in the pursuit of an ideal, the search for knowledge. To live, means more than just making a living. To live, means to devote one's life to the progress of humanity. I never forgot that lesson.

After this momentous event I read all the books I could get on polar expeditions. I realised that Scandinavians, and especially Norwegians were the foremost pioneers in this death defying struggle. Soon I knew almost all expeditions by heart. My hero was Fritjof Nansen, and I read his book "In Eis und Schnee" a number of times. His idea of drifting across the North Pole in his "Fram" captured my imagination. I was deeply moved when I read that Nansen,

having realised that the drift would not carry him across the Pole, left the warmth and security of his "Fram" and set out with Johansen to reach the Pole by foot. I followed in later life all adventures and all endeavours of Fritjof Nansen for humanity. 40 years later, the Japanese drove me and my wife and 16,000 refugees from Germany, Austria and the other countries into the segregation camp of Hongkew in Shanghai. Amazingly, one refugee was spared. He could remain in his workshop and in his home. I could not understand why the Japanese did not drive him out and I went to him and asked him "Are you not a refugee? Have you not a German passport?" "I am a refugee", he said, "but I have a Nansen Passport". And the Japanese authorities respected what Fritjof Nansen has done for the refugees of World War I.

My father taught me to love nature, and the laws of nature, chemistry and physics. My mother taught me to love literature. She read with me the "Freiheitsdramen" of Friedrich Schiller, and she took me to the theatre to see them all, notably "Wilhelm Tell". I could recite by heart many pages from this wonderful story of the fight of the Swiss people against oppression. In school, I learned of Goethe and the other German Dichter und Denker. But all the persons in those plays and stories were people of the past, and on the stage they looked like actors in operas. Their stories dealt with a murderous past of wars and warlords. They told me nothing of the murderous present, of the difficulties of our modern life. I learned about this from novels and dramas that were not read and not taught in our highschool. This was the time when Scandinavian writers were foremost in the minds of the teenagers who thought like me. I read the "Gesellschaftsdramen" by Henrik Ibsen, "Die Stuetzen der Gesellschaft", "Gespens-ter", "Baumeister Solness", "Nora", "Die Frau vom Meer", "Die Wildente", "Peer Gynt", and the others. Henrik Ibsen and later Knut Hamsun taught me more of life than all the "Klassiker" of the German past, and I am still indebted to them.

Then I came across a novel by Selma Lagerloef that taught me for the first time of the catastrophic influence of words. It carried the curious title "Der heilige Scarabeus". I learned that the scarabeus is a beetle which for the old Egyptians was a symbol of resurrection and immortality. I learned in the novel that the resurrection was the second coming of Christ. A religious fanatic had convinced the people of the valley of Dalarne in Sweden that the coming of Christ was near, and that they all should leave their homes and go to Jerusalem to await Christ's coming, and thus gain salvation. The people sold their homes and came to Jerusalem. And there they sat and prayed for days and weeks and months - but Christ did not come. But something else came - and I remember vividly to this very day that particular event in Selma Lagerloef's novel.

The hot and terrifying summer came to Jerusalem. The poor Swedish people were sitting in their meagre rooms, praying and going almost crazy for thirst in the oppressive heat. "What are you thinking?" asked one man another man. "I am thinking of the cool clear waters of Dalarne!" said the other man. At this, they all broke down and wept, and they realised that religious words of a fanatic have ruined their lives. They had not the money to go back, and many died in the foreign soil so far away from their beloved Sweden.

This book made a tremendous impression on me, and I believe it made me aware what words can do to people. I believe Selma Lagerloef's novel set me on my way to do something about words and their influence on human actions.

The cool clear waters of Dalarne reminded me of the cool clear waters of my homeland. The adventurous spirit that North Pole expeditions had awakened in me encouraged me to make small expeditions into the forests and mountains of my

homeland. Even today, being 71 years of age I like to hike with my brother Henry (66) through trackless valleys and mountains in the neighbourhood of Sydney. And it was the adventure spirit of the polar expeditions which made me venture forth into a no-man's land - a new idea to bridge all languages and to make people think and act better.

On my marches through my homeland I was accompanied by my brothers and a few friends. Marching through the colonial Bukowina was like marching across Europe. We would come into a village called Liechtenthal and the settlers were Germans from Schwaben, and their church and their houses, their clothes and their language was German. Another village was called Biela Kernitza (white well) and the villagers were Russians and wore long beards. Their houses and their church were in Russian style, and they talked only Russian. I learned that they call themselves Lippowans, and that they emigrated to Austria because they refused to go to war as Russian soldiers. The Austrian authorities respected their religious views and used them only in Red Cross units.

Another village, and another language and another nation. One village was called Bojan and the villagers were Ukrainians. Another was Hadikfalva and Hungarians in their colourful dresses were seen. There were Roumanians, Polish and other villages, even Jewish villages like Sadagora. My brother Isidor (now deceased) and I played the mandolin and Heinrich accompanied us on his guitar and we knew some of their national dances and folk songs. Their faces broke into a great smile and they danced and sang. I learned there that people of all nations and all cultures are basically friendly and kind - and that only words separate them. I never forgot that lesson.

Being a musician I liked very much classical music, but being also a lover of nature it was mainly Edvard Grieg's music which I felt came nearest to the spirit of the mountains and the forests I loved so much. I saw "Peer Gynt" many times, and I played the Grieg suite to "Peer Gynt", "Sonnenaufgang", "In der Halle des Bergkoenigs", "Anitra's Tanz", "Solveig's Lied", and other Grieg compositions.

But my overwhelming interest was science, and especially chemistry. I built a chemical laboratory in our small home. I was then 13 years of age, and was soon the best pupil in chemistry and physics. Naturally, the great chemists filled me with admiration. Notably Jöns Jacob Berzelius excited me wildly, because here I could see for the first time a "meaningful writing" (Greek semantography) that could be read and understood in all languages. Moreover, I realised that  $H_2O$  means water in all languages, and that the "word"  $H_2O$  is truer to nature than Wasser, water, eau, aqua, agua, voda, etc., because  $H_2O$  shows all the children the real composition of water, namely that it is composed of 2 parts Hydrogen and 1 part Oxygen.

Alas, the wonderful symbolism of Berzelius made me soon realise that other chemists, who were not filled with the spirit of an "international medium" for chemistry, discredited and even contradicted the work of Berzelius. For instance, Berzelius chose H to mean Hydrogen, and O to mean Oxygen. Naturally, English speaking chemists adopted these words and their corresponding letter symbols. But German chemists refused to do so. They pester their pupils and themselves by using the word Wasserstoff (though they don't write a W for it) and Sauerstoff though they write an O for it. In turn English speaking chemists did not accept Berzelius's word for Wolfram. Instead they say Tungsten, but write a W for it. They accepted Berzelius's N for Nitrogen, but the German chemists keep on speaking of Stickstoff. It was all very confusing for the students, and it still is.

But the worst confusion was created by thoughtless chemists when they discarded the idea of international endings for compound chemicals. For instance, the ending -d should stand for say chlorid -Cl, as in Natriumchlorid. But the English chemists write and pronounce Sodiumchloride. German chemists even speak of chlorige, as in "hydrochlorige Saeure". And French chemists speak and write of chlorique. It is a shame to see how endeavours for international meanings were turned into the contrary.

In 1914 war broke out. I felt I had to defend my "Vaterland" and went with my friend Paul to a recruiting office. When I said that I was only 16, the Sergeant Major told me "Geh heim zu Muttern Bub, du weisst nicht was Krieg ist!" I wanted to find out, and joined a Red Cross Field Ambulance. Within a few days I was on the battlefield of Bojan. It was horror upon horror to see the waxen faces of the dead, and to realise that innocent and peaceful human beings had killed each other. In 1915 I came of military age and joined the army. In my wanderings with my army unit I came to the Italian front and learned Italian, only to find that Italians too are peaceful people who don't want to harm anyone. In 1918 I witnessed the break-up of the Austrian army. German speaking units were sent out to subdue mutinying Czech units. Ukrainian soldiers threw away their arms. Hungarian soldiers went home. Resistance to the Allies ceased. In 1918 I came home alive.

My poor father had died in 1917. The horrors of war, when the Austrian and Russian armies fought for the town, and occupied and lost it three times, were too much for my father. He had wanted that his first-born son should become a chemical engineer, and so in 1919 my good mother sent me to Vienna where I studied and graduated with top marks from the Technische Hochschule there. I got a job as chemist with a Vienna firm making electrical and electronic equipment. I became one of the radio pioneers of Austria. I believed that radio will bring the nations together. Instead I came to realise later that the nationalistic and communistic hate propaganda reached now into all countries and made life worse.

I was a good chemist, and I made a number of useful inventions. But deep in my heart was the dream of making a great invention which should help humanity. By very hard work and devotion to my duty I rose to become an industrial executive and chief of the patent department of my firm. In this capacity I fought many a patent fight against Philips and Telefunken, especially in Berlin. I collected there the latest Hitler jokes and told them in Vienna to my laughing co-workers. Some of them were Nazis. Six days after Hitler overran Austria, the Gestapo arrested me and I wandered from one political prison into another until I landed in Dachau and later Buchenwald.

Nothing whatever has been said or written can really describe the horrors of these camps. I don't want to talk about it, and I try to forget. But sometimes I come into a small alley behind a restaurant in Sydney, and suddenly I get the stench of rotten food into my nose. And equally suddenly I feel I am back in Buchenwald and my whole body and brain is filled with one overwhelming desire: to end my sufferings and commit suicide. Death by such and other "natural causes" was 20 to 40 a day. I was a "Selbstmordkandidat" until I discovered an old mandolin in Dachau. Suddenly the other inmates crowded around me and listened to my music. Suddenly I felt that I can help others, and thus I can help myself. My good Claire smuggled my good musical instruments into the camp (it was forbidden to receive parcels), and with music I made friends with the Nazis. Thus I landed the job of "Blockschreiber". It meant life, because a most terrible winter came upon us.

The facts about my imprisonment in the Gestapo prisons in Vienna, Dachau and Buchenwald can be verified by the Austrian authorities (Amt der Wiener Landesregierung Magistrats Abteilung 12, Opferfuersorge und Hilfsfond) who paid me and other survivors a meagre compensation in later years. What I am telling in the coming paragraphs can be verified by others who survived Buchenwald during the time of 1938 - 1939, the "golden days of concentration camps" when the idea of "mass exterminations" had not dawned yet in the minds of the Hitler madmen. A few men were even released - mainly to keep the morale and the hope of all awake, and make them work on the buildings for the Himmler Waffen SS. Every morning when the "Arbeitskollonnen" marched through the gates of the KZ (short for KonZentrations Lager) they saw a sign on the gates ARBEIT MACHT FREI. In later years, I have seen photographs of extermination camps with the same words on the gates, though the millions who marched through went straight into the gaschambers.

Buchenwald was situated on the Etterberg near Weimar. For some reason (true or false) the pumps which brought water up to the mountain were not sufficient, and the stored water lasted only for half an hour in the morning. Needless to say that the SS had water running all the time! But for us, in the evening we often were given a salted herring only, and we were crazy with thirst. Imagine thousands walking the streets of Buchenwald in search of water. It was there - but for a price.

The fact was that hardened criminals, the "Berufsverbrecher", had taken over Buchenwald. After evening roll call we were left to ourselves, with no SS guard venturing into the camp. Another fact was that the Lagerkommando allowed prisoners to receive money from home. Thus the stage was set for open robbery. Those criminal gangs who manned the "Stubendienst" in all huts, filled up all buckets and barrels with water when the taps could be turned on in the morning. In the evening, when we all were almost out of our minds by ravenous thirst, those gangs sold us water. When in November 1938 all synagogues in Germany went up in flames, and when over 10,000 Jewish prisoners were brought into Buchenwald, the price for one glass of water went up to 50 Mark.

We in Buchenwald could "see" the lie which was given out by Goebbels. Goebbels told the world that the "Kristallnacht", the burning of all synagogues and the mass imprisonment of Germans of the Jewish faith, was caused by the "indignation" over the shooting in Paris of the German diplomat von Rath by the young Gruenspan. But we built the huts for the mass arrests months before. We knew they were coming.

Suicide by hanging occurred almost every night. It was easy. The "Selbstmordkandidat" slipped out of the hut in the night, dodged the searchlights that continuously swept the camp, and, using a box to reach a branch on the trees nearby, simply kicked away the box - and escaped into the freedom of death. Other deaths were staged dramatically by the SS. When one inmate hid himself in the half-finished buildings, he was missed at roll call - and the hunt was on! The whole camp of over 20,000 prisoners had to stand to attention hour after hour well into the night - until the escapee was found. Often, we stood in drenching rain or freezing blizzards with hungry stomachs and weary to death after 12 hours work in the rain or snow. We yearned to go back to our huts, but we had to wait.

At last, he was found. And they brought him back like hunters bringing in a dead animal. The dead man was bound to a pole with arms and legs swinging down, and so came the hunting party with torches burning in the night like in a gruesome opera.

One night an official hanging was staged. There was the SS, with their long drums beating a deadly drumming, until the judicial officer said in medieval German: "Schafft ihn zum Tode!" And it was over after a few twitchings of the body. And we all envied him. He was free at last.

A sort of "crucifixions" was staged daily. Those who were punished for the slightest fault were led to trees, their hands and arms were wrenched behind their back, a rope bound over their twisted hands and pulled behind them so that the prisoners remained hanging with their arms behind them on their hands only, crying in pain for their mother, for help, for God, until some had their arms wrenched out of their sockets.

But the death we all feared most of all was: drowning in urine and excrements. It was not an official death, but it was officially stage-managed, and it occurred almost daily, especially in the rainy autumn and spring, and in the snowy winter months. As told before, there was no water available for toilets. At night nobody was allowed out of the hut, and therefore a barrel was placed in the ante-room of every hut for 240 prisoners to relieve themselves during the night. In the morning the barrel was overflowing, and each morning two men were assigned the duty to carry the barrel to the latrines and empty it there. One morning I was one of the excrement bearers. My comrade and I heaved the heavy barrel and we walked slowly through the streets. But they were a quagmire from the continuous rain and the wading of thousands of feet. Buchenwald was on a mountain slope and some streets were steep. We both slipped and the barrel of urine and excrements emptied out over our bodies. There was no water to clean ourselves, and besides, our prison uniform was made out of that new "Ersatzstoff von Brennesseln". Once wet, it stayed wet for days and nights and brought death by pneumonia in the cold winter months. We had to live for days in our stinking uniforms until the worst smell went out. But we praised ourselves lucky. We didn't drown in the excrements. But others were not so lucky. For them the stage was set for quick drowning.

The latrines for 20,000 prisoners were large and deep. All around were long beams of round raw-hewn tree logs, usually wet and slippery, most dangerous to sit on. In order to give the prisoners some support, there was a second beam behind them to lean on with their back. But it was too high up. Moreover, the earth in front of the prisoners was wet with urine, and very slippery. A weak prisoner, or one who was just careless for a moment, slipped backwards between the sit-log and the back-log, and fell into the liquid mass of urine and excrements. He couldn't be rescued, because the latrine was deep. Such deaths occurred almost daily.

Somehow one had to feel that the SS men were infatuated with the behind and all that it means. It was known to all that homosexuality was rampant within the SA and the SS. It was therefore no surprise to us when we prisoners were addressed as "Arschloeher!" (arsholes). At the morning roll call the voice of the commanding officer came over the loudspeakers. "Achtung ihr Arschloeher, herhoeren! Die Arschloeher Nr. 7649 and 18,598 fehlen. Stubendienst in den Wald die Arschloeher suchen!"

As I, as Blockschreiber belonged to the Stubendienst, I went with the others to search for the missing prisoners. The first search was among the trees. And sure enough, here was one of them hanging from a branch with his tongue out. We got him down and went for the second spot where we could find the other man: the latrines. We poked with long poles in the liquid excrements, and soon we found him. We brought him out, identified him by his number, and thus the wait

ended, and the columns marched out of the gates, usually accompanied by the "Lagermusik". Because the Lagerkommandant Obersturmbannfuehrer Koch was a romantic man. His wife Ilse loved lamp shades made from human skin. Koch loved creatures in cages. He had a zoo erected within the camp, filled with poor and wretched animals in small cages. Many times I stared from my cage into their cages, and this dreadful experience was the beginning of my thoughts as to whether animals are really lower than humans in their behaviour. These my thoughts are enlarged in my large book, and also in my forthcoming popular pocket book where I prove, and am supported by eminent professors, that animals of the same kind do not kill their own kind systematically and mercilessly as human beings do to other human beings from whom they are separated by words and labels.

But winter was coming, and it promised to be a very harsh winter. When the cold October days and nights came upon us, we all began to worry, because we were told that we shall not receive any winter wear, not even an overcoat. What are we going to do? we asked each other. And the common answer was: suicide. There was no other way out to escape the added ordeal of freezing arms and feet in the heavy work outside. Besides, we had given up all hope of freedom.

And we all were continuously hungry. We knew that in winter we would need food to sustain our continuous shivering. I remember what happened to me one day. I passed the kitchen, and saw a cook coming outside and throwing potato peelings to the pigs which were fattened in their pigstyes for the officers' mess. I almost fainted for hunger, and wanted to throw myself down to the pigs and feed with them on the peelings. But at this moment an SS guard passed by, and I felt that he would kill me when I do this.

Soon some of the SS officers realised that there is quick money to be made in Buchenwald. Among the over 20,000 prisoners there were over 10,000 Jews, and most of them got money from home. They all wanted desperately to buy food, and to buy warm winterwear. So, one day we were informed that foodstuff will be sold at the canteen. It was not ordinary food like bread, because the profit margin is small on this. We could buy only delicacies like chocolate, sweets, and cakes. I remember vividly what happened when I held for the first time in months a small pack of chocolate in my hands. I was so hungry that I could not wait with the unwrapping of the paper and the tinfoil. In my ravenous hunger I bit into the package and swallowed it all, paper, tinfoil and chocolate. I simply could not help myself. And others did the same.

Soon winter clothing came into the camp to be sold to those who had money. And equally suddenly the criminal gangs in the camp decided to monopolise this trade and to charge their higher prizes to the "rich" Jews. These gangs were more dangerous than the SS. If a prisoner dared to criticise their undoings, he was soon undone himself. These gangs had their medieval "Femegerichte" where there is only one quick sentence: death. The prisoner, who dared to speak up against them, was dragged out during the night and hanged on the next tree. In the morning there was just one more "suicide" to record.

Thinking back today, I think I must have been crazy in Buchenwald, because I decided to oppose the criminals. I can only say as an excuse that it was my compassion for my poor comrades that made me defy my own death. And here is how it came about.

I was the Blockschreiber, and thus I knew exactly who gets money from home

and who gets nothing. As Blockschreiber it was my duty to collect the orders for winter wear, to bring the money to the officials in the "Kleiderkammer" and to distribute then the sweaters, cardigans, woollen socks, mittens, shawls, etc., to those who had made their advanced payment to me. I decided then not to submit to the gangs, and not to let them take over all and sell it for their own higher prices.

They were outraged and threatened me with death. One day they beat my face to a pulp. All flesh on my face was so swollen and covered with bloody scars that I had difficulties to see. But I did not give in. Instead, I went even further. I announced that I shall sell all winter wear to the "rich" prisoners for double the official price, the double price is to pay for a second sweater, a second pair of mittens, a second pair of socks, etc., to be given free to those prisoners who received no money from home. Every prisoner who paid for 2 sweaters could choose the poor comrade who would get the second sweater. I am glad to say that almost all "rich" prisoners realised my ethical and altruistic endeavours and almost all paid gladly double the price and were glad to nominate the poor comrade who got the second piece of winterwear.

In my desire to help my comrades I did not realise that I made myself open to a most dangerous charge of embezzlement. I handled thousands of Marks, and nobody controlled me. How easy to accuse me of swindle and of filling my own pockets. I announced therefore that the prisoners of my block should choose a committee to whom I would show all my books and all my money dealings. Somehow everyone believed me, seeing my frantic working to help them all. For instance, I would haunt the "Kleiderkammer" when I believed that new winterwear would come in. Until I could collect orders for them, all would have been sold to other blocks. And so - having made friends in the "Kleiderkammer" - they agreed to give me whole boxes of winterwear on credit to be paid later. They knew that I would not betray them even by a single Pfennig. And thus I could give all the prisoners under my care warm winterwear, and thus make everyone happy.

I believe that this ethical work and fight for the poor prisoners won me the grudging admiration of the criminals, and thus saved me from death at their hands. But there was still a fight to fight with them and I took up this fight too. The trouble was stealing. A prisoner would take off his shawl when he washed himself. When he turned around, the shawl was gone, stolen - and sold to someone who can pay to wrap himself in 2 shawls, because the winter of 1938-1939 was extremely harsh. How to fight this?

I then remembered my good poor mother, and what she did, and I recommended the same to all prisoners and many followed my advice. When my good mother knitted shawls, gloves and mittens for all her 4 children, she knew that we may lose them, and thus she sewed our shawls on to our overcoat, and sewed our gloves and mittens to length of rope and then sewed the ropes on to our sleeves. Thus, we simply could not lose them. About ten years ago I read about the French Mount Everest Expedition, and I remembered again my good mother. The leader of the expedition Herzog took off his mittens for a moment on the way down, and by some mishap the mittens escaped his clasped hands and rolled down the steep icy slopes. Herzog came down with both hands frozen.

Fortunately my comrades under my care did not suffer from frozen hands and feet, but prisoners in other huts were terribly smitten with frozen limbs which called for amputation. How glad I was that among the 240 prisoners under my

care there was not one single casualty. I remember vividly one evening when again a prisoner was missing at roll call, and we all had to stand for attention hour after hour well into the night. A howling blizzard made us tremble and shiver and soon we were covered with deep snow. Yet, we had to stand still. Suddenly I remembered that I have in the hut still some boxes with shawls and "Ohrenschuetzer" (earmuffs) which I got on credit. It was madness to leave the ranks, and I could have been shot, but somehow I trusted that I will not be seen in the swirling snow and the deep shadows of the search lights. I ran into our hut and came back with the boxes and distributed the earmuffs to all who had none, and gave shawls to all who needed one. It was impossible to take down names, but somehow I could scrape together the money to pay later for all the goods at the "Kleiderkammer".

What I am saying here, I have recounted in a long story (over 50 pages) which I wrote in German for all my friends in Vienna and abroad. I shall be glad to submit this story if wanted. Moreover, I, who has invented a method to uncover lies, would surely not tell lies now. Furthermore, all our sufferings during 1939 were nothing compared with the sufferings in the extermination camps during the war. So let me say that what I am telling here is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So help me God!

I have said before, that my music helped me to make friends with all, with the criminal gangs, and even with the SS blackguards. Moreover, I don't know how my mind works, but the fact is that I cannot sit idle for a minute. I must work, and must work for a cause for something that could help others. Many a time some of my friends said to me: "If you Blitz would devote your energy, your intelligence, your endeavours, your cleverness to making money you would be a millionaire in no time!" This may be so. But money never interested me. Somehow I make enough for my upkeep, and also to indulge in my ethical altruistic work. In the Gestapo prisons in Vienna we all were idle, and this was more unnerving than work. I saw how my fellow-prisoners went almost out of their mind, worrying about their families and about their own fate. But time simply crawled. To help them all, I arranged chess tourniers, the chessmates we made from kneaded bread, and the chessboard from pieces of cardboard. Moreover, every afternoon I gave a lecture on almost everything I knew and had read in former years. I am a good lecturer, and many a time my listeners have told me that my lectures were the best they ever heard. For instance I was famous of being the only scientist in Vienna who could explain Einstein's relativity theory in simple words so that everyone, just everyone could understand Einstein's ideas. Well, I gave a number of lectures on this, on physics, chemistry, geography, travel, literature, etc., etc., in the Gestapo prisons in Vienna and these my daily lectures were the highlights of the inmates, Christians and Jews alike. On Christmas Day 1938 the blizzard that howled through Buchenwald was so terrible that nobody could venture out. I gave lectures on Einstein's relativity theory, and made them all forget their misery by leading them on a journey through the stars and galaxies of our eternal universe.

And there was something else. I have inherited from my good father a great sense of humour. I can tell jokes, better than the best comedian. I have proved this and I still prove it. Indeed, if I envy one man in the world, it is Charlie Chaplin, who made the whole world laugh, something I wanted to do all the time. Now, we all know that professional comedians hate their jesting. What most of them want, is to play philosophical roles, like "Hamlet": "To be or not to be, that is the question".

So the comical fact emerges that all comedians want to be philosophers, but I wanted to be a comedian all the time, and (confound it) I was a philosopher all the time. Fortunately, I was able to merge both activities, by making my comrades laugh and learn in my lectures. I would for instance, explain Einstein's idea about all movements being relative. "Now Gentlemen", I would say, "here is a simple explanation of universal relativity. You are seeing me here standing. Sometimes I am walking to and fro when speaking to you. And all the time I am sitting!" Sitting - "sitzen" means in the Viennese dialect "to sit in prison!" They laughed and laughed. So great was the hilarity of my variety shows which I staged at the Gestapo prison in the Hahngasse, in Vienna, that the windows of all the other prisons facing the central courtyard were full with the faces of prisoners all wondering why wave after wave of laughter came out of our window. Naturally I was the happiest of all.

I continued giving variety shows in Buchenwald on Saturday evening. I was the Master of Ceremonies wearing a white shirt and black tie (all made from cardboard) and introducing the other artists and sometimes myself. I played my mandolin and sang my songs, and so did others. But after all, prisoners among themselves, want to hear riskier jokes, and so I arranged short plays and jokes with my fellow artists. For instance, I would come on the stage with my friend and he would ask me what I think about the newspapers we can buy in the camp. He would show me the front pages (for all to see) of the FRANKFURTER ZEITUNG, of the WEIMARER GAUBOTE, and the VOELKISCHER BEOBACHTER. And I would say: "Die" Frankfurter Zeitung"ist mir lieb und wert. Der" Weimarer Gaubote"ist mir lieber und werter. Aber der "Voelkische Beobachter"ist mir am liebsten am Allerwertesten!" The "Allerwerteste" (the most valuable one) is of course the behind. They all roared with laughter. Only later did I realise in horror that a denunciation by an enemy would have brought a quick death for me should the SS learn that I said their Nazi papers are only good for the toilet. But I had no enemies.

Being an engineer I engineered various things that made life easier for my comrades. So, I came to think of engineering my release. Making friends with my music was not enough. I had to take my life in my hands and all my courage, and had to approach the top men in the camp with clever ideas why they should let me go into freedom. It was dangerous work, but I had to do it, and I prepared everything as I prepared everything as an engineer in the factory. I could write a whole book about my fight for freedom from Buchenwald, and it would be better than a spy thriller, because it would be a true story. It would make this story too long to tell all here. Enough to say here that I advised in clandestine words my Claire whom to approach in Vienna in order to co-ordinate my efforts in Buchenwald. Perhaps I am the only man who did not pray only and did not wait only for the chance to be released. I engineered my freedom, and on the 14th April 1939 I left Buchenwald a free man. One day later, and I embraced Claire. We wept and wept, but there was no time to weep. I had to leave for England quickly, but Claire had to come afterwards. Alas, the permit for her dragged on and on and within 4 months Hitler started the war against Poland, and Claire was trapped. I left London and went to Shanghai, the only place where I could be re-united with Claire, and on Christmas Eve 1940 we fell into each others arms after 3 years of terrible separation. The story of what happened to me in Shanghai and to my mind when confronted with Chinese writing, has been told by Dr. Everingham, and you will find more of it in the publications submitted.

In Buchenwald, and in England, and later in Shanghai I thought long about

all my dreadful experiences, about all the misery caused to mankind by the words of a Hitler, and you will find a large chapter in my book beginning on page 582ff titled

THE RAVAGES OF LANGUAGE - GERMANY A NATION RUINED

There I show the most vicious German slogans of the Hitler era and the Kaiser era translated in my symbols, and operated according to my logical rules. I prove there that Hitler would not have had a chance if a school subject called "Wortdeutung" (my Semantography) would have been taught in the German schools. But today 25 years later nothing has been done. Indeed, a German student who studies for 5 years History at German universities will not hear a single lecture on the Hitler era. Neither are there official German text books for primary schools, high schools, colleges and universities who could tell the young Germans what the Hitler criminals have done. Why? Because many of the German officials of today are the Nazis of yesterday. And many times I could hear and read in later years that even youngsters would say that "Hitler was right!" And this brings me back to my teacher and master Dr. Chisholm who taught me that "the concept of right and wrong" is the cause of many of our troubles that bring violence and war to our planet.

Alas, when I the engineer studied carefully Chisholm's lectures, trying to find out how the professor thinks that his "re-education of mankind" should be engineered, I was bitterly disappointed. Chisholm thinks that "the concept of good and bad, right and wrong" can be "eradicated" (his own word, see his lecture, publication No. 3 on page 9, 2nd paragraph left column). But how? Should we stop using the words "good" and "bad", "right" and "wrong"? We can't. These little words are so practical. For instance, we can say that there is a "right" way to open a tin of food, and a "wrong" way. Then we can examine the food in the tin and say that the food is still "good" or that it has gone "bad". Of course, we could use highbrow language to avoid these little words, but we would say them nevertheless only in round-about professorial words.

And so, as Dr. Everingham pointed out, a professor Sobrero, discovered nitroglycerine, and a chemical engineer Nobel made it a practical tool for industrial progress. Similarly, a professor Chisholm discovered the cause of human warfare and a chemical engineer Bliss used Chisholm's theory and made a practical tool for peace out of it.

And this reminds me of my student days in Vienna. I was enraptured by a saying of the great Viennese physicist Boltzmann, who said:

"Nichts ist so praktisch wie eine gute Theorie".

"Nothing is as practical as a good theory".

When professors came up with the theory that almost all chemical elements and many compounds can under certain circumstances change from the solid state into the liquid, and then into the gaseous state, all chemical engineers, and all tradesmen, and all housewives learned that water can be made solid, or liquid or gaseous under certain conditions. Thus Boltzmann is really right: "Nothing is as practical as a good theory".

And therefore let me give thanks to Chisholm the professor. Without him and his theory, the best I would have produced would have been symbols for road warnings and other situations. But Chisholm taught me that certain words can cause war, and thus he led me on to search for a logical system of logical symbols for

a new symbolic logic that can help avoid quarrels in the homes, in the communities, and in the nations. One day, my symbols and my symbolic logic will be taught in the schools of the world and peace will come to many millions of quarrelling people, and perhaps to all mankind. When? In 200 years? Or never?

Having given praise and thanks to Chisholm, let me end this story by giving praise and thanks to those two persons to whom I owe all I am: my beloved parents. Herebelow are the pages 811-812 from the Epilogue of my large book second edition: