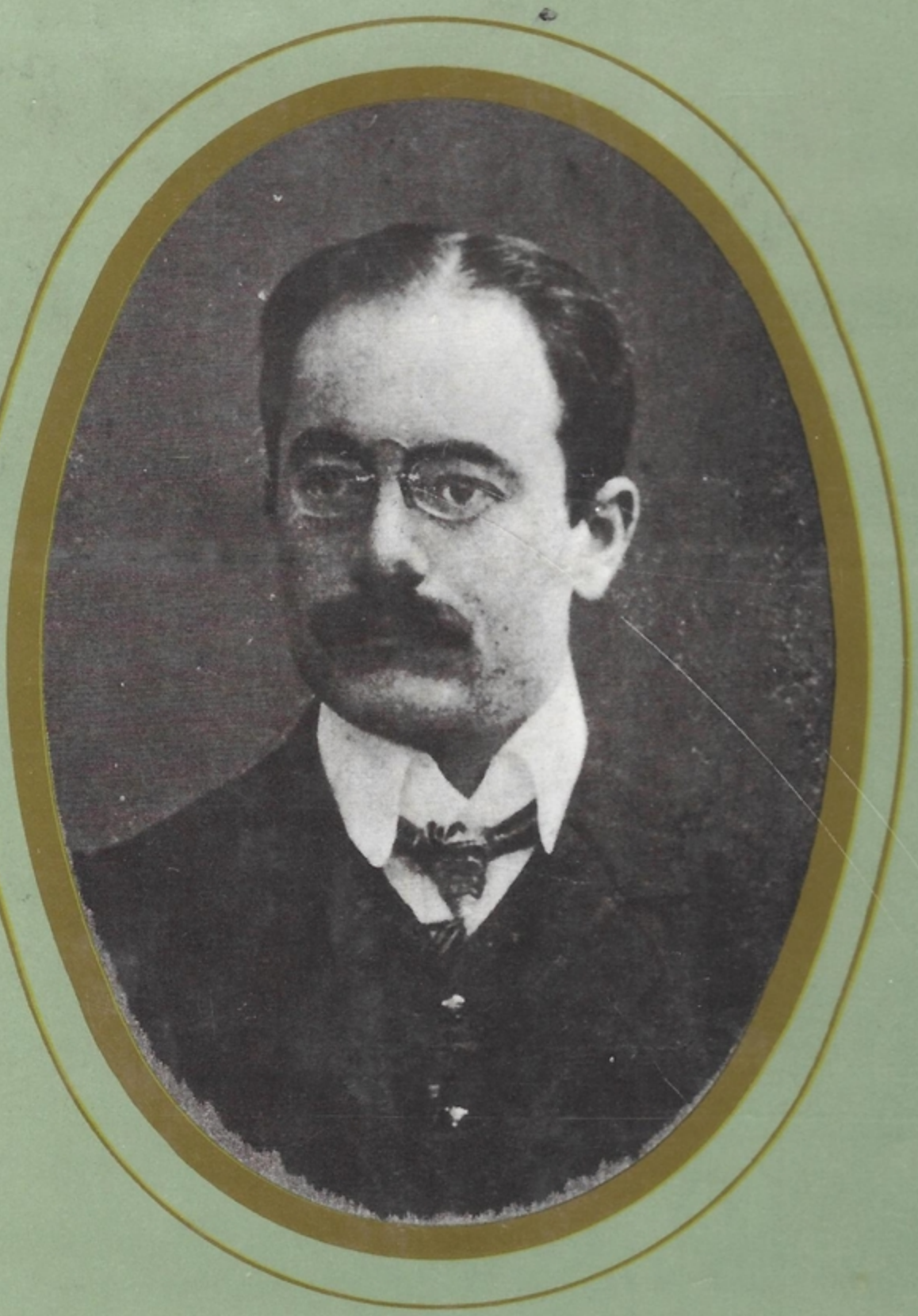
ARTHUR RUPPIN

Memoirs, Diaries, Letters



2 Childhood in Rawitsch (1876–1886)

Rawitsch lies in the south-eastern corner of the province of Posen, near the Silesian border. Beyond Posen, the town is almost unknown. At most, someone who hears the name might remember that there is a large penal institution there. In my time, the town had a population of about 13,000 people, the large majority of whom were German. The proximity of Silesia was responsible for the large German element, which had ousted the Poles from the leading position they had once held in the town. The Poles now lived in the surrounding countryside and were mostly farmers, while commerce and industry had been taken over by the Germans. Even the former Polish name of the town, Rawicz, had been changed to the German-sounding Rawitsch. While Polish was the predominant language in the surrounding villages, an exceptionally pure and grammatical German was spoken in the town itself.

Rawitsch had a Jewish community of about 3,000 people, which amounted to a quarter of the total population. The rest of the inhabitants were divided almost equally into Protestants and Catholics. Almost all the Protestants were German nationals; the majority of the Catholics were Poles. The Jews felt closer to the German culture and spoke German. The different religious and national groups were on very good terms with each other. In the schools, there were no signs of hostility or discrimination against the Jewish children; Jews and non-Jews served together amicably on the town council; and the members of the three different religions regularly attended their places of worship and observed their holy days, the Jews rather more so than the Protestants and Catholics. On Saturdays and on Jewish holy days, all the Jewish shops were closed and the Jewish children were excused from school or (as in my case) at least excused from doing written work there. The Jewish dietary laws were strictly observed. All the Jewish children attended the state schools (elementary or secondary), and on Sundays we also attended special lessons in which we were taught religion, Jewish history and a little Hebrew. Most of the retail trade in the town was handled by Jews.

With the exception of the four main streets which radiated from the market-place, the streets of the town were narrow, and the houses were old and plain. On the whole, the town had nothing to distinguish it. In

a corner of the old market-place was a draper's shop (dry goods, mainly ladies' and mens' clothing) which belonged to my parents. Founded in 1831 by my grandfather Simon Ruppin, it was inherited by my grandmother upon his death.

Our family had been living in Rawitsch since the end of the eighteenth century, and the business founded by my grandfather was one of the oldest in the town. When my father took it over in 1875 he was thirty-three years old; he married my mother on 22 March 1875, before she had reached her twenty-first birthday.

As the first-born son of this union, I saw the light on 1 March 1876 in the large Jaross house at the corner of the old square, where the Posener and the Berliner streets meet. That is to say, I did not see the light, but, contrary to the usual practice of new-born babies, kept my eyes shut and did not make a sound. I was thought to have been born dead, and only after great efforts did the midwife, a Mrs Riebel, succeed in rousing me to life.

I have no first-hand memories of what happened to me during the first four years. Because my parents have told me so, I know that I had a sensible Polish wet-nurse and grew up strong and healthy, without a day's illness. Moreover, I did not remain an only child for long: in 1877 my parents had a daughter, Martha; in 1878 a second daughter, Else; in 1880 their second son, Siegfried; and in 1883 their third son, Martin. In 1878 and 1879 my parents took me with them to visit relatives in Breslau and Posen, but I remember nothing of these journeys.

My earliest memories date from the year 1880. I vaguely remember the circumcision of my brother Siegfried in the house next to the old post office in the old square, to where both our home and our business had been moved in 1878. I also remember a journey to Liegnitz made with my father in 1880/1 in order to congratulate my grandmother Pauline Ruppin on her birthday. I can still remember my grandmother's venerable face, and later I very much regretted that she had not remained with us in Rawitsch.

I was sent to school when I was no more than four years old, but only to a so-called play school, in which the children were taught by means of stories and poems and occupied in play. Although I do not remember much of my life at this school, one episode remains clear: because I had been naughty, I was sent from the classroom of the older children to join the younger ones, and this made me weep bitterly. At Easter 1881, soon after my fifth birthday, I was moved from the play school to the first class in the elementary school, and from then on I remember things more clearly.

As I was only five years old, I was the youngest in the class, and our teacher, Mr Tietzmann, therefore treated me with some care, although

I was not doing particularly well. At the end of my first year at school, Mr Tietzmann asked my parents to decide whether I should be moved up or not. Although I managed to keep up with the others, he thought that I was rather young, and as the secondary school would not accept me until I was at least nine years old, I had nothing to lose by staying in the first class for another year. My mother agreed because she was afraid that I might otherwise find the strain too great, so I went through the same lessons once more, but under a teacher who was stricter than Tietzmann. At the end of the year I was near the top of the form, and from then on I continued to be ahead of my class-mates. In the second year I came in second and in the third year I came in first, so that my parents were proud of me and my father sang my praises unceasingly to relatives and friends. My reports were sent to all the relations and shown to everyone, whether they were interested or not. In retrospect, this seems to have been the root of my tendency to over-estimate my abilities.

Altogether, I was definitely lucky with my elementary school. The headmaster, Mr Krüger, was one of my father's friends, and when lessons were over he called me into his study, showed me the stuffed animals there, and took an interest in me in all sorts of ways. My teacher in the third class, Mr Linke, an old and experienced educator, had a special affection for me, and I responded to it by paying close attention and always being his best pupil. He was probably the only one of my teachers for whom I felt a real affection and devotion. Other than this, I have nothing much to relate about elementary school, except that when I was in the fourth class we were photographed, and I still possess the picture.

That I was a good pupil was due not only to my ability to grasp things quickly, but also to the fact that I paid attention in class. I did not do much homework, however; that would have been impossible in Rawitsch. The games played by the children in the streets were an attraction I could not resist. When the weather was warm, we spent the whole afternoon and evening out in the streets. We played '*Anschnetzen*', a game in which a button was thrown against a wall so that it bounced back to lie close to one previously thrown by another boy; if the distance between them was no more than a hand's breadth, the second button had captured the first. We were always carrying about little bags full of buttons, and metal military buttons were in special demand. Another game was 'cops and robbers', and, of course, every boy wanted to be a 'cop'. As there was no limit to the hiding-places in our town, I always found its pleasures completely absorbing.

Until 1881 we lived in a nice, spacious flat, in the house on the old square, which had flower beds in the yard. When I was not allowed to go outside, I went to visit our landlady, Mrs Sturzel, who was seventy years old, lived alone and was a staunch Catholic. We were very fond of each other. Every

Friday my mother used to bake a small cake for me, and once I took it along to offer it to Mrs Sturzel. For many years my parents cited this exploit as proof of my silliness, saying that the cake was already crumbling and no longer at all nice. Towards the end of 1881 we gave up our flat in Mrs Sturzel's house for a flat in the house of the pastry-cook Friedländer on Posener Street. I spent some very happy years in this house, and got up to some nice mischief with the landlord's son, George. I also spent much time with his sister Frieda, who was a year or so younger than I. For the first time, there stirred in my little-boy's heart a feeling of affection towards a female; it lasted for several years and faded only very slowly.

We moved again in 1884. Our new neighbours were the Rosenthal family, whose two sons, Max and Georg, soon became my friends (the latter attended elementary school with me). We were almost always together and spent most of our time playing cards. I had a passion for the card game 'Sixty-six' and used all kinds of inducements – including presents – to make my friends, who did not care for it, play it with me. The Rosenthals were one of the most orthodox families in the town and therefore very acceptable to my mother, while my father did not like them very much and often made fun of their strict observance of rituals. Like my father, I was not too particular about observing religious customs and clearly remember the occasion when I bought some rolls during Passover and was scolded by my mother, who had somehow found out. Through associating with Max and Georg Rosenthal, however, I was infected by their orthodoxy and also began strictly to observe the religious commandments.

Unfortunately, my friendship with the Rosenthal brothers came to an abrupt end. Georg caught diphtheria, and the most terrible rumours circulated among us children about the horrors of this illness. It was said that in order to save the patient from suffocation, boiling water had to be poured down his gullet, that this was the way in which Matheus' children had been saved. Suddenly, people were saying that Georg Rosenthal had died after a tracheotomy had been performed in an effort to save him. I was unable to imagine what this meant. I ran to his home and met his older brother, who was crying terribly. Only when I saw that Georg was no longer there and learned that he was to be buried the very next day did a suspicion of what dying meant dawn on me. Although I was sad, I felt obliged to comfort the crying Max. He had a talent for mathematics (he later became a mathematics teacher), and when all other distractions failed I had the bright idea of working out the area and the volume of the room. This attracted his attention and he stopped crying, at least for a while. For a long time afterwards I lost all interest in games and pastimes, but with the thoughtlessness of youth I gradually overcame even these sad memories and again turned to the diversions which life in Rawitsch offered so amply.

With the school, we made excursions to Königsdorf or Sarne, near-by

villages in the forest, and what pleasures these occasions always gave me! With 50 pfennigs in my pocket, I fancied myself as rich as a king and the happiest of all people. We picked flowers and collected butterflies, caterpillars and lizards, which were abundant; to light a cigarette behind the teacher's back was the choicest of pleasures – at least for the moment. Often enough, amusing incidents happened on these walks. I remember, for instance, a walk arranged for all the children who attended the lessons in Jewish religious intruction and in Hebrew. We went to Königsdorf and there, in order not to miss the evening prayers, quickly arranged for a divine service in the garden of the inn. One of the peacocks in the garden joined the congregation and screeched as loudly as it could. The effect of this performance was so funny that we could not stop laughing, and the service was interrupted for quite some time.

In summer, my closest friends – Michalek, Püschel and Pulst – and I frequently went for the afternoon to the 'sand hill', where what we called our 'cave' was located next to a large poplar. We used its branches (always breaking them off the day before so that they could dry out) to light a fire and baked potatoes, which we stole from the near-by fields; ate apples, cucumbers and turnips; smoked the cigarettes which Michalek brought from his father's shop; and did not return home until quite late. Our baked potatoes seemed to taste better than the choicest delicacies did at home, and we never tired of finding ways of making the 'cave' more habitable and comfortable. Once, after reading *Robinson Crusoe*, I bought a few pfennigs worth of salt to pour into the fire of our primitive hearth and was most disappointed that it would not become 'glazed', as Robinson's cooking pots had. We broke up the ribs of an umbrella to use as forks with which to fetch the potatoes out of the fire. Püschel, whose father was a plumber, brought a sheet of metal, which we fixed above the fire to bake apples and other good things we could not put into the fire itself. When we lacked salt for the cucumbers, we sprinkled sand on them, claiming that 'sand cleans the stomach'. For fear of being caught by one of our teachers, we smoked the cigarettes only in the best of hiding-places.

When bilberries and strawberries were in season, we often went to the woods and collected them, eating whole basketfuls of berries and still bringing some home. In hot weather we went to either the 'Dreieck' or to the 'Furt', two ponds in which we splashed about. None of us knew how to swim and we were not entirely safe, because in places the water was quite deep. On one occasion some older boys amused themselves by covering me from head to toe with soap, so that I could not even open my eyes. Then they carried me to a place where the water was deep and let go of me, and I had great difficulty getting out and saving myself.

Whether on foot or by carriage, I hardly ever travelled further than half a mile or so from Rawitsch, except for the one time my father took me

with him when he went by carriage to Gründorf, about a mile and a half from Rawitsch, on business. The sight of pastures, flowering meadows and lakes with storks standing on one leg made me feel, for the first time, that I would like to live in a nice part of the country one day. Once, during the long summer holidays, I went to visit my uncle Moritz Mendelsohn, who lived in Bojanowo, a small town about twenty minutes from Rawitsch by train. He dealt in horses, and it was my greatest delight to be allowed to enter the stable and be lifted on a horse by one of the grooms. Sometimes, much to my delight, my uncle took me with him when he went out in his carriage. The meals in Bojanowo were very ample (food was ridiculously cheap), but except for a shabby memorial to one of the mayors there were no places of interest.Not until much later did I find out that this was the birthplace of Frauenstaedt, Schopenhauer's biographer.

Four times a year, a great fair, lasting two days, was held in the square, and then Rawitsch really came to life. With great pleasure, we helped the owners to erect the stalls, but in the evening, in return for our assistance, we made use of the still unfinished stalls as hiding-places, knocking down quite a few of the boards we had only just put up. My father naturally did a lot of business during the fair (the whole countryside flocked into town) and was then in his most generous mood. With 20 pfennigs in my pocket, and after receiving some solemn admonitions, I made my way between the rows of stalls and spent several hours before I exchanged the first 5 pfennigs for a bag of sweets. Unfortunately, the splendour lasted only a short while. The stalls were hardly up when, to our great annoyance, by the second day they were being torn down again, and soon only the litter and places where the pavement had been torn up bore witness to the event.

Apart from the great fair, a shooting contest took place once a year. Stalls were erected in front of the grounds belonging to the rifle-club at the southern end of the town, while on the grounds people competed for the title of king of the contest. On the morning of the great day, the previous king marched in a solemn procession, accompanied by music and followed by the crowd, to the grounds, and in the evening the new king was brought home to the sound of music. Apart from these celebrations, there was also the emperor's birthday and the anniversary of the battle of Sedan, when military parades were held in the old square and the whole town turned out to watch them.

Occasionally a troup of acrobats or a circus pitched in the new square, and naturally attracted young and old. I must admit that the joy I derived from a circus performance at the age of eight or nine was soon lost. I only went once later on, when I was fourteen or fifteen years old, and from then on I definitely disliked circuses, menageries and similar exhibitions. On the whole, life in Rawitsch ran its routine course and only rarely, as when we received a visit from relations, was there any excitement for us children.

At Easter in 1885 I moved from the elementary to the secondary school, which I remember with much less pleasure. In elementary school, I had been used to being among the first in my class distinguishing myself by my knowledge. My parents had also come to take it for granted that I would have the best marks at the end of each quarter. It was not the same in the secondary school, partly because I was still relying on my ability to grasp things quickly by paying attention in class – without doing any homework – and partly because some favouritism was shown towards the boys who had entered the first form from the prep school. Also, I must admit that I was wild, disobedient and headstrong, and this behaviour may well have influenced what my teachers thought of my school work. Gradually I got used to the new conditions, however, and worked my way up, so that by the end of the first school year I was again one of the first (I took third place), and in the second form I maintained my position.

A bitter and long-standing feud existed between the secondary and the elementary schools, and the boys did their best to keep it alive. Those who attended the secondary school called the others *'Klimpelschüler'* and they played every possible practical joke on us in order to revenge themselves for being ridiculed. While I was in the first form, it was decided to determine once and for all which side was the stronger, and for several Saturday afternoons the boys from the two schools collected on the sand hills to decide the issue in pitched battle. Certainly, these fights were nothing new; nevertheless, the intention was to settle the quarrel all over again on a larger scale. I too went to the sand hills with a friend one Saturday to fight for 'God and my country' in the ranks of the secondary school boys. Instead of finding our confederates, however, we found ourselves entirely alone, while the boys of the elementary school were advancing in close formation. As soon as they caught sight of us they began a mad chase, in the course of which we were caught and beaten black and blue.

During the last few years in Rawitsch I was particularly keen on collecting butterflies and caterpillars, which was then in fashion among the young people. During the holidays, I went to the sand hills every morning, equipped with butterfly net and specimen box, and searched the willows, pines, poplars etc. for caterpillars until noon. I valued particularly the privet-hawkmoth and the puss moth. At home, I put the caterpillars into little boxes and fed them fresh food daily until they changed into chrysalises and (if they did not die in this state, as in fact most of them did) the butterfly finally emerged. I also had a collection of postage stamps, which I built up by begging from adults, trading with other boys, and buying with what little pocket-money I was given. I never tired of looking at the stamps, which I had pasted into an album, and was proud that stamps from such infinitely remote places as Guatemala, New South Wales and the Cape of Good Hope had found their way into my possession. These last three

stamps were the *pièce de résistance* of the collection and seemed more valuable than jewels or gold.

One evening – I must have been about nine years old – I was sitting in front of our door, the stamp album on my knees, lost in contemplation of my treasure. Along came an older boy from my school, sat down beside me and looked at the stamps. I asked him what he thought of them. 'The stamps – they're not worth anything. They're quite common ones.' I objected and defended my stamps, but he shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. 'Another time I shall show you *my* stamps – they are proper stamps. Yours are no use at all.' I continued to defend my stamps, but already more feebly; I had been intimidated by the self-confidence and the apparent expertise of the older boy. In the course of our conversation he revealed an old umbrella frame. 'What is that for?' I asked him. 'Oh, it's very nice. You can break off the separate bars and use them as forks to fetch the hot potatoes which you bake in your cave out of the fire.' This explanation immediately kindled my enthusiasm for the umbrella frame, and I made it plain that I wanted to have it. 'Well, I did intend to keep it for myself. But as it's you, I will let you have it, if you give me your stamp album.' I hesitated. Should I part with my stamps just like that? He continued to wave the umbrella about before my eyes, describing its splendour. But I still could not make up my mind. Then he added 10 pfennigs, for which I would be able to buy a lot of transfers at the stationer's opposite (he knew that I had a passion for them) – my resistance was broken and the bargain was struck. That was the end of my first and only stamp collection.

My third collection consisted of plants. I began it because my botany teacher urged me to, and not on my own initiative. I still possess the herbarium which I made at that time; today it is in Bet Gordon in Deganyah.

On summer evenings my parents often went to the beer gardens and most often took me with them; but on Friday evenings they always stayed at home because my mother celebrated the coming of the Sabbath with prayers and an unusually good supper. We also played games and she shared out nuts and other treats. I was keen on going to the synagogue and went not only on holy days and Friday evenings, but also every Saturday, when a special children's service was held from eleven o'clock until 12.30. We boys were encouraged in our piety by the old men whom we saw sitting all day long over old parchments studying the holy scriptures in the *talmud torah* next to the synagogue. They must have been close to 100 years old – I am thinking particularly of Reb Meyer Bergel. There was a certain poetic haze about the divine service which was particularly attractive to young people.

We were made to study Jewish religion and history while still quite young. From the age of seven or eight we attended the classes held on

Sunday mornings by the rabbi – until 1883 Dr Koref, later Dr Loeb – and two other Jewish teachers. The instruction was very superficial: we learned to read the prayers and the Bible in the original and to understand them more or less, but we did not advance to the spelling and the grammar of the Hebrew language. We got up to all sorts of mischief in these classes. I remember an occasion on which the teacher chased us around the synagogue yard for half an hour before we consented to go to the classroom. About once a month, I went with my father to visit the graves of his parents in the Jewish cemetery, which lay outside the town in the sand hills. The cemetery was well cared for, and I liked to spend time there; I continued to like lonely places all my life.

Once, to satisfy my passion for a pocket-knife and some transfers I had seen in a shop-window, I took 3 marks from the till of my father's shop and bought the objects of my desire for one mark. Later, when I was displaying my wealth to my friends, one mark rolled into the gutter and was apparently lost. I proudly told my comrades that I would pay 10 pfennigs reward to the finder and went home. One of them found the mark and brought it to my father, asking for the reward. 'One mark? How does Arthur come to have a mark?' I was questioned closely, and I immediately admitted to what I had done. My father said terrible things about my behaviour, and when I realized that an exemplary punishment threatened, I escaped into the yard and climbed on to the sloping roof of a shed (I was an expert roof-climber). From below it looked highly dangerous, and my parents were terribly frightened that I might fall. I made use of their fears to dictate from above my terms for coming down: no punishment, and I, for my part, would promise never to take money again. The terms were accepted and carried out by both sides.

I have drawn a cheerful picture of my life in Rawitsch. Unfortunately, the last year of my stay in the town (1886) forms a sad conclusion to it. For some time, my father had been indicating to me that his business was failing. I was then nine years old, and I liked to linger about the office next to the shop, where my father sat on a revolving stool in front of his desk to do the accounts. The most important ledger was the one containing a chronological record of the bills of exchange, according to the dates on which they matured. With the utmost care, he would cancel the entry of a bill after he had managed, with much difficulty, to honour it. He would cross it out until it had become illegible and nothing remained to remind him of it. For a long time my father had been unable to pay cash for the goods he bought and purchased everything against bills of exchange, which he issued quite freely. It was another matter when the bills matured, however. Then he reproached the inventor of the system, and the due bill became his personal enemy, which every possible effort was made to defeat. First he tried to extend his credit. This usually worked once, or even twice, but in

the end the payment still had to be made. Then the last coppers were scraped together. Father liked to postpone the date until the quarterly fair, when the country people came into the town and the daily earnings (he called them the parole) were larger.

These earnings, however, rarely equalled the hopes cherished by my optimistic father, because the business was undoubtedly failing. Certainly, it had been established for more than fifty years and was well known, but my father relied too much upon this reputation and was unwilling to modernize the business, although the competition he had begun to face made this absolutely necessary. Newspaper advertisements, fixed prices and the like were horrible innovations which he refused to have anything to do with. Once, after I found a newspaper containing an advertisement by our fiercest rival, I was very excited and advised my father to advertise as well. My suggestion was not at all well received: 'My business has been in existence for fifty years, without advertising, and now I should begin to advertise?'

My father's treatment of the customers also left much to be desired, although my mother's influence curbed him a little, and his so-called proposal, i.e., exaggeration of the real price, could be monstrous. He was simply incapable of believing that it would be possible to do business without bargaining – and perhaps he was right, as his customers were Polish peasants who were used to haggling. I remember the sensation it created when a customer who had moved to Rawitsch from another district paid the price of 8 or 9 marks demanded for a hat, without bargaining. Such a thing had never happened before.

As I have already said, the business was failing and it became more and more difficult to meet the bills of exchange. Certainly, the messenger sent by the bank to collect the money waited until the last moment, and so, if the bill was not honoured, did the bailiff – if he was tipped enough and treated sufficiently well – but he, too, came in the end. Then my father ran from one acquaintance to another in order to borrow money, although he preferred to send me to them with the request: 'Father sends his regards and would like to know if you could loan him 50 marks?' Sometimes I got the money, but mostly I did not. In either case, I found these errands most unpleasant, but I always went, partly because the bills of exchange worried me as much as they did him, and partly because when I was successful I was given 5 or 10 pfennigs to add to the 20 or 30 pfennigs pocket-money which I received every Saturday out of my father's winnings at skittles.

For months, even for years, my father managed to keep his head above water in this way, and I even believed that this was how business was usually done and that it could not be done otherwise. I was, therefore, horrified when he informed me that the business was failing and that he

would have to go bankrupt. I (then nine years old) was very much against it. If only things could wait until I was older; I would find a way out. But things could not wait. In October 1885 my father went to court, and the business which had been in existence for fifty-four years was closed.

After this catastrophe, we remained in Rawitsch for another sixteen months. For me, this was a period of terrible humiliations. On the day the business was closed down, one of my friends stood in front of the shop and shouted 'Gone broke, gone broke', which filled me with anger and grief. Until then, my contemporaries had respected me as the son of an important shop-keeper and honourable citizen; I now became an object of pity, scorn and contempt. I was a proud boy and minded the pity even more than the scorn. When my sister Martha and I went on a school outing to Königsborn, we met the Pragers, our rich relations, who invited us to supper. I proudly declined with the comment that we still had the money to buy food, although in fact we had no more than 5 pfennigs.

A few months after the collapse – I was in the second form of the secondary school in Rawitsch – my parents were no longer able to pay the school fees (I believe 25 marks per quarter). There was a danger that I would no longer be able to attend school. My mother decided to ask the head master to give me a free place. I suspected as much but was not sure. During one break period, as I was playing with other boys, I saw my mother crossing the playground. My heart stopped, I was so ashamèd – as if the other boys knew why she was going to the head master and that it was about to be decided whether or not I would be able to continue school. I could not bear to stay with them and was ashamed to talk to my mother, so I ran away, without attracting attention, to the lavatories, where nobody saw me. For a long time I felt a burning shame, which still persisted after I was granted a free place. At least I was no longer asked for the school fees in front of my class-mates, however, and so was spared their scorn and contempt, to which I had been exposed on two previous occasions. Free places were awarded not only to the poor but also to the sons of civil servants, etc.

With regard to scorn, no one was quite as bad as my form master. One day, after, there had been a compulsory auction of some of our belongings, I had a few feathers on my suit, and the teacher said in front of the whole class, 'Maybe their clothes-brush has been auctioned,' and sent me home to brush my suit. I went home boiling inside. I can still see myself crossing the town square, swearing that I would take a terrible revenge on the whole world for this humiliation. Above all, my greatest desire was to get away from the town in which I was helplessly exposed to such humiliations.

My parents may also have felt the same, and thus the idea of moving from Rawitsch gradually took shape. At first we considered settling in Breslau, then in Berlin, then in Leipzig. My father went to Leipzig in Decem-

ber 1886 and at the house of my Aunt Bertha met a relative called Wittenberg, from Magdeburg. He talked with such enthusiasm about this town that my father accompanied him to Magdeburg and actually rented a flat there. I remember to this day his telegram: 'SUCCESS RENTED MAGDEBURG'. It arrived on a Saturday, and I immediately told my friends about it during the children's service in the synagogue. After I had walked once more over every stone, said my warmest farewell to every tree and paid a final visit to all my beloved places, we left the town at nine o'clock on the evening of 28 December 1886 to make a new home in a strange place.