

Nor did he always remain on good terms with Hitler, the party's chief. One day he wrote Hitler a letter, which he gave me to deliver personally. He was afraid that otherwise the missive might not reach its destination, because Hitler's staff often held back letters which contained disagreeable matter. In this letter Kirdorf protested against the persecution of the Jews which went on in Germany in 1933. For it happened that Kirdorf was much beholden to the Jews for the success of his career. In spite of this he then became the great financial backer of the Nazis. Also he had renounced his membership in the state Church--even before the Nazis came to power. But as he was afraid of death, he allowed himself to be converted by Mathilde von Ludendorff (wife of the general) and entered the neo-pagan church, 'At the Fountainhead of German Strength,' which she had founded.

Kirdorf died at the age of almost ninety years, and I attended his funeral. It was terrible. The coffin had been set on a Nazi flag, which made a beautiful effect. But then the Reich Minister of Economics, Dr. Walther Funk, made a very bad speech; it consisted entirely of flattering tributes to Hitler, who was present. At the end the *Horst Wessel Song* was sung. I left immediately at the end of the ceremony. Hitler left at the same time. I hid behind a tree, so he wouldn't see me. But I was able to see how the Führer stood up in his automobile, obviously in expectation of an ovation from the assembled workmen. But as nobody was prepared for a demonstration, this made a painful impression, not to mention the tastelessness of Hitler's posture. I was sorry for old Kirdorf because of this burial; he deserved a better one.

Hermann Göring I came to know in the following manner. One day the son of one of the directors of my coal mining companies, a certain Herr Tengemann, came to me. 'Listen to me,' he said, 'there exists in Berlin a Herr Göring. He is trying very hard to do some good for the German people, but he is finding little encouragement on the part of German industrialists. Wouldn't you like to make his acquaintance?' In consequence of this suggestion I met Göring in due course. He lived in a very small apartment in those days, and he was anxious to enlarge it in order to cut a better figure. I paid the cost of this improvement.

At that time Göring seemed a most agreeable person. In political matters he was very sensible. I also came to know his first wife, Karin, who was a Swedish countess by birth. She was an exceedingly charming woman and showed no signs of the mental derangement which clouded her life before she died. Göring idolized her, and she was the only woman who was able to guide him--as though he were a young lion. She also had a great influence on him. Sometime after her death Göring made his estate, Karin Hall, into a fantastic memorial to his first wife.

As for Hitler, I saw him again in Munich, at a meeting concerning the Young Plan. Later I met him occasionally at Göring's house, but I have never visited him at Obersalzberg and I have never been inside the Brown House. On one occasion Hitler, Hess, and Röhm slept at my late father's house. That was about the extent of our acquaintance.