

Gabor Paneth's School Report Book



In the first two years of elementary school, I attended the school of a Jewish orphanage. Now, my father regarded Judaism as a personal matter. He was a Jew inside, but he lived in a Christian environment. He wanted me to get used to that environment, and he decided enroll me in a state school. This is how I entered a state gymnasium in 1936 when it was getting increasingly hard to get into a non-Jewish gymnasium. The following story could have only happened in such a state school in 1938: we were looking at some slides of the Holy Land and when the slide showed a Jewish holy place, my non-Jewish classmates laughed loudly. When we got to a Christian shrine, I turned to the boy sitting next to me, a Jewish boy, and told him, "Now they aren't laughing." Somebody heard me and accused me of having said "Rotten Christians!" The board of the school

exaggerated the case and found me guilty of this offence. Thanks to my father's being a teacher, I wasn't kicked out of school. The matter was slowly forgotten. I ran into my headmaster 17 years later on the tram. He greeted me saying, "So you survived, Paneth?" I asked him, "Do you remember my story from the second year of school?" He said nothing, and, avoiding my eyes, he got off the tram without saying goodbye. It was on the day of the oral part of my graduation exam in April 1944 that I had to wear a yellow star for the first time.