Help yourself and help others with all your strength. And at the same time be cheerful! But how much strength should one need for oneself and how much for the others? It is hard to live well!! But it is good to live well. However, not my, but Thy will be done.

When the long-awaited moment came, however, he fell ill and was told by his commanding officer that he may have to be left behind. 'If that happens', he wrote, 'I will kill myself.' When, on 15 April, he was told that he would, after all, be allowed to accompany his regiment he prayed: 'If only I may be allowed to risk my life in some difficult assignment.' He counted the days until he would at last be in the line of fire, and, when the time came, prayed to God for courage. He noted that since he had been at the Front he had become completely asexual.

Once at the front line he asked to be assigned to that most dangerous of places, the observation post. This guaranteed that he would be the target of enemy fire. 'Was shot at', he recorded on 29 April. 'Thought of God. Thy will be done. God be with me.' The experience, he thought, brought him nearer to enlightenment. On 4 May he was told that he was to go on night-duty at the observation post. As shelling was heaviest at night, this was the most dangerous posting he could have been given. 'Only then', he wrote, 'will the war really begin for me':

> And – maybe – even life. Perhaps the nearness of death will bring me the light of life. May God enlighten me. I am a worm, but through God I become a man. God be with me. Amen

During the following day in the observation post, he waited for the night's shelling with great anticipation. He felt 'like the prince in the enchanted castle'.

> Now, during the day, everything is quiet, but in the night it must be *frightful*. Will I endure it?? Tonight will show. God be with me!!

The next day he reported that he had been in constant danger of his life, but through the grace of God he had survived. 'From time to time I was afraid. That is the fault of a false view of life.' Almost every night at his post he expected to die and prayed to God not to abandon him, to give him courage to look death squarely in the eye without fear. Only

then could he be sure that he was living decently: 'Only death gives life its meaning.'

As on the *Goplana* Wittgenstein preferred being in a solitary and dangerous position to being in the company of his comrades. He needed as much, or more, strength from God to face them as he needed to face the enemy. They were 'a company of drunkards, a company of vile and stupid people':

> The men, with few exceptions, hate me because I am a volunteer. So I am nearly always surrounded by people that hate me. And this is the one thing that I still cannot bear. The people here are malicious and heartless. It is almost impossible to find a trace of humanity in them.

The struggle to stop himself from hating these people was, like the struggle against fear in the face of death, a test of his faith: 'The heart of a true believer understands everything.' So, he urged himself: 'Whenever you feel like hating them, try instead to understand them.' He tried, but it was obviously an effort:

> The people around me are not so much mean as *appallingly* limited. This makes it almost impossible to work with them, because they forever misunderstand. These people are not stupid, but limited. Within their circle they are clever enough. But they lack character and thereby breadth.

Finally, he decided that he did not *hate* them – but they disgusted him all the same.

Throughout these first few months at the Front, from March to May, Wittgenstein was able to write a little on logic. He continued with his theme of the nature of functions and propositions and the need to postulate the existence of simple objects. But he added this isolated and interesting remark about the 'modern conception of the world', which found its way unchanged into the *Tractatus* (6.371 and 6.372):

> The whole modern conception of the world is founded on the illusion that the so-called laws of nature are the explanations of natural phenomena.

Thus people today stop at the laws of nature, treating them as something inviolable, just as God and Fate were treated in past ages.

And in fact both are right and both wrong: though the view of the ancients is clearer in so far as they have a clear and acknowledged terminus, while the modern system tries to make it look as if *everything* were explained.

From Frege he received a postcard encouraging him to keep up his work on logic. 'Your desire not to allow your intellectual work to be abandoned', Frege wrote, 'I find very understandable.' He thanked Wittgenstein for the invitation to come to Vienna to discuss his work, but thought it doubtful whether he would be able to make it. He hoped, nevertheless, to be able to continue their scientific discussions in some way or other. Wittgenstein, however, was to write little on logic for the remainder of the war. And when Frege finally had a chance to read the *Tractatus*, he was unable, in Wittgenstein's eyes, to understand a word of it.

The fighting on the Eastern Front during the months of April and May was light, but in June Russia launched its long-expected major assault, known, after the general who planned and led it, as the 'Brusilov Offensive'. Thus began some of the heaviest fighting of the entire war. The Austrian Eleventh Army, to which Wittgenstein's regiment was attached, faced the brunt of the attack and suffered enormous casualties. It was at precisely this time that the nature of Wittgenstein's work changed.

On 11 June his reflections on the foundations of logic are interrupted with the question: 'What do I know about God and the purpose of life?' He answers with a list:

I know that this world exists.

That I am placed in it like my eye in its visual field.

That something about it is problematic, which we call its meaning.

That this meaning does not lie in it but outside it.

That life is the world.

That my will penetrates the world.

That my will is good or evil.

Therefore that good and evil are somehow connected with the meaning of the world.

The meaning of life, i.e. the meaning of the world, we can call God.

And connect with this the comparison of God to a father.

To pray is to think about the meaning of life.

I cannot bend the happenings of the world to my will: I am completely powerless.

I can only make myself independent of the world – and so in a certain sense master it – by renouncing any influence on happenings.

These remarks are not written in code, but presented as if they somehow belonged to the logical work that precedes them. And from this time on reflections of this sort dominate the notebook. It is as if the personal and the philosophical had become fused; ethics and logic – the two aspects of the 'duty to oneself' – had finally come together, not merely as two aspects of the same personal task, but as two parts of the same philosophical work.

In a notebook entry of 8 July, for example, we find: 'Fear in the face of death is the best sign of a false, i.e. a bad life' – not, this time, as a statement of a personal credo but as a contribution to philosophical thought.

At the beginning of the war, after he had received news that his brother Paul had been seriously wounded and assumed that he had lost his profession as a concert pianist, he wrote: 'How terrible! What philosophy will ever assist one to overcome a fact of this sort?' Now, it seems, having experienced the full horrors of the war for himself, he needed, not only a religious faith, but also a philosophy.

That is to say, he needed not only to *believe* in God – to pray to Him for strength and for enlightenment; he needed to *understand* what it was that he was believing in. When he prayed to God, what was he doing? To whom was he addressing his prayers? Himself? The world? Fate? His answer seems to be: all three:

To believe in a God means to understand the meaning of life.

To believe in God means to see that the facts of the world are not the end of the matter.

To believe in God means to see that life has a meaning.

The world is *given* me, i.e. my will enters the world completely from the outside as into something that is already there.

(As for what my will is, I don't know yet.)

However this may be, at any rate we *are* in a certain sense dependent, and what we are dependent on we can call God.

In this sense God would simply be fate, or, what is the same thing: The world – which is independent of our will.

I can make myself independent of fate.

There are two godheads: the world and my independent I.

. . . When my conscience upsets my equilibrium, then I am not in agreement with Something. But what is this? Is it *the world*?

Certainly it is correct to say: Conscience is the voice of God.

A little later on we read: 'How things stand, is God. God is, how things stand.' By 'how things stand' here, he means both how they stand *in the world* and how they stand in *oneself*. For the self is, as Weininger and Schopenhauer had said, a microcosm of the world.

These thoughts seem to have forced themselves upon him – almost to have taken him by surprise. On 7 July he recorded: 'Colossal exertions in the last month. Have thought a great deal on every possible subject. But curiously I cannot establish the connection with my mathematical modes of thought.' And on 2 August he remarked about his work – as though it had a life of its own – that it had 'broadened out from the foundations of logic to the essence of the world'.

The connection between Wittgenstein's thought on logic and his reflections on the meaning of life was to be found in the distinction he had made earlier between *saying* and *showing*. Logical form, he had said, cannot be expressed *within* language, for it is the form of language itself; it makes itself manifest in language – it has to be *shown*. Similarly, ethical and religious truths, though inexpressible, manifest themselves in life:

> The solution to the problem of life is to be seen in the disappearance of the problem.
>
> Isn't this the reason why men to whom the meaning of life had become clear after long doubting could not say what this meaning consisted in?

Thus: 'Ethics does not treat of the world. Ethics must be a condition of the world, like logic.' Just as to understand logical form one must

see language as a whole, so, to understand ethics, one must see the world as a whole. When one tries to describe what one sees from such a view, one inevitably talks nonsense (as Wittgenstein wrote about his own attempts to do so: 'I am aware of the complete unclarity of all these sentences'), but that such a view is attainable is undeniable: 'There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They *make themselves manifest*. They are what is mystical.'

In discussing this view of the world (the view that sees it as a limited whole), Wittgenstein adopts the Latin phrase used by Spinoza: *sub specie aeternitatis* ('under the form of eternity'). It is the view, not only of ethics, but also of aesthetics:

> The work of art is the object seen *sub specie aeternitatis*; and the good life is the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. This is the connection between art and ethics.
>
> The usual way of looking at things sees objects as it were from the midst of them, the view *sub specie aeternitatis* from outside.
>
> In such a way that they have the whole world as background.

These remarks show the unmistakable influence of Schopenhauer. In *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer discusses, in a remarkably similar way, a form of contemplation in which we relinquish 'the ordinary way of considering things', and 'no longer consider the where, the when, the why, and the whither in things, but simply the *what*':

> Further we do not let abstract thought, the concepts of reason, take possession of our consciousness, but, instead of all this, devote the whole power of our mind to perception, sink ourselves completely therein, and let our whole consciousness be filled by the calm contemplation of the natural object actually present, whether it be a landscape, a tree, a rock, a crag, a building, or anything else. We *lose* ourselves entirely in this object, to use a pregnant expression . . .
>
> It was this that was in Spinoza's mind when he wrote: *Mens aeterna est quatenus res sub specie aeternitatis* ['The mind is eternal in so far as it conceives things from the standpoint of eternity'].

Whether Wittgenstein was rereading Schopenhauer in 1916, or whether he was remembering the passages that had impressed him in

his youth, there is no doubt that the remarks he wrote in that year have a distinctly Schopenhauerian feel. He even adopts Schopenhauer's jargon of *Wille* ('will') and *Vorstellung* ('representation' or, sometimes, 'idea'), as in:

> As my idea is the world, in the same way my will is the world-will.

Wittgenstein's remarks on the will and the self are, in many ways, simply a restatement of Schopenhauer's 'Transcendental Idealism', with its dichotomy between the 'world as idea', the world of space and time, and the 'world as will', the *noumenal*, timeless, world of the self. The doctrine might be seen as the philosophical equivalent of the religious state of mind derided by Nietzsche, the morbid sensitivity to suffering which takes flight from reality into 'a merely "inner" world, a "real" world, an "eternal" world'. When this state of mind is made the basis of a philosophy it becomes solipsism, the view that *the* world and *my* world are one and the same thing. Thus we find Wittgenstein saying:

> It is true: Man *is* the microcosm:
> I am my world.

What distinguishes Wittgenstein's statement of the doctrine from Schopenhauer's is that in Wittgenstein's case it is accompanied by the proviso that, when put into words, the doctrine is, strictly speaking, nonsense: 'what the solipsist *means* is quite correct; only it cannot be *said*, but makes itself manifest'.

He had, he thought, reached a point where Schopenhauerian solipsism and Fregean realism were combined in the same point of view:

> This is the way I have travelled: Idealism singles men out from the world as unique, solipsism singles me alone out, and at last I see that I too belong with the rest of the world, and so on the one side *nothing* is left over, and on the other side, as unique, *the world*. In this way idealism leads to realism if it is strictly thought out.

Frege, the thinker Wittgenstein credited with freeing him from his earlier Schopenhauerian idealism, was not, apparently, told of his

relapse back into it. A card from Frege dated 24 June remarks again how pleased he is that Wittgenstein is capable of scientific work. 'I can hardly say the same for myself', he writes. His mind is occupied by the war and by the suffering of the people he knows who are engaged in it, one of whom had recently been injured for the second time, while another had been killed in Poland. Of the Brusilov Offensive he says nothing, but remarks how pleased he was at the recapture of Lemberg. In the next card, dated 2 July, he sympathizes with Wittgenstein for the latter's inability to work. He, too, he says, has been incapable of scientific work, but he hopes that after the war he and Wittgenstein can take up again their work on logical questions. On 29 July he again remarks on the low spirits evident from Wittgenstein's recent communications, and hopes to receive a card written in a better spirit soon, but: 'I am always pleased to receive a sign of life from you.'

Nothing in these cards indicates that he was made aware of the fundamental changes taking place in Wittgenstein's thought at this time – that he knew of the widening of Wittgenstein's concerns from the foundations of logic to the essence of the world, or of Wittgenstein's conviction that he had found the point at which solipsism and realism coincide.

Thoughts of Pinsent had never been far from Wittgenstein's mind during the writing of his book. On 26 July he recorded another letter from him. It was written in German and told Wittgenstein of the death of Pinsent's brother, who had been killed in France. 'The war cannot change our personal relationships', Pinsent insisted; 'it has nothing to do with them.' 'This kind, lovely letter', Wittgenstein wrote, 'has opened my eyes to the way in which I live in *exile* here. It may be a salutary exile, but I feel it now as an exile.'

By this time the Austrian forces had been driven back into the Carpathian mountains, pursued by the victorious Russians. The conditions were harsh – 'icy cold, rain and fog', Wittgenstein records. It was: 'a life full of torment':

> Terribly difficult not to lose oneself. For I am a weak person. But the spirit will help me. The best thing would be if I were already ill, then at least I would have a bit of peace.

But to avoid capture or death he had to keep on the move, pursued by the fire of the advancing Russians. 'Was shot at', he wrote on 24 July, 'and at every shot I winced with my whole being. I want so much to go on living.'

Under these circumstances, the question of the identity of the 'philosophical I', the self which is the bearer of moral values, was given a peculiar intensity. On the retreat through the Carpathian mountains Wittgenstein discovered, probably for the first time in his life, what it was like to lose sight of that self and to be overtaken by an instinctual, animal, will to stay alive, a state in which moral values were irrelevant:

> Yesterday I was shot at. I was scared! I was afraid of death. I now have such a desire to live. And it is difficult to give up life when one enjoys it. This is precisely what 'sin' is, the unreasoning life, a false view of life. From time to time I become an *animal*. Then I can think of nothing but eating, drinking and sleeping. Terrible! And then I suffer like an animal too, without the possibility of internal salvation. I am then at the mercy of my appetites and aversions. Then an authentic life is unthinkable.

For the next three weeks, his diary shows him remonstrating with himself about this tendency to sink into a life of sin. 'You know what you have to do to live happily', he told himself on 12 August. 'Why don't you do it? Because you are unreasonable. A bad life is an unreasonable life.' He prayed to God for strength in the struggle against his own weak nature.

Despite these self-admonitions, he in fact showed remarkable courage throughout the campaign. During the first few days of the Brusilov Offensive he was recommended for a decoration in recognition of his bravery in keeping to his post, despite several times being told to take cover. 'By this distinctive behaviour', the report states, 'he exercised a very calming effect on his comrades.' He was quickly promoted, first to *Vormeister* (a non-commissioned artillery rank similar to the British Lance-Bombardier) and then to *Korporal*. Finally, towards the end of August, when the Russian advance had ground to a halt, he was sent away to the regiment's headquarters in Olmütz (Olomouc), Moravia, to be trained as an officer.

Before going to Olmütz Wittgenstein had a period of leave in Vienna. There, he wrote in his diary, he felt depressed and lonely, the one cheerful piece of news being the fact that Loos was still alive. From Loos he received the name and address of a contact in Olmütz: an ex-student of Loos was, at the time, convalescing at his family home there after having been discharged from the army suffering from tuberculosis.

On 28 August Wittgenstein received a letter from Frege suggesting that they enter into a correspondence on logic. When Wittgenstein had enough time, Frege suggested, couldn't he write his thoughts on paper and send them to him? He would then attempt to respond to Wittgenstein's thoughts by letter. 'In this way', wrote Frege, 'perhaps a scientific communication between us could take place, and so at least provide some sort of substitute for a face-to-face discussion.' Wittgenstein appears not to have responded to this suggestion until after he had completed his book. Perhaps the offer came too late; for in the autumn of 1916 he found the discussion partner he needed to work out the new direction of his thoughts.

The student Loos mentioned was Paul Engelmann, a member of a group of young people which formed a self-consciously cultured oasis in what was otherwise a rather culturally barren outpost of the Austro-Hungarian empire. There was Fritz Zweig, a gifted pianist who later became first conductor at the Berlin State Opera House, his cousin Max Zweig, a law student and playwright, and Heinrich ('Heini') Groag, also a law student and later a successful barrister. Groag was, says Engelmann, 'one of the wittiest men I ever met'. Engelmann's brother, too, was a man of sharp wit – later to become famous in Vienna as the cartoonist 'Peter Eng' – although at this time he and Wittgenstein shared a mutual antipathy for one another. Engelmann himself was a disciple of both Adolf Loos and Karl Kraus. After his discharge from the army he devoted himself to assisting Kraus in his campaign against the war, helping to collect the newspaper cuttings that formed the material for Kraus's satirical anti-war propaganda.

Wittgenstein arrived in Olmütz some time in October 1916, and stayed there until shortly before Christmas. He wanted at first to lodge in the tower of Olmütz Town Hall, but upon being told by the watchman that it was not to let, he settled for a room in a tenement block on the outskirts of town. Shortly after moving in, he fell ill with

enteritis, and was nursed back to health by Engelmann, with the help of Engelmann's mother, who cooked Wittgenstein light meals, which Engelmann would then deliver to the invalid. On the first occasion that he performed this act of kindness Engelmann spilt some soup on his way up to Wittgenstein's room. On his entering, Wittgenstein exclaimed: 'My dear friend, you are showering me with kindness', to which Engelmann, his coat bespattered, replied: 'I am afraid I have been showering myself.' It was exactly the sort of simple kindness and simple humour that Wittgenstein appreciated, and the scene stayed in his mind. When he was back at the Front he wrote to Engelmann: 'I often think of you . . . and of the time you brought me some soup. But that was your mother's fault as well as yours! And I shall never forget her either.'

Thanks to Engelmann's group of friends, Wittgenstein's time at Olmütz was a happy one. He joined in with their performances of Molière's *Malade imaginaire*, listened appreciatively to Fritz Zweig's piano recitals and, above all, he joined in with their conversations – about literature, music and religion. With Engelmann particularly he was able to discuss with a sympathetic and like-minded listener all the ideas that had come to him during the last six months at the Front. Sometimes, Engelmann recalls, these conversations would be conducted while he was accompanying Wittgenstein on his way back from Engelmann's house to his room on the outskirts of town. If they were still engrossed in discussion by the time they reached the tenement block, they would turn round and continue the conversation while Wittgenstein accompanied Engelmann back.

Engelmann was the closest friend Wittgenstein had had since leaving England. The friendship owed much to the fact that the two met each other at a time when both were experiencing a religious awakening which they each interpreted and analysed in a similar way. Engelmann puts it well when he says that it was his own spiritual predicament that:

> . . . enabled me to understand, from within as it were, his utterances that mystified everyone else. And it was this understanding on my part that made me indispensable to him at that time.

Wittgenstein himself used to say: 'If I can't manage to bring forth a proposition, along comes Engelmann with his forceps and pulls it out of me.'

The image brings to mind Russell's remark about dragging Wittgenstein's thoughts out of him with pincers. And, indeed, it is hard to resist comparing Engelmann and Russell with respect to the roles they played in Wittgenstein's life during the development of the *Tractatus*. Engelmann himself seems to have had the comparison in mind when he wrote that:

> In me Wittgenstein unexpectedly met a person, who, like many members of the younger generation, suffered acutely under the discrepancy between the world as it is and as it ought to be according to his lights, but who tended also to seek the source of that discrepancy within, rather than outside himself. This was an attitude which he had not encountered elsewhere and which, at the same time, was vital for any true understanding or meaningful discussion of his spiritual condition.

And of Russell's introduction to the book, he says:

> [It] may be considered one of the main reasons why the book, though recognized to this day as an event of decisive importance in the field of logic, has failed to make itself understood as a philosophical work in the wider sense. Wittgenstein must have been deeply hurt to see that even such outstanding men, who were also helpful friends of his, were incapable of understanding his purpose in writing the *Tractatus*.

To a certain extent, this is anachronistic. It shows, too, little awareness of the fact that the Wittgenstein Engelmann met in 1916 was not the same as the Wittgenstein Russell had met in 1911. Nor was his purpose in writing the *Tractatus* the same. Russell was not in touch with Wittgenstein at a time when his work 'broadened out from the foundations of logic to the essence of the world'; so far as Russell knew, his purpose in writing the book was to shed light on the nature of logic. Engelmann, one might say, would have been little use to Wittgenstein's development as a philosopher in 1911, when his preoccupations centred on the issues raised by Russell's Paradox.

Nevertheless, it remains true that in 1916 – just as in 1911 – Wittgenstein was fortunate to be in a situation in which he could have

daily conversations with, and the almost undivided attention of, a kindred spirit.

It is noteworthy that there are no coded remarks in Wittgenstein's notebook for this time; Engelmann's presence made them unnecessary. There are, however, a number of philosophical remarks. In the main these are a continuation of the Schopenhauerian line of thought begun at the Front. It is likely, I think, that his protracted conversations with Engelmann helped Wittgenstein to formulate the connections between the mystical and the logical parts of the book. Certainly he discussed the book in depth with Engelmann, and from the latter's 'Observations on the *Tractatus*' included in his memoir it is clear that it had been firmly impressed upon him that: 'logic and mysticism have here sprung from the same root'. The central thread that links the logic and the mysticism – the idea of the unutterable truth that makes itself manifest – was an idea that came naturally to Engelmann. Indeed, he later supplied Wittgenstein with what both considered to be an excellent example: a poem by Uhland called 'Count Eberhard's Hawthorn'.

After spending Christmas in Vienna Wittgenstein returned to the Russia Front in January 1917, now an artillery officer attached to a division of the Austrian Third Army stationed just north of the Carpathian mountains. By now the Russians were in disarray and the Front was relatively quiet. He wrote to Engelmann that he was once again capable of work (unfortunately, the manuscripts from this period have not survived). In all probability the work he wrote at this time was concerned with the inexpressibility of ethical and aesthetic truths. In a letter dated 4 April 1917, Engelmann enclosed 'Count Eberhard's Hawthorn', Uhland's poem recounting the story of a soldier who, while on crusade, cuts a spray from a hawthorn bush; when he returns home he plants the sprig in his grounds, and in old age he sits beneath the shade of the fully grown hawthorn tree, which serves as a poignant reminder of his youth. The tale is told very simply, without adornment and without drawing any moral. And yet, as Engelmann says, 'the poem as a whole gives in 28 lines the picture of a life'. It is, he told Wittgenstein, 'a wonder of objectivity':

> Almost all other poems (including the good ones) attempt to express the inexpressible, here that is not attempted, and precisely because of that it is achieved.

Wittgenstein agreed. The poem, he wrote to Engelmann, is indeed 'really magnificent':

> And this is how it is: if only you do not try to utter what is unutterable then *nothing* gets lost. But the unutterable will be – unutterably – *contained* in what has been uttered!

There was, at this time, some reason to think that the war might soon come to an end through a victory for the Central Powers. The government in Russia had collapsed; there had been a breakthrough for the Germans against the French on the Western Front; and the U-Boat campaign against the British seemed to be succeeding. So, at least, Frege thought. 'Let's hope for the best!' he wrote to Wittgenstein on 26 April, listing all these reasons for doing so.

During the quiet time that followed the Russian Revolution, Wittgenstein was given some leave in Vienna. There Frege wrote to him, apologizing for having to refuse his invitation to come to Vienna to discuss his work. 'The journey to Vienna and back again', he explained, 'is, under my present circumstances, too strenuous.' It was clear that if Wittgenstein wanted to discuss his work with Frege, he would have to go to Jena.

In the event, the collapse of the Tsarist government was to lead, initially, to renewed activity on the Eastern Front. The new Minister of War (and, from July, the new Prime Minister), Alexander Kerensky, was determined to continue the struggle, and in July the Russians launched the ill-fated offensive named after him. The will to prolong the war on the part of the ordinary soldiers had, however, by this time been dissipated, and the Russian advance soon ground to a halt. Wittgenstein was awarded the Silver Medal for Valour for his part in the stand made by the Austro-Hungarian forces in defence of their positions at Ldziany. In the counter-offensive that followed he took part in the advance along the line of the river Pruth which led, in August, to the capture of the city of Czernowitz (Chernovtsy) in the Ukraine.

The Russian war effort had by this time completely collapsed, and with it the Kerensky government. The war in the East had been won by the Central Powers. After coming to power with a slogan of 'Bread and Peace', it remained only for the new Bolshevik government to salvage whatever they could from their inevitable surrender.

Throughout the long drawn out negotiations that followed, Wittgenstein remained stationed in the Ukraine, and it was not until 3 March 1918, when Lenin and Trotsky finally gave their signatures to the draconian terms of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, that he, along with the bulk of the Austro-Hungarian forces, was transferred to the Italian Front.

During these six months of effectively non-combatant service, he seems to have begun the work of arranging his philosophical remarks into something like the form they finally took in the *Tractatus*. The manuscript of an early version of the book (published as *Prototractatus*) appears to date from this time, and we have it from Engelmann that a typed copy of the book existed *before* Wittgenstein left for Italy. This cannot have been the final version, but it is clear that during the winter of 1917–18 the work was beginning to take its final shape.

During this time Wittgenstein was in communication with both Frege and Engelmann. Frege wrote cards expressing the by now customary wish that he and Wittgenstein would be able to meet to discuss logic after the war. Engelmann, who was at this time employed by the Wittgenstein family to make alterations to their house in the Neuwaldeggergasse, wrote on more personal matters. On 8 January 1918 he was bold enough to make an observation on Wittgenstein's spiritual condition. It was, he said, something he had wanted to say when the two met in Vienna during the Christmas vacation, but had neglected to do so. 'If in saying it, I do you an injustice, forgive me':

> It seemed to me as if you – in contrast to the time you spent in Olmütz, where I had not thought so – had no faith. I write this not in an attempt to influence you. But I ask you to consider what I say, and wish for you, that you do what is in your *true* best interests.

Wittgenstein's reply to this is remarkably forbearing. 'It is true', he wrote, 'that there is a difference between myself as I am now and as I was when we met in Olmütz. And, as far as I know, the difference is that I am now *slightly* more decent. By this I only mean that I am slightly clearer in my own mind about my lack of decency':

> If you tell me now I have no faith, you are *perfectly right*, only I did not have it before either. It is plain, isn't it, that when a man wants, as it were, to invent a machine for becoming decent, such a man has no faith. But what am I to do? *I am clear about one thing*: I am far too bad to be able to theorize about myself; in fact I shall either remain a swine or else I shall improve, and that's that! Only let's cut out the transcendental twaddle when the whole thing is as plain as a sock on the jaw.

'I am sure you are quite right in all you say', the letter ends. Engelmann had, it seems, at one and the same time spoken twaddle and spoken the truth. It was a combination that Wittgenstein was also to attribute to his own words in the *Tractatus*, but which Russell, as a logician, was to find deeply unsatisfying.

On 1 February 1918 Wittgenstein was promoted *Leutnant*, and on 10 March he transferred to a mountain artillery regiment fighting on the Italian Front. His book now almost complete, he wrote to Frege on 25 March acknowledging the great debt his work owed to the elderly, and still much neglected, logician. Frege replied that he was astonished to read such an effusive acknowledgement:

> Each of us, I think, has taken something from others in our intellectual work. If I have furthered your endeavours more than I thought I had, then I am very pleased to have done so.

In the preface to the final version of the book, Wittgenstein repeats that he is indebted 'to Frege's great works and to the writings of my friend Mr Bertrand Russell for much of the stimulation of my thoughts'.

Within a month of arriving in Italy Wittgenstein fell ill with the enteritis that had troubled him in Olmütz, and sent away to Engelmann for the medicine he had been given then – 'the *only one* that has ever helped me'. Engelmann was slow to reply, and when on 28 May he finally put pen to paper, it was to ask Wittgenstein whether he knew of any remedy for a weakness of the will! His letter crossed with a parcel of books sent by Wittgenstein: 'which you don't deserve as you are too lazy even to answer an urgent enquiry'.

In the meantime, Wittgenstein had spent some time in a military hospital in Bolzano, where he was presumably able to continue work on his book. A letter from Frege of 1 June remarks how pleased he is

that Wittgenstein's work is coming to a conclusion, and that he hopes it will all soon be down on paper 'so that it doesn't get lost'.

On the same day Adele Jolles wrote to him in a slightly wounded tone, apologizing for bothering him with another letter when he was so contemptuous of letters and so reluctant to engage in a superficial exchange. The Jolles family were perhaps the first, but by no means the last, of Wittgenstein's friends to fall victim to the changes in him wrought by his experience of war.

By the time of the Austrian offensive of 15 June Wittgenstein was fit enough to take part, and was employed as an observer with the artillery attacking French, British and Italian troops in the Trentino mountains. Once again he was cited for his bravery. 'His exceptionally courageous behaviour, calmness, sang-froid, and heroism', ran the report, 'won the total admiration of the troops.' He was recommended for the Gold Medal for Valour, the Austrian equivalent of the Victoria Cross, but was awarded instead the Band of the Military Service Medal with Swords, it being decided that his action, though brave, had been insufficiently consequential to merit the top honour. The attack, which was to be the last in which Wittgenstein took part, and indeed the last of which the Austrian army was capable, was quickly beaten back. In July, after the retreat, he was given a long period of leave that lasted until the end of September.

It was not in Vienna, but at Wittgenstein's Uncle Paul's house in Hallein, near Salzburg, that what we now know as *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* received its final form. One day in the summer of 1918 Paul Wittgenstein came across his nephew unexpectedly at a railway station. He found him desperately unhappy and intent on committing suicide, but managed to persuade him to come to Hallein. There Wittgenstein finished his book.

The most likely cause of this suicidal wish is a letter from Mrs Ellen Pinsent, dated 6 July, written to inform Wittgenstein of the death of her son, David, who had been killed in an aeroplane accident on 8 May. He had been engaged in research on aerodynamics, and had died investigating the cause of a previous accident. 'I want to tell you', she wrote, 'how much he loved you and valued your friendship up to the last.' It was to David's memory that Wittgenstein dedicated the completed book. David was, he wrote to Mrs Pinsent, 'my first and my only friend':

> I have indeed known many young men of my own age and have been on good terms with some, but only in him did I find a real friend, the hours I have spent with him have been the best in my life, he was to me a brother and a friend. Daily I have thought of him and have longed to see him again. God will bless him. If I live to see the end of the war I will come and see you and we will talk of David.

'One thing more,' he added. 'I have just finished the philosophical work on which I was already at work at Cambridge':

> I had always hoped to be able to show it to him some time, and it will always be connected with him in my mind. I will dedicate it to David's memory. For he always took great interest in it, and it is to him I owe far the most part of the happy moods which made it possible for me to work.

This last, as we have seen, refers not only to the time they spent together in Cambridge, Iceland and Norway, but also to the letters that Pinsent wrote during the war, which were, at times, the only things capable of reviving Wittgenstein's spirits sufficiently to enable him to concentrate on philosophy.

Now, having finished the book – having solved the problems he had set out to solve – what struck him most forcibly was the relative unimportance of the task that he had achieved. 'The *truth* of the thoughts that are here communicated', he wrote in the preface, 'seems to me unassailable and definitive'; and he believed himself to have found, 'on all essential points', the solution to the problems of philosophy. But:

> . . . if I am not mistaken in this belief, then the second thing in which the value of this work consists is that it shows how little is achieved when these problems are solved.

He chose as a motto for the book a quotation from Kürnberger: '. . . and anything a man knows, anything he has not merely heard rumbling and roaring, can be said in three words'. The quotation had been used before by Karl Kraus, and it is possible that Wittgenstein took it from Kraus, but it is equally likely he got it straight from Kürnberger (books by Kürnberger were among those sent by

Wittgenstein to Engelmann). In any case, it is extremely apt. The whole meaning of his book, he says in the preface, 'can be summed up as follows: What can be said at all can be said clearly; and whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent.'

In its final form, the book is a formidably compressed distillation of the work Wittgenstein had written since he first came to Cambridge in 1911. The remarks in it, selected from a series of perhaps seven manuscript volumes, are numbered to establish a hierarchy in which, say, remark 2.151 is an elaboration of 2.15, which in turn elaborates the point made in remark 2.1, and so on. Very few of the remarks are justified with an argument; each proposition is put forward, as Russell once put it, 'as if it were a Czar's ukase'. The Theory of Logic worked out in Norway before the war, the Picture Theory of Propositions developed during the first few months of the war, and the quasi-Schopenhauerian mysticism embraced during the second half of the war, are all allotted a place within the crystalline structure, and are each stated with the kind of finality that suggests they are all part of the same incontrovertible truth.

Central to the book in all its aspects is the distinction between showing and saying: it is at once the key to understanding the superfluity of the Theory of Types in logic and to realizing the inexpressibility of ethical truths. What the Theory of Types attempts to say can be shown only by a correct symbolism, and what one wants to say about ethics can be shown only by contemplating the world *sub specie aeternitatis*. Thus: 'There is indeed the inexpressible. This *shows* itself; it is the mystical.'

The famous last sentence of the book – 'Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent' – expresses both a logico-philosophical truth and an ethical precept.

To this extent, as Engelmann has pointed out, the book's central message is allied to the campaign of Karl Kraus to preserve the purity of language by exposing to ridicule the confused thought that stems from its misuse. The nonsense that results from trying to say what can only be shown is not only logically untenable, but ethically undesirable.

On completion of the book Wittgenstein evidently considered these ethical implications to be as important, if not more so, as its implications for logical theory. He wanted it published alongside the work of Kraus. And as soon as it was finished, he sent it to Kraus's publisher, Jahoda, seemingly expecting the relevance of it to Kraus's work to be readily apparent. At the same time he wrote to Frege offering to send him a copy. In a letter of 12 September Frege says that he would indeed be pleased to see it. He could understand, he wrote, Wittgenstein's feeling that the work might prove fruitless: when one has forged a path up a steep mountain that no one has climbed before, there must be a doubt as to whether anyone else will have the desire to follow one up it. He knew that doubt himself. And yet he had confidence that his work had not all been in vain. In a later letter (15 October) he writes: 'May it be granted to you to see your work in print, and to me to read it!'

Engelmann, too, was promised a copy. Towards the end of September, immediately before he returned to Italy, Wittgenstein travelled to Olmütz, and it was then that Engelmann read the book for the first time. In a letter to Wittgenstein of 7 November he mentions that he often reads in it: 'and it gives me more and more joy, the more I understand it'.

At the end of September Wittgenstein returned to the Italian Front, and for the next month waited impatiently to hear from Jahoda. 'Still no reply from the publisher!' he wrote to Engelmann on 22 October:

> And I feel an insuperable repugnance against writing to him with a query. The devil knows what he is doing with my manuscript. Please be so *very* kind and look up the damned blighter some day when you are in Vienna, and then let me know the result!

A few days later he was informed that Jahoda could not publish the work, 'for technical reasons'. 'I would dearly like to know what Kraus said about it', he told Engelmann. 'If there were an opportunity for you to find out, I should be very glad. Perhaps Loos knows something about it.'

By the time Wittgenstein returned to Italy, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was beginning to break up. The allegiance of the Czechs, the Poles, the Croats and the Hungarians that made up the bulk of its army was no longer given to the Habsburg Empire (in so far as it ever had been), but to the various national states, the creation of which had been promised to them not only by the Allies, but by the Habsburg Emperor himself. After the final Allied breakthrough of 30 October,