SHE SHALL HAVE MUSIC

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The Memoirs of

BEATRICE MARX

W. J. FLESCH & PARTNERS

CAPE TOWN

ONE OF THE PIONEERS of good music in South Africa, Beatrice Marx (for the last 30 years music critic of *The Cape Times*), in this spirited story of her life, writes vividly of the great figures in the world of music, the theatre and art whom she met both in this country and abroad in the last 60 or 70 years—Elgar, Paderewski, Edward Lloyd, Clara Butt, Ellen Terry, Tartaglione, Beerbohm Tree, Eleonora Duse, to mention but a handful. (She was present when Tchaikovsky's Pathétique Symphony was played in London for the very first time).

Long before she established music clubs which brought good music to the smallest country towns, she had, as Beatrice Stuart, made a name for herself both as a concert performer (violin and piano) and as a teacher in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town.

In 1914 she joined the staff of the South African College of Music and also the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra, later marrying Ellie Marx, the orchestra's brilliant first violinist. She has thus been at the very centre of musical life at the Cape which she describes so refreshingly and with such splendid anecdote.

But this is more than the story of music. It is an intensely personal and human document by a woman of talent, refinement, enterprise and courage. It is the story also of her gifted family and of her British-Netherlands forbears, all told against the social background of London of Victorian and Edwardian days, of the Natal countryside in the closing years of the last century, then of the expansive days of a fast-spreading Johannesburg and finally of the Cape of contemporary times—altogether a warm-hearted autobiography of a woman who has led a full and fascinating life.

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To Ellie

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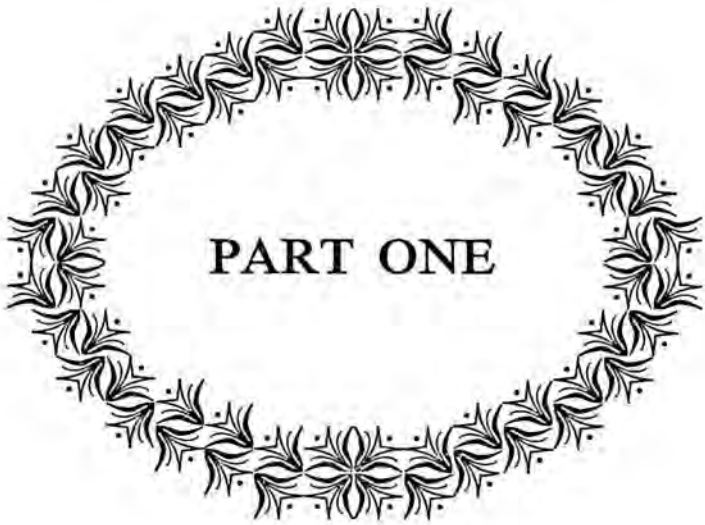


PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

MY MOTHER was the brilliant one of the family. I never heard why her father, David Taylor, left his family in England as a young man to come to South Africa, nor how it was that he met and married Sophia Moodie in Pietermaritzburg before taking her to settle in Blanco, near George in the Cape Colony, where my Mother and her brother Jack were born. He could not have lived very long afterwards, for his Sophie had time to journey back to Natal with her two little ones, meet, marry and travel all over Zululand with John Shepstone, and then die before she was thirty-six.

Mother used to tell tales of those pioneering treks in Zululand. One I remember perfectly. She and Uncle Jack, sitting at the back of the ox-wagon as they forded a river, were horrified to see their little dog, swimming beside them, caught by a crocodile and dragged out of sight. Another story was about her mother's meeting with the Zulu king, M'Panda, who was so astounded by his first sight of her that he spat on her hand and tried to rub off the 'white'.

Mother's step-father, John Shepstone, was Judge of the Native High Court in Maritzburg, and he and his brother, Sir Theophilus, were big-wigs in those early Natal days. Both kept open house, and while Lady Shepstone—a great lady of the old school—held court in the charming old house at the top end of Loop Street, young Mary gloried in playing hostess to her step-father's guests lower down the town. Picture her . . . a high-spirited girl of fifteen, entertaining them and getting a sort of catch-as-catch-can education at the same time.

Of course it couldn't be allowed to go on. Mary's maternal relations were up in arms over the scandal of it. They were the Moodie clan, lots of them. They put their heads together and decided that the only thing to do with Mary was to pack her off to her father's people in England. It sounded exciting, and Mary was all for it. How was she to guess what havoc it would make of her life? And if she had, who would have listened to her pleas not to be sent away?

She was put on to a sailing ship in charge of the captain and his wife, and the voyage lasted three months.

I think Mary must have felt like a bird in a cage for the five years that followed. The three old maiden aunts, her father's sisters, lived in a tall, old-fashioned house in Islington, secluded and far from the distractions of London's West End. It was the year 1861. Women dressed in crinolines and had their hair parted and combed demurely over their ears to a bun or chignon at the back of their heads. (A photograph of Mary at seventeen made her look like a woman twice that age.)

It was an age of prunes and prisms, especially where maiden aunts were concerned.

Aunt Rebecca, eldest of the three, must have been about sixty-five, Aunt Eliza, the next, was sixty-two, and just as plain and forbidding as Aunt Rebecca. Aunt Sarah, Mary's favourite, never dared to be soft and loving to the motherless child who ached for a warm hug and a kiss now and then, for she, too, had to mind her p's and q's with her sisters.

There was another old maid in the house—Styles, a lady's maid and parlourmaid in one. She had raven black hair, a straight plank of a figure, and had been with the aunts since the beginning of time. Mary found more warmth in Charlotte, the buxom housemaid who used to smile at her sometimes, and was periodically told off to accompany her to the dentist. Poor Mary was never allowed outside the garden gate alone; she was informed that young ladies in London must always have chaperones.

How she sighed for the freedom of her life in Natal! The picnics, the dances when she had been as gay and carefree as a bird, and the riding parties with all her young friends!

But sighs and longings had to be stifled.

It was no good looking back. Besides, John Shepstone was about to marry again, and it would be unfair to come back like a bad penny.

Meanwhile, many daily chores included lessons in darning stockings under Aunt Sarah's watchful guidance. How in-

variably those sharp eyes picked out the little spots Mary had left untouched, and how vainly she pleaded, "But, Aunt Sarah, I don't *hunt* for them as you do!"

I wonder how that fun-loving girl spent her time apart from those duties. Reading—one of Mother's greatest joys all her life—was mercifully not forbidden, but there must have been times when boredom enveloped her like a cloud. For some reason that I could never fathom, and she never did, either, the old aunts would not allow her to touch the piano. There it stood, in the musty old drawingroom, never played on from one year's end to another, and there was that little caged bird, bursting with the love of music and the longing to learn—to teach herself if need be—and forced to be silent. She used to steal upstairs when the aunts were out and gently open the lid and stroke the keys, afraid to make them sound . . .

It makes my heart ache, even now, to remember how her fingers used to grope over the keys of our piano when I was a child, as she invented accompaniments to the sweet old songs she taught herself to sing. She had a lovely voice, a ringing soprano which had, even in her old age, the freshness of youth. She saw to it that I had every chance of learning as soon as I was old enough, and then I played those accompaniments for her . . . But here I am, running on, and Aunt Rebecca and the other two coming in at the front door and wanting to know what Mary has been up to in their absence . . .

The aunts took in a periodical magazine which ran serials week by week. It was a highlight in Mary's life when it arrived, especially when *The Old Curiosity Shop* came out, for Charles Dickens in those days was at the height of his fame. People meeting in the street would talk over each chapter as it appeared. The sad day came when Little Nell died. "Have you heard?" a neighbour said to Aunt Sarah and Mary as they passed her gate—"Little Nell . . . Little Nell! Oh"—wiping away her tears—"I can't talk about it!"

Mary was one of the most devoted of Dickens's admirers. She took her courage in both hands one day and wrote to the great man. He must have been touched by her girlish ardour, for he answered her letter. How transported she was! She carried the precious thing next to her heart for days, longing for a congenial spirit to whom she could display her treasure. She dared not confess her unmaidenly action to the aunts, and as for confiding in Styles or Charlotte, they would simply not have understood.

She sent the letter eventually to a girl friend in the country, with strict injunctions about sending it back in deepest secrecy.

Weeks passed. News came that the girl was laid up with scarlet fever. At last, three months later, she wrote enclosing the letter, assuring Mary that every precaution had been taken to make it free of infection. Alas! It arrived at breakfast time.

"Who is your correspondent, Mary?" asked Aunt Rebecca, looking at her sharply over her spectacles. Poor Mary! She was obliged to give the girl's name. "Why, she's just had scarlet fever!" chorused the aunts. "Put it behind the fire *at once*, dear!" Any hesitation would have led to the discovery of the shameful secret enclosed in the letter. Mary quailed at the thought. Slowly she left her seat and went to the fireplace. With a bursting heart she saw the flames lick round the pages covered with the fine writing in violet ink . . . Never to her dying day did she forget the tragedy of that winter morning.

The aunts had visitors now and then, and sometimes Mary was allowed to sit by while they conversed. Once, a handsome young man made his appearance—the son of an old friend now in South Africa. Mary was now seventeen and quite alive to the admiring glances he shot across the dinner table from time to time. She looked forward to a few words with him, perhaps, before he went away. But no. Aunt Sarah—not Aunt Rebecca for once—waited for the damask cloth to be removed and the dessert to be brought on and then, taking a plate, she selected a peach from one dish, an apple from another and nuts and raisins from a third.

Handing the plate to Mary she said, "Here, dear, perhaps you would prefer to have these in your own room".

The indignity of it! Mary rose; with downcast eyes she saw in the polished wood of the mahogany table the reflection of the colour flooding her cheeks . . .

Meanwhile, there were letters from home. Not very many, because having to pay sixpence on every one, she did not encourage too many correspondents. A young man named Martinus Stuart was one. He and Mary had struck up a boy-and-girl attachment before she left home. He was very good-looking, with flashing brown eyes under a thatch of black hair, and since he was three years older, it flattered Mary to know that he had singled her out. His parents were Hollanders who had come to South Africa some seven or eight years earlier.

Mary had been a favourite with his parents, and it was largely through the influence of the aristocratic old lady that eventually she married Martinus.

The Stuarts were courtly, gentle people; their ancestors had migrated from Scotland to Holland in the time of the Pretender. This gave rise to the rumour that they were descendants of the

Royal Stuarts, but Mother, untouched by glamour, was not proud of it. "Those Stuarts", she'd say, "what a poor lot they were!" Grandpapa, however, possessed a ring which he declared had belonged to the Duke of Monmouth, and which he had had cut in half for his two sons. One was turned into a wedding ring for Mother. She never really liked it because of its pale gold colour and its thinness, and gave up wearing it when my eldest brother, Jamie, bought her a new one with his first earnings after he left school. We left it on her hand when she died, and the other was given to Jamie. Now his son, Robert, has it as the present head of the family.

Old Jacobus Stuart, my grandfather, came from Holland where he owned the estate of Velscher, in Amsterdam, originally built for a Dutch prince. In the early 1850s he travelled for two years in South Africa, and after his return to Holland he published a book, *Die Hollansche Afrikanen en hun Republiek in Zuid Afrika*, which gave the world its first authentic information of the history of the Voortrekkers, gathered direct from those of them who were still alive.

Before returning to Holland he had been entrusted by General Andries Pretorius to sell 600,000 acres of land in the Lydenburg district, with a view to encouraging Dutch immigration. The scheme failed, however, as it was found that settlers were entitled to free farms after six months' residence in the Transvaal. Moreover, as he pointed out to the Volksraad, no immigrants would be attracted to the country until a code of laws had been drawn up and proclaimed by the Volksraad itself.

After a great deal of persuasion his suggestion was acted on; a commission was appointed to draw up a Concept of Laws with himself as chairman and K. J. de Kok (a young land surveyor who had come from Holland with him) as honorary secretary. It happened that Grandpapa had in his possession a French copy of the Constitution of the United States, and this was the sole guide or book of reference used for drawing up the articles which, with a few additions, were to constitute the Grondwet Constitution of the Transvaal Republic.

Grandpapa's young friend, Karel de Kok, was responsible for the drawing up of one of the first maps of Johannesburg. He, too, wrote a book—entertaining fragments of social and civic history of the Orange Free State and Transvaal which were published under the title of *Empires of the Veld*, or *Toen en Tans*.

He was very handsome, gay and debonair, and a remarkably fine baritone voice rounded off his list of attractions. The story

goes that when Grandpapa took him home to introduce him to his wife and daughters, he had no eyes for the captivating beauty of the elder one, but was struck with love at first sight for the plain younger sister in the background, spell-bound by the open gaze of her steadfast blue eyes.

Perhaps he was blessed with a prescience of the fifty years of unclouded married happiness they were to have together. ("My life will not be long enough to show you how much I love you", he told her on their wedding-day.)

The beautiful elder sister was Aunt Cor—short for Cornelia—who married Captain Albert Allison, a magistrate well-known in Natal. Their eldest son, James, retrieved the sword of the Prince Imperial, son of Napoleon III, after he was killed in the Zulu war of 1879. When it was returned to his mother—the Empress Eugenie, living then in England—she sent Aunt Cor a pearl as a symbol of her gratitude, and it became an heirloom in the Allison family.

Mary had gradually outgrown her childish infatuation for the boy Martinus. Reports reaching her that he was getting into bad company and wasting his time had helped to disillusion her. Her coolness probably fanned his ardour. He heard her praises being constantly sung by his parents; he wrote, at last, begging her to marry him.

His mother wrote as well, and Mary—feeling something of a heroine and longing to get home—finally gave her promise.

The months that followed were given up to preparing her trousseau, a dozen of this, a dozen of that. One, only one of those garments is still in existence, a chemise of coarse calico that in these days of nylons and orlons a housemaid would not deign to look at, but what work in it—myriads of exquisitely fine stitches and open-work embroidery and cross-stitch monograms that would grace the lingerie of a duchess.

On her return voyage to South Africa, once more in charge of the Captain and his wife, Mary's spirits flared up like the bubbles escaping from a bottle of champagne. Life was suddenly gay and full of colour again. She was not actually in love, but everything was set for it. She was a bride-to-be, whose lover was waiting ardently over the seas, ready to open the gates of Paradise for her, and she would be free, free, *free* to enjoy life to the full once more.

Meanwhile, she was the life and soul of the ship and a prime favourite with the captain. He was an easy-going man, henpecked by a wife who carried a whistle to blow whenever she wanted him. "Run, Teddy, *run*" Mary would cry with wicked glee. (Can you picture such a scene on a present-day big liner?) He put up with her impudence as he bore with his

wife's arrogance. Mary never saw him again after that voyage, but she kept an affection for him always, because, with him, part of her irresponsible girlhood left her forever.

At times, as the ship sailed on its leisurely course, Mary was beset with qualms as to the wisdom of the step she had taken. Now that the bars of her cage were down, and her popularity on the ship was giving her a taste of what she might expect in her own circle, she began to wonder whether she had not been somewhat precipitate in turning her back on the joys of unattached girlhood. There was also the nagging thought behind these probings that her mother's sisters had not smiled on her engagement.

"Mary, dear", Aunt Lolotte had written, "do think well before you decide on this step. Martinus Stuart is no doubt a fine young man, and his people, one hears, are well-connected in Holland. But he is a foreigner, after all, and mixed marriages can end up very unhappily. We are all concerned about it and think you could do very much better for yourself". Mary had tossed the letter aside. Advice on those lines was not to her taste. She was deeply loyal to the old Stuarts, and the idea of breaking off her engagement on the mere score of nationality seemed ridiculous. Love, and love alone should decide a matter of this sort . . .

That was how her thoughts had run in London. But now, alone with them and away from persuasion for or against this vital step—was she so sure? Mary was far too healthy in mind and body to give way to futile introspection. Before the voyage was over she had, in her mercurial way, cast all her doubts aside. She determined to cross her bridges when she got to them, meanwhile Life, with a capital L, was opening its gates and, come what might, she meant to make the most of all it held for her.

She reached her journey's end at a critical time. A bitter controversy was raging in Maritzburg between the heads of the two cathedrals, Dean Greene, representing St. Saviour's and its congregation, and Bishop Colenso and his following at St. Peter's.

Poor Mary found herself plunged into the middle of the two factions. Aunt Lolotte was Uncle Dean's wife, and Bishop Colenso was a close friend of the Stuarts, and a constant visitor at their home. The Moodies hated the very sight and sound of his name, but it only added fuel to the fire of her loyalty to her old friends. She threw up her head, feeling that she had found the solvent to her doubts.

An uncomfortable period ensued. Shorn of all the fun and gaieties she had looked forward to, time for Mary passed almost

as drearily as it had done in Islington. A few little gifts came from old friends, half-heartedly sent, because Maritzburg was a small community, and it was known that Mary was defying her people's wishes.

The wedding-day dawned at last. Mary, the light of battle in her eyes under the flame of her red-gold hair, was a lovely bride, but on this, the most vital day of her life, every one of her relations left the town. She never got over the hurt to her pride, and it cut her to the heart, but it confirmed her decision to throw in her lot thenceforth with that of her husband's people. The rift in her own was healed in after years . . . she was never one to reject an olive branch.

CHAPTER TWO

MARY settled down with a will to her new life. She was always adaptable and she found great fun in having a house of her own to manage, and in trying to make sixpences go as far as shillings. She knew, of course, that Martinus was earning only £150 a year as assistant in the magistrate's office, and had no illusions on that score. He had not attempted to disguise his position. There was not a streak in his make-up of the romantic outlook on life that made his Polly look so engagingly at everything through rose-coloured spectacles.

Except for his passionate love and admiration for her, there was in his nature much of the phlegm typical of his Dutch parentage, and sometimes it couldn't make head or tail of the changing lights in hers. This characteristic, when it came into conflict with her volatile moods—as often happened in their years together—caused many misunderstandings and heart-burnings.

One of these, after he had left for his work in the morning without the customary "kiss-and-be-friends-again", made her suddenly chop off the two heavy plaits of her hair, reaching far below her waist, that were her greatest beauty and his special pride. It was sheer temper, the hot, unbridled fury of a child, bitterly regretted the moment after. But pride helped to keep her head up while she hid in the kitchen when he came in at the door, hours later.

It must have cost her something, though, to parry the hurt, bewildered look on his face when he caught sight of the havoc that had been done.

Sunshine came with a burst of mirth in the middle of the next morning when a special messenger from the magistrate's court arrived with a note bearing this irresistible appeal: "My own Darling, let us be friends and happy again, and live forever in peace and *contention*. Your devoted M."

In spite of having had most of his education in an English school, Papa made comical linguistic mistakes at times. They tickled Mother enormously, and I suspect that her bubbling sense of humour often saved the situation when their temperaments clashed.

As for Papa's "wild ways", no one seems to have heard of them after his marriage. Realizing that even one glass of wine was enough to upset his equilibrium, he forswore all kinds of intoxicating liquor, and for the ceremonial banquets and lunches he had to attend in his official capacity, he gave instructions for a decanter of cold tea to be placed at his side.

Once, only, was this rule broken—with dire results. Conscious of his lapse and fearful of the reception awaiting him, he checked his pony's trot as he neared home; crept stealthily up the stairs, slipped out of his clothes and into the bed in his dressingroom without so much as a creak to tell the tale to the ears in the next room. Sure enough, his spouse heard nothing, but light dawned on her next morning when she saw the dress suit in a tumbled heap on the landing floor, and the poor horse outside, still saddled and standing with the reins loosely knotted round a dry mealie-stalk.

There were no recriminations.

My brother Jamie was born fifteen months after their marriage. Mother stole precious hours from her house work to make exquisite little garments for her baby. Knitting had not come into vogue, and every little shirt, petticoat and frock was elaborately stitched and embroidered by hand, such work as you never see today. She wove dreams into each one, you may be sure, singing as she stitched. She sang at her work all her life, whatever it happened to be.

Papa took her to Maritzburg for her confinement. She was fond of telling the story of how old James Stuart came to pay his first visit to the small James Stuart, his first grandson, the day after he was born. Mother, conscious of feeling utterly indifferent to the babe lying asleep in a bundle at her feet, was wondering miserably why it was that the tide of mother-love she had expected to overwhelm her had not made itself felt. Twenty four hours had passed since the baby's birth and her heart was like a stone.

As she lay fretting, the old man came in.

"And how is the little mother?" he asked tenderly, as he prepared to sit on the bed. Like a tigress she sprang at him . . . "Take *care*!" she cried, then, sinking back on her pillows she sobbed hysterically, "It's come, it's *come*!"

Back in Greytown life took on a different tempo. A little Zulu nursemaid was brought in to do the heaviest part of the baby's washing; the delicate laundering of the finer things Mother attended to herself. Topsy became an institution in the family and she eventually became the first wife of Papa's chief induna, Hlozi. Incidentally, the ten cows he paid her father for her multiplied, and so did his harem, but Topsy—Ta-bu-sy, as he called her, was always his favourite.

I remember her sweet black face in an old photograph, carrying Jamie, Native fashion, on her back. She was my brother Charlie's nurse, as well, when he came on the scene, two years later. When he was a year old, she went home on the usual six-months' leave, and an umfaan—small Native boy—took her place.

A dreadful thing happened while he was there. Mother rarely left the two little boys with the servants, but one day she was obliged to go out. The umfaan was given strict injunctions not to leave the children. When she returned she was aghast at the sight of her baby. His little face was crimson and his eyes terribly inflamed. The boy would give no explanation and all she could get from Jamie, aged three, was a high-pitched "an-ee-cried, an-ee-cried, an-ee-*cried*!" Evidence came out later that the little black ruffian had amused himself by shaking pepper into the baby's eyes!

Harold John and Theodora Helen were the next arrivals in the family, but I never saw my little sister. The tragedy of her death when she was eighteen months old nearly broke my Mother's heart. I found some pathetic verses in memory of this precious little daughter in a volume of her manuscripts after Mother's death. There were numbers of other little poems as well, charmingly written, of which none of us had ever heard.

Philip—who was called Flossie all through his early childhood because of his golden curls—and I were her last children, and while we were quite tiny Papa was transferred to Ixopo as the first magistrate of that district. Stuartstown, where we lived, was named after him.

We travelled there, all of us, in an ox-wagon. A photograph was taken as we set out on our pilgrimage, showing a dim silhouette of Mother sitting in state, the two littlest ones at her knee.

I can't remember much of those very early days in my life. "Hold up neckie, Papa kiss!" is one of the few recollections I have of my father. Another is about the time when the hut in which he held court was struck by lightning. Two of his Native policemen were killed, the hut was set on fire and he escaped with a slight burn on his foot. A little picture in my mind's eye of Papa bathing his feet in a basin on the floor is all I can remember of that incident.

A more vivid one comes back, of a day when Papa and Mama came to the kitchen where Flossie and I were playing, for hot water to wash their hands after gardening. I heard the story told so often afterwards.

The Native boy put the big kettle of boiling water on the brick-paved floor, and somehow or another it tilted over. Flossie screamed and Mother darted forward shrieking "Flour!" She threw it up Flossie's little petticoats and it came down with flakes of tender skin.

She was a born nurse, and only her devoted care in the days that followed saved his life. Papa rushed to fetch the doctor, but he was so drunk when he arrived that Mama had him locked up in the next room till he was sober enough to attend to the child.

All through that first agonizing night she knelt at the bedside—Papa propping her up with cushions—with Flossie on a pillow in her arms, fearing that the blisters would break if she moved. The doctor was full of praise when he saw what she had done. All Flossie's curls were cut off as he lay. Mother kept one for years that had a pink sweet tangled up in it.

When he was getting better he asked to see his pet donkey, and it was solemnly brought to his bed-side. Luckily, it was on the ground floor with a french door to the verandah. Even if it had been upstairs, I'll be bound Mother would have got the donkey to walk up.

When the first Boer war broke out, Sir Garnet Wolseley and his A.D.C. called at our house on their way to the front, resplendent in scarlet uniforms, shining swords and spurs, to ask Papa to join G.H.Q. as Dutch interpreter and A.D.C. to General Colley.

He was delighted. He was only 38, and life up to then had not held much excitement. But Mother was scared. "Nonsense!" the the officers cried. "It will be a walk-over, and we shall all be back in a twinkling!" And they brandished their swords like a couple of schoolboys.

The morning was dull and cloudy when he went, riding gaily away in the mist. Mother's forebodings were justified, for she

never saw him again. He was killed at Ingogo while acting as stretcher-bearer for the wounded. Sir George Colley wrote to her, extolling Papa's services. He felt responsible for his death, I expect.

Poor man! He was shot, himself, ten days afterwards, at Majuba.

Mother was overwhelmed with grief and the responsibility of having to bring up five young fatherless children. Women were not trained to be breadwinners in her day, and there were debts to be paid. I think her life-long horror of debt stemmed from the worries and anxieties she went through at that time. Papa had bought land, a few acres a mile from the village of Stuartstown, and the building of our house there was not yet completed.

Presently, a letter came from the War Office, by way of Government House, offering her a colonel's widow's pension . . . "in compensation for her husband's death". She wrote back, proudly rejecting it. There could be no compensation for the death of her husband. Another letter followed by return of post ". . . in recognition of your late husband's services". That made all the difference. For the rest of her life she received £160 a year in addition to an allowance of £20 annually for each of her children until we became of age.

Now she had to plan for the future. The three eldest boys were at Hilton College, Jamie now thirteen. But she was determined to carry out the plan, made long since with Papa, of having them educated in England—and she never rested till she found ways and means of taking them there. The house was the first consideration, and having found a tenant who would take it over for six months, she set about making preparations for disposing of all the property she would not be needing again. The success of the public sale when it came off was talked of for months afterwards.

Flossie and I were left with old friends in the neighbourhood and, once more, Mother set sail for England. More success crowned her efforts there. At the big public school, Hurstpierpoint in Sussex, the headmaster, Mr. Cooper, was so touched by her story that Jamie was granted a scholarship which gave him free board and schooling for a year, and the other two boys were taken in on special terms.

She spent part of her time with the aunts in that grim old house in Islington. She was thin and run down, and Aunt Eliza and Aunt Sarah—Aunt Rebecca was dead—were shocked at the change in the bonny girl they had known. There was, of course, inevitable friction, for they found they could no longer

dominate Mary. When the time came for her to go, her only sorrow was in leaving her boys.

Memory of the things that happened in the next six or seven years when Mother, Flossie and I settled down again at Highbury—our house in Stuartstown which Mother named after the Greytown and Islington ones—comes to me only in snatches.

John Shepstone—"Mis' Jan" as he was known by the Natives and by the entire population of Natal—paid us periodical visits, driving round on circuit with his staff in a great black coach drawn by four horses. He had a big walrus moustache (it made a great impression on Flossie and me) which raised itself into a sort of canopy as he bent down to kiss us. We hated having to submit to it—don't most children dislike being kissed by strangers?—but our objections would have been lessened had we been allowed to keep the half-crowns he surreptitiously tried to press into our hands. But Mother's watchful eyes were always looking on and the shake of her head sent the hands behind our backs.

He told Mother a story once of a discussion he and his travelling companions had had on the subject of burial. One thought the system of lowering bodies into the earth was barbaric; another preferred cremation; Mis' Jan suggested that the most hygenic plan might be to keep the custom of burial in the earth, but to have the coffins made of basket-work.

"Yes", chimed in the Irishman of the party, "and far cooler, too!" They called him "Far cooler" ever after.

That grey moustache of John Shepstone's reminds me of another one, yellow, with a beard to match that was the terror of my life. It belonged to a Greytown friend of Mother, Jack Bonnar, who visited us now and then. He would take me, willy-nilly, on to his knee and whisper (the moustache tickling my ear) that he was coming some day to carry me off to be his dear little wife. I believed him and hated him with all my heart, and because I never dared to confide in Mother—who seemed to be in league with him—I fled round to the back of the house whenever he appeared.

I don't remember if it was in honour of the magistrate who succeeded Papa, Mr. Hathorn, or when the Chadwicks came, who followed him, that Mother gave a grand dinner party. She was a wonderful cook and delighted in turning out the most marvellous dishes. There was cream, which Flossie and I were set to whip, and all sorts of jellies and trifles that made our mouths water. The story we never heard the last of was that towards the end of this particular banquet two little heads popped round the door . . . "May *we* lick the pots?"

My musical education began when I was seven. A neighbouring mother—Mrs. Greer—with an ever-increasing family undertook to teach me my notes. (I came across an old Hemy instruction book in a secondhand bookshop recently, and nostalgia flooded over me as I turned the pages to find the simple old tunes I struggled to learn.)

My teacher's eldest two, Minnie and Lally (christened Henry) used to come and play with us sometimes. Minnie, farther advanced than I as a pianist, was a year older, and she took the treble in our *Beautiful Isle of the Sea* duet. To my infinite pride, Secondo had to cross Primo's hand several times in it, but I always found it tiresome that Minnie was not quick in moving out of the way. We played it at one of the village concerts and our parents were thrilled, but Mother thought it a shame that Minnie, ten years old, was supposed to be younger because she was a head shorter than I. I was fond of Minnie. She was my only confidante in the burning question as to what steps I should take when Jack Bonnar got me as far as the altar. I always finished up: "I shall just say I won't, Minnie!"

But Flossie was my inseparable companion for the rest of the time. In spite of frequent quarrels, when we would stand glaring at each other with bared teeth, we were always together.

As little children we slept, top-and-tail, in a single bed in Mother's room. I would snuggle my feet on to Flossie's tummy and very sweetly, he would tuck them up under his little shirt One freezingly cold night, however, he rebelled. He had sharp little teeth, and one of my big toes was nearly bitten off.

We used to run wild in the wattle plantation at the side of our house, singing all the songs we knew. Mother, showing visitors round one day, heard us singing at the tops of our voices:

"For he's ma-ray-*yed* to a mer-may-*yed* at the bottom-of-the-Double-U-SEA".

Midwifery was a great accomplishment of Mother's in that period at Stuartstown. She inherited her love of medicine from her mother, and both would have made excellent doctors. Mother used to accompany Dr. Bonnar, Jack's father, on his rounds in the Greytown district, gaining invaluable experience. All the neighbours in Ixopo got to hear of her prowess and messengers would turn up mysteriously in the night, and we would wake up to see Mother tip-toeing around with hot water bottles and all the paraphernalia necessary for infants coming into the world.

She would just whisper, "Ss-s-sh!" and off she would go, on horseback, into the dark.

An episode of this kind broke up those first music lessons when

my teacher's fifth child arrived. Then I had a governess who gave me lessons at home and sat and sewed or read a book, while I plodded through my scales. But she was delicate and did not stay long. My next governess was a beautiful young woman of 21, an Irish girl whose temper matched the fiery gold lights in her chestnut hair. Mother's hair was the same colour and their tempers were of the same brand. So she, too, departed. When the third one left—no disturbance this time—I had begun playing all Mother's accompaniments—*The Blind Girl to her Harp*, (how proud I was of its arpeggios!), *Hope Told a Flatt'ring Tale*, *Should He Upbraid* and *Bid Me Discourse*.

There were little village concerts, ending up with dancing, where she was invariably the prima donna. She took me to other little concerts and dances, too, all round the district, travelling always in our ox-wagon, with handkerchiefs tied over our noses to keep the freckles away. I was the only child in the room at those dances, and how scandalized all Mother's friends were about it. Mother did not mind. "She'll have no time for dancing bye and bye", she would say, darkly, and that was quite true. I never danced again, except on board ship, after those childish days in Natal.

We had tennis parties every Saturday about this time, to which flocked all the young people of the village, and older ones too. Mother was a born hostess, and she was famous for the big bowls of granadillas, with lashings of cream from our own cows, which she served under the trees.

Jim was back from England then, very much the eldest one of the family, He thought Flossie and I ought to know something about Latin, so he patiently drilled us in mensa, mensa, mensam. An old English doctor from Harley Street, out for his health as district surgeon at Ixopo, was living with us at the time. Dear Dr. Beviss! We were all very fond of him. He had a grey beard and only one eye. The closed lid of the other, which he did not bother to hide, had the effect of making the good one seem piercingly alert. You felt that that one eye could see further and more than anyone else's two.

He had a surgery in the village, across the valley, a mile away, and as there was no dentist nearer than Maritzburg he treated all the population, black or white, when a tooth had to come out. He didn't drill holes in them or stop them or do anything elaborate like that; his technique and equipment were limited; but he had a strong wrist and a pair of forceps that made short work of any offending molar. Unfortunately for me, he was a very long time getting rid of one of mine. My teeth were a source of worry to Mother because my mouth seemed to be too

small for all the new ones coming along, and the canines were over-lapping others. She asked Dr. Beviss's advice, and he thought that it would be a good thing to take one out.

Mother dreaded the pain for me and kept putting it off, because Dr. Beviss used no anaesthetic for his dentistry, so I plucked up courage to go alone to him one day and get over the horrid deed by myself. One of the sharpest recollections of my life is of the three separate struggles that poor man had to get that tooth out, and of me, running to the edge of the verandah each time to spit out the blood. I learned only years later that a 'pukka' dentist would have removed one of the back teeth instead, and never, *never* one of the precious deeply-rooted canines.

Jamie earned money for the first time as Dr. Beviss's assistant, riding round the district with him to all the Native kraals, vaccinating the entire population there at sixpence a head. One mother expostulated violently at not being let off for threepence "because her baby was so small".

Jamie's interest in and sympathy for the Natives must have begun then. Those frequent excursions to the kraals, picking up more and more of the Zulu language he had learnt as a child and never forgotten, must have struck the chord which was to sound the keynote of his future life's work. From that time on his interest never wavered, and his subsequent research into Native habits and customs was to culminate in a reputation for being the leading authority on Zulu affairs.

I have dim recollections of the way that the Natives of all the outlying kraals in the Ixopo came to condole with Mother when the news of Papa's death reached them. They would come into our big brick-paved kitchen and crouch down on their haunches in the way that the raw Native does to show his respect. Topsy's husband, Hlozi, who had been Papa's head induna (chief), was beside himself with grief and rage. Mother used to tell the story of how he tore the ring from his head to express his impotent fury at the wanton cutting off of M'Hlopela's (The White Man's) life. It made me shiver with sympathetic pain every time, for the ring—which indicates the induna's rank—ebony black, an inch in diameter, is fixed to the scalp by the very hairs of a Zulu's woolly pate.

I can still picture faithful old Hlozi's face, and the way that he would kiss all our hands, Mother's first, then ours as we clung to her skirts in that old kitchen. He would kiss our palms first, then turn them round and kiss the other side. Flossie and I disliked the performance, but he was so genuinely fond of us that we couldn't hurt him by showing any aversion.

As the years rolled on, and he became an old man, he continued to visit us, though Topsy had long since ceased to be a maid in our house and was busy bringing up a family of her own. The eldest son, Qalizwe (the Q in Zulu has a click which you make by putting you tongue to the roof of your palate and taking it sharply away) was soon impressed into our service as a kitchen boy. He was as devoted to us as were his father and mother. Now a grandfather, is he carrying on in his kraal that tradition of loyalty to the White Father inherent in the Zulu in his native state?

Mr. D. Malcolm, lecturer on anthropology in the Natal University, saddened me, some years ago, when he told me that the Zulus are changing before our eyes, and it is largely the manners and postures of the European that mould the behaviour of the Zulu. The old hand-kissing, worshipping Zulu is nowhere to be found today, although he is naturally a gentleman in manners, for we have lost our position as gods.

Our feet of clay and our hearts of greed have been revealed only too plainly. Therefore psychologically we have created in the Zulu a resistance and an overbearing attitude which should excite our sympathy rather than our condemnation . . .

As children we had no difficulty in mastering the Zulu clicks. Topsy taught us the language in our babyhood. To this day I can remember the lines of doggerel she chanted so musically as she dried and counted my toes after my evening bath—

Moon-ye-leh,
Ar-ti-leh,
Ga-di-ga
So-*mar*-ti-leh,
Haang-ka-la,
Ahaang-ke-la,
Mar*darm*-se-la,
Ing*ko*-si-leh,
E-seleh-ku-*sen*,
Qu-(big click!)-*BOO!*

Of other clicks I can remember two. C, as in Cetewayo—the name of the notorious Zulu king who was taken to England in the 80s and presented to Queen Victoria—is pronounced like the "Tch!" of annoyance, tongue against the front teeth and released sharply. The X, as in Ixopo, is a much more difficult one to accomplish, and no one with false teeth should attempt it first in public. Situated at the back of one's wisdom teeth, it sounds like the click one makes to a horse, riding or driving, to urge it to wake up. There was no click in Hlozi's name; Hl in Zulu is like the Welsh double L.

Charlie followed Jamie from England a year later. He was shy and sensitive, with a shock of copper-red hair which went well with his greeny-grey eyes. Philip ("Flossie" had been suppressed by Jamie) and I were filled with excitement over having two big brothers at home, but Charlie hurt my feelings dreadfully one day when he told me not to hang on to his arm in the street or people might think I was his girl. He was a fine cricketer—all my brothers were—very elated when he was chosen for the Natal XI that had a triumphal tour to the Cape one summer.

Uncle George Pigot-Moodie(who discovered the Barberton gold fields) was living then in Rondebosch at Westbrooke, the old house he renovated which is now Government House. Aunt Rose gave a garden party there for the cricketers, and Charlie had an embarrassing moment when he upset a cup of tea on the velvet chair he was sitting on. The little daughter of the house discovered it. "Oh, Mummie", she cried, "look what *some*one's been doing!" Aunt Rose came hurriedly to the rescue; "Never mind, dear, it's only tea!"

Mr. J. C. Chadwick was magistrate at Stuartstown at that time. He was a handsome man with several very pretty daughters; Ella, 15 years old, was Charlie's first love. She gave me an infallible recipe for keeping hands white: "Hold them upwards". I tried it out in church whenever I could remember to do it.

Ella and Mabel Chadwick had a darling governess who lived with them, Ada Molyneux who, as "Mino", captured my heart. She had forget-me-not blue eyes, and I listened entranced to her sweet voice as she sang and played for herself. There was a photograph on her dressing-table of a dark-eyed young man who looked like a Prince Charming from a fairy tale. She married him soon after, Fred Tatham, and he became one of Natal's most celebrated judges.

Our last ox-wagon journey was to Maritzburg, when Philip and I were put to school.

Oh, the excitement of those journeys! The periodical jaunts when Mother did her errands in Maritzburg; shopping, visits to the dentist and—what was nearly as bad—long hours at the photographer's where Flossie and I had metal clamps fixed at the backs of our heads while the man creeping behind the camera with black velvet over his head told us to smile when we saw the little bird. (An extant photograph shows me, frowningly crouched at Mother's knee, dressed in a little dark frock with—believe it or not—long button-boots and black stockings with white horizontal stripes!)

The days and days of preparation before those journeys . . . the hurry and bustle of seeing that everything was packed before we started, and then the crack of September's long whip as we

finally got under way. He was an expert driver and his whip-lash never touched the front ox's ear—sixteen in the span—but seemed only to swish a "Heave-ho, my hearties, let's get a move on . . . !"

There were fearsome times when we got to the places named after their great rivers, Umkomaas and Umzimkulu. The steep bit leading to the first one was positively terrifying, especially when it was slippery. The wagon wheels had to be tied with iron chains to keep them from running too quickly forward. September's henchman at the back of the wagon always had a big stone ready to put under one of the wheels, and the two back oxen had been specially chosen for their reliability in acting as extra brakes. One, called Blom, was black-and-white with spreading horns. His tail had a kink in it, caused by the vicious twist September used to give it whenever he wanted to hurry him up. (I used to feel so sorry for the poor beast.)

There was a punt at the bottom where an old man stood—his name was Leask—shaking all over with palsy. He super-intended the Zulu boys who crowded round to help us on to the punt and to strain at the strong ropes that pulled us across the river. Sometimes, when the water was low we would venture crossing the drift farther up, but how alarming it was to see the poor oxen swim when a deep spot made the water sweep them off their hooves! And some of the roads were really dreadful—great dips and ruts which made the wagon lurch this way and that while Flossie and I clung to each other, waiting for it to turn over on its side.

But what fun at mid-day, to outspan and grill chops in the shade of the trees, the tired oxen, released from their yokes, cropping grass near a stream; and after another long stretch, at three miles an hour, to outspan for the night! The ecstasy of sleeping under the wagon, cosy and warm in our blankets, with the stars shining overhead. ("Flossie, do you see that big one?" "Ssh-sh, children, go to sleep"! And the fire-flies playing hide-and-seek in the trees all round.)

We met Natives every day, carrying bundles of *imfi*—long reeds like bamboos, almost as sweet as sugar-cane, easy to strip and crunch between the teeth. We always bought the bundles and revelled in chewing and sucking the delicious juice as we jogged along. Other groups would pass, the women balancing baskets of Cape gooseberries or green mealies on their heads, the men walking in front—their invariable custom—coloured blankets slung over their shoulders, knobkerries ready for snakes, or kept in place across their shoulder-blades. And so to Maritzburg town hill in the distance; one more outspan—and the close of another chapter in my life.

CHAPTER THREE

MARITZBURG, seventy and more years ago, really deserved the name of Sleepy Hollow, but though its tarred streets of today would scorn the red, dusty ones of that time, its peaceful atmosphere made it a very pleasant place to live in.

Mother took a small house in an unfashionable quarter of the town, at the lower end of Pietermaritz Street, and I was sent to school at the Collegiate in Longmarket Street. Afterwards, when I went to St. Anne's College at the top of Loop Street, Mother took a house at No. 34 which was within an easy walk of it. (The story of the terrible tragedy in that house, years afterwards, will come later on in these pages.)

It was next to a big old Scottish manse on the lower side, and on the other, between us and St. Anne's, Sir Theophilus and Lady Shepstone lived in an old-fashioned bungalow with a huge garden. There were masses of grape vines in it, the small, black variety one never hears of now—I wonder why? Those Catawba grapes had a peculiar flavour, but you soon acquired a taste for their little bags of sourish jelly because of the delicious sweet juice that surrounded them. I imagine they'd make lovely jam.

Now and then I was invited to walk through those vines and pick what I wanted of the bunches hanging high overhead.

Uncle Theophilus often dropped in to see us on his way home from town, wheezing dreadfully with chronic asthma after labouring up the steep bit to our house—long since improved by the levelled road next to it. Dear old man! I don't suppose he knew one note of music from another, but Mother inveigled

him into hearing me play one day and I was actually allowed to keep the golden sovereign he gave me as a prize—a great concession after the ban on the half-crowns his brother, "Mis' Jan" tried so hard to give Flossie and me in the Stuartstown days!

Now I was studying music in real earnest. I skimped homework for school and spent every spare minute on music. Mother had discovered a master for me soon after our arrival. His name was Hermann Eberlein—a German who had come to South Africa as accompanist to Rémény, the famous Hungarian violinist touring the country at that time. They had fallen out and now Eberlein was teaching in Durban and visiting Maritzburg once a week, giving violin and piano lessons there as well.

It did not take Mother long to enrol me as a pupil for both instruments. I was avid to learn. I stretched my fingers apart on the corners of the piano—any right angle I came across; I kept bricks at my side, hoisting them up and down to develop my muscles; I got up at six in the morning to practise the violin in an outhouse where I would not bother the neighbours . . .

Some friend of Mother had given me a violin and, when I had been learning for two months, Herr Eberlein put me on to play at a concert in the Durban Town Hall. (It was the old one which is now the Post Office.)

It was absurd, of course, for I could hardly bow straight, and knew precious little about the instrument anyway. But he was clever; he choose the pizzicato piece from Delibes's *Sylvia*, and the knack of plucking strings is comparatively easy to master. How I managed the bowed interlude is a miracle to me now. I was green with nervousness and Mother had whispered, "You needn't do it, dear, if you would rather not"; but between the shame of giving in and the fright of going on, I did what Mother herself would have done, and carried on. I had a big ovation, I believe, and the papers next day said I was a prodigy, but we three, Eberlein, Mother and I, were not deceived—though Mother's dream of future fame for me probably started just then.

My schooling at St. Anne's was sketchy. The Lady Warden, Miss Usherwood, and her head-mistress, Miss Heaton, came to expostulate with Mother about the precious time dear Beatrice was wasting on a mere accomplishment. They knew that I was playing at concerts—even giving lessons—that my homework was nil and that all my lunch hours at school were spent on playing to the girls.

Mother was indignant. A 'mere accomplishment' indeed! Time would show.

There were other battles on the subject, one fierce one with

her cousin, Edward Greene, Uncle Dean's eldest son. "What is this cock-and-bull idea of yours, Mary, about having Beatrice trained as a professional musician?"—"She will have to earn her living some day".

"What nonsense! She's got four brothers to keep her, hasn't she?"—"She must be independent", said Mother, and that was her last word. She always stuck to her guns.

The three boys—as Jamie, Charlie and Harry were always called—were meanwhile getting on to their feet; the two elder ones in the Civil Service and Harry in a preliminary canter as clerk to an auctioneer friend. He was articled later to the firm of Bale and Greene, solicitors in Maritzburg. (Edward Greene was head of it.) He had a lovely baritone voice and Mother's own love of singing. At Hurst his fame as a small chorister had once brought Christine Nilssen, the famous Swedish soprano, from Brighton to hear him. Now he was in great demand at local concerts where we—Mother, he and I—sometimes appeared together.

Philip, bless his heart, was at the school-boy stage of thinking it 'soft' to be thought musical. My practising used to worry him in those days. He complained to Mother once that the harmonics in a piece I was practising, pounded out incessantly, were like nails being driven into his head. Mother, always my loyal champion, was unsympathetic: "Wait till she's top of the tree and then you'll be proud of her". Phil, baffled, turned away growling, "I wish she'd get on the top of the tree to practise!"

Later he, too, developed a voice—a tenor of lovely quality that might have turned him into a professional singer but for a terrible thing that altered the whole course of his life.

It happened at school when he was fifteen, at the High School for Boys some miles out of Maritzburg. The first Mother knew about it came in a note from Dr. Campbell-Watt, a personal friend. It ran something like this:

Dear Mrs. Stuart,

I was called in to see your son, Philip, at the College, and as I was passing I thought I would drop you a line to say that he is all right now and you need not be unduly alarmed. I take it the school authorities have already told you of the regrettable thing that happened there this morning, and that you will be fetching Philip home shortly.

Yours sincerely,
Campbell-Watt.

It was a dreadful shock to Mother. She drove out at once to the school to find Philip barely recovered after having been

unconscious for an hour and a half. The story, garbled at first, came out by degrees: one of the masters—Kufal was his name—irritated by what he called Philip's "insolence" in class, had in a sudden access of violent rage, boxed the boy's ears so unmercifully and continuously that he felled him to the floor, still beating him about the head after he was down. When he realized that Philip had lost consciousness the craziness of his action came to him in a flash.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "what have I done?"

Panic set in, and sent the whole class in a stampede through the door and windows of the room. It must have seized the headmaster, Mr. Clarke, as well, for he foolishly summoned all the boys into the quadrangle and told them not to say anything about the occurrence when they went home.

On the way home with Mother Phil complained of noises like thunder in his ears. It was the beginning of the deafness that was to make havoc of what might have been a brilliant career.

An inquiry was held in due course at which Mother insisted on being heard, but nothing came of it. Years afterwards Jim had the case brought before the Legislative Council in Maritzburg. All he got for seeking justice was an award of five pounds for an injury which kept Philip a poor man for the whole of his life . . .

This break-up of Phil's school days in Maritzburg precipitated Mother's long-visualized plan of taking us both to England. The three boys were now off her hands and it was time that we younger ones had our chance. Once more, she fetched out her cabin trunks.

CHAPTER FOUR

PITCHING and rolling along the coast to Cape Town on the old Union mail boat, *Trojan*, the thrill of going to England to study music almost compensated for the sea-sickness of the first week.

Never to be forgotten was the first sight of Madeira after those four weeks on the sea; its masses of bourganvillias, and the cobble-stones over which I experienced the joys of bumping and slipping along those narrow streets in sledges drawn by wide-horned oxen.

I saw beggers for the first time in my life, and was shocked at the sight of those who exhibited their diseased limbs and tattered clothing in the rush round us to get sympathy and alms as we left the ship. But the breakfast at the hotel, high up on the mountain! Never did I taste, before or since, such nectar and ambrosia!

Back on the ship, watching the little bronze-coloured boys as they yelled and dived from their bobbing cockle-shell boats for the pennies we flung into the greeny-blue sea, its transparency showing the coins which the buoyancy of the water kept from sinking too fast . . .

That first landing at Plymouth, the excitement of the swift-moving train on the journey to Waterloo, the incredible green of the English fields and meadows, the delicious glasses of creamy milk at the stations, the first taste of a real Banbury bun . . . ! I could go on indefinitely with those "firsts", the thrills of which are still fresh in my memory.

We arrived in England in full summer. London was, they

told us, deserted, but Mother found plenty for us all to see and do. There were visits to be paid to old friends and, of course, Philip and I had to be taken to see the old aunt at Islington—only one now, Aunt Eliza, aged 92. She was nearly blind and she took no interest in Philip and me. Even Mother she was slow to recognize.

"This is Mary, dear; you remember *Mary*"

The old hands moved gropingly towards her. "Mary? Mary? not the Virgin Mary, is it?"

We took lodgings in Gloucester Terrace, near Baker Street, and Mother, in one of her daily expeditions in that locality, wandered into the Portman Rooms and fell in with a buxom, friendly lady who was in charge of them. She was a musician and principal of a small academy of music there. Her name was Miss Clynton-Fynes, and she had a jolly red face and twinkling brown eyes. It was exciting to hear that she had studied and played with the great violinist, Ferdinand David in Leipzig, Mendelssohn's friend and collaborator (particularly in the violin concerto).

It did not take long for Mother to hand me over to her. We started off with Beethoven's *Spring* sonata. My first real appreciation of the art of musical phrasing dates from those duets with her.

Bernard Carrodus was the violin teacher on her staff, and soon I was having lessons from him as well. He was the son of J. T. Carrodus, a celebrated English violinist and leader of the Philharmonic Orchestra in his day. Mother grabbed all these lessons for me as a preliminary skirmish before taking me to the Royal Academy of Music which—as it was summer then—was closed for the long vacation.

Among the friends we were beginning to meet was a cousin of Mother—Herbert Taylor, the son of her father's eldest brother.

He was an aristorcratic old man with distinguished manners, and very handsome still. His flashing eyes and black eyebrows were set off by a head of thick white hair, pink cheeks and the sort of nose that always commands attention. He often visited us in our lodgings. He had been a very rich man—I never heard how he lost his money—and had been a great friend of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry.

His sister, Helen, who lived at Avignon in the South of France, came to see us when she was in London. She was one of the first women to take a prominent part in the Women's Rights movement, as it was called, and did a lot of public speaking —considered "very unwomanly" by the aunts. Mother wondered how she made her voice carry at the large meetings

she addressed; so Cousin Helen said that she always pitched it to the end of the room, and when she saw the man in the last row take his hand down from his ear she knew all was well with her voice.

When her father died her mother, Harriet Taylor, married John Stuart Mill, the great logician. (I have always regretted that I cannot claim him as a blood relation.)

These relations were all very well, but what interested me far more was the meeting with a group of Italian musicians. An old composer, Giulio Tartaglione, was the first. He lived in Torrington Square, and soon we ourselves moved into lodgings at No. 10. We were introduced to Denza—at the top of his popularity as the composer of *May Morning, Beauty's Eyes* and other tuneful ballads.

Denza's wife was a charming singer. It was she who initiated me into the art of manipulating spaghetti with the minimum of effort and the maximum of grace. But I never achieved the ease with which she did it.

The summer holidays were over at last. Philip had been safely installed at Hurst and Mother was anxious to get me settled at the Academy.

We arrived at the old building in Tenterden Street, round the corner from Hanover Square, one morning in October, Mother, fiddle and I, and were ushered into the Principal's own sanctum.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie was a great character, apart from being a distinguished musician and composer. Short, thick-set, with one of the shiniest bald heads I ever saw—those were some of my first impressions of him. He asked me what I had brought to play. Shyly I produced the violin part of Beethoven's Sonata in D major. It did not perturb him to hear that I had not thought it necessary to bring the piano part; he just sat down and played the first movement with me by heart.

He arranged for me to study with Hans Wessely, the Austrian violinist, and I remained with him for two years. He was an excellent teacher, careful and very strict, but I was repelled by his harsh and abrupt manner. He was even uncouth at times. He had black hair, standing up stiffly *en brosse*—which he Anglicized later by flattening it down—and a swarthy complexion. His widely-opened brown eyes held a glint of sardonic mirth—you always felt that he was mentally appraising you and pleased to find you wanting. One unfortunate pupil was very plain, with a receding chin, and she was playing very badly at a lesson one day. Wessely lost his temper.

"Miss Smeeth", he exclaimed, "you are like a . . . *feesh*"

Anna Stern was another of his pupils; pretty, talented little

Anna whose brother, Leo, was the best English 'cellist of the day. He introduced the Dvorak 'cello concerto at a Philharmonic Orchestra concert, the composer conducting it.

Anna lived with a girl friend—another Wessely pupil—in Hampstead. Her name was Jessie Maclean. She was Scots, with fair, straight hair, and with not an atom of Anna's charm. She never achieved anything in the way of playing the fiddle. One day, Anna came to me for sympathy: "Why is Jessie so unkind?" she wailed. "We share the same bedroom and every morning, of course, I run to the mirror to see if I have any pimples on my face. Jessie comes with me and . . . she *always* finds one!"

It was about this time that I had my first professional engagement. Miss Riedl, the Lady Superintendent at the Academy, said to me one day: "Would you care to accept an engagement—for expenses—at a Girls' Club at Bethnal Green tomorrow night? It is run by two rich ladies who live in Park Lane".

I didn't know where Bethnal Green was, but Park Lane sounded promising and "expenses" had a professional ring even if a fee wasn't attached to it. I said, "Yes, thank you".

Miss Riedl went on to say that I would be expected to bring an accompanist, and "expenses" might mean one, perhaps two guineas.

I asked Anna to accompany me, Mother, of course, would not dream of allowing me to go to the East End of London alone, so she came too. Anna, coming from Hampstead, brought Jessie, so quite a cavalcade set out on the long train journey to Bethnal Green. The lady in charge of the club welcomed us warmly; explained that a singer had disappointed her, so would Anna and I give the entire programme ourselves? It ended in my playing six or seven pieces to Anna's same number on the piano, and then we all trekked back to our various destinations.

The Park Lane lady had given me her address, with the request that I would write to let her know what my expenses had been. Still feeling warm over my first "engagement", I posted a polite little note the next day quoting the modest sum of one guinea.

I shall never forget the cold douche of disillusionment that reached me a day or two later in a coroneted letter. Would I, it ran, state the exact amount of my train fare, which would be forwarded to me by return? Not Anna's fare, or Jessie's—not even Mother's.

I replied briefly asking the lady to regard our services and expenses as a gift to the club.

I trod on air, one morning in my second term, when a letter from the Academy informed me that I had been "chosen" to play in Handel's *Largo* in the end-of-term concert at St. James's Hall.

Wholesome perspective was restored when I found that I was only one among seventy-nine other "chosens". All the same, the performance when it came off must have been impressive, with Emil Sauret conducting eighty violins, seven harps and an organ with all its stops out at the end!

Sauret was fond of those violin ensemble stunts. Twice, later, when I was one of his pupils, twelve of us played in unison at Academy concerts in the Queen's Hall. It was Bach's unaccompanied *Prelude in E major* the first time, and Paganini's *Caprice in A minor* next. (It is more familiar, now, in its variations form by Brahms, for piano, and Rachmaninov's for piano and orchestra.)

Sauret was a most inspiring master—not like Wessely who delighted in snubbing his pupils. He expected great things of his pupils and he naturally got the best out of them.

He must have been attractive as a young man; dark, with roguish eyes that could look volumes of sentiment when given half a chance. I could quite understand how it was that Teresa Carreño fell for him. He loved talking about her and about the time they had together—now that he was safely tied up to another sweet woman who mothered him and looked after all his accounts.

He called me his "Little Matabelle". His knowledge of geography was vague; Natal meant the same to him as Matabeleland. (This reminds me of Ellie's story about Ysaye, with whom he studied at the Brussels Conservatoire. Ysaye: "So you come from South Africa? I have a good pupil out there". Ellie pricked up his ears; "What is his name?"—"Moses". Ellie had never heard of him. "What town?"—"*Melbourne*"

Two orchestral practices were held at the Academy every week. Sir Alexander conducted both. He liked violinists and pianists, but, because so few were good musicians, he only tolerated singers. Harpists bored him to tears and exasperation. A girl trying over a showy fantasia with the orchestra one day couldn't keep time. The long-suffering man threw up his hands in despair at last—"Is it not given to hair-r-r-pists to count four-r-r in a bar-r-r?"

Pretty Isabel Jay shed bitter tears over the "Jewel" song from *Faust* at one of those rehearsals, just before she began her brilliant career as a musical comedy star.

Marie Tempest had left the Academy and was the rage just

then in *An Artist's Model* with Hayden Coffin. Her understudy, Louise Beaudet, was living above us on the drawing room floor of our lodgings, and she came down one day to ask if I would coach her in the part. We worked hard at it and were jubilant some weeks later when, Marie Tempest taken suddenly ill, Louise had to take her place.

It was while we were in those lodgings near the British Museum that a country parson and his wife and little son came for a holiday in London. They took rooms upstairs, heard me practising and thought how nice it would be if "Tappins" could learn to play too. Would I give him some lessons? Tappins was six years old. Even I, with optimism a ruling passion, felt that the six weeks of their holiday hardly gave time for appreciable progress in the art of violin technique . . . but I was young then and willing to help.

What a time we had! Tappins was like an eel, and I had to treat him like a 'cello between my knees before I could get him to stand still. We never, in those six weeks, got as far as holding a bow. All hands were at the pump to get the violin under the chin, the left hand to curl round the fingerboard and the other to hold out a finger for pizzicato. Laboriously we tackled the G scale; Tappins—who certainly had an ear—hummed the notes two octaves higher, like a mosquito, as I pressed his little fingers on to them.

Then we went on to *God Save the Queen.* Now Tappins sang the words—long rests between as the fingers fumbled over the strings: "God - save - ther - gra - shus - Queen - God - (very long pause)—is God on the same string?"

About this time Jamie, who was enjoying a temporary post as Acting-Consul for Swaziland, came over with about a dozen Swazi chiefs, delegates on some tribal matter, to seek audience with Queen Victoria. It was a responsible job for a young man, for he had to get suitable lodgings for his charges, trot round with them everywhere and interpret all they had come to say.

I wish I could remember all he told us of his experiences with them, from the actual presentation to the Queen (he gave a funny description of the way they all had to walk out backwards), the grand dinner Madame Burdett-Coutts gave for them, when those raw Natives ate off gold plates, down to the Lord Mayor's show, when their black faces on a balcony in the Strand caused as much of a stir as the mayoral coach itself.

Concerts.

Of course we went to crowds of them. There were always free tickets available at the Academy for recitals by continental stars and budding English artists, tumbling over each other to

be heard; but I remember most clearly the Monday and Saturday "Pops" at the old St. James's Hall, to which a friend treated me every season and where in the string quartets led by Joachim or Lady Hallé, I first learned to appreciate music in its purest form.

Lady Hallé—Norman-Neruda—had a halo of romance round her, for she was the pioneering queen among violinists, one of the first to prove that women fiddlers could hold their own with men.

There was an old-world courtliness in the way that Joachim would lead her to the first music-stand when they played the Bach double concerto or Spohr duets. They were getting on in years when I heard them, and Joachim was much past his prime. He had almost given up solo playing in public, but I heard him in a sonata recital once, with Leonard Borwick, the celebrated English pianist, at St. James's Hall.

For the Bach E Major and Brahms A Major he sat and played to notes, but for the Tartini Sonata—the "Devil's Trill"—he stood and played by heart. Alas, he missed the turning after the double bar in the second movement and started again. The same thing happened the second time. Borwick sat like a statue at the piano; it was not for him to offer assistance to the Master. Joachim, now white as death, began for the third time, and a shiver of sympathy ran like an electric current through the audience when failure to capture memory overtook him once again! This time a trembling bow pointed to the next movement, scrapping the second, and the sonata went on faultlessly to its close.

I heard the *Kreutzer* sonata for the first time when Sarasate played it with Berthe Marx. Such diamond-clear tone, and such elegance in style! But it didn't move me to the storm of enthusiasm that swept over me when I heard Ysaye, at the Crystal Palace, play Bruch's D Minor second concerto. I shall never forget the luscious quality of his glorious tone nor his inimitable "cock-of-the-walk" style in the Wieniawski Polonaise he gave as an encore. No violinist since—and I have heard the greatest—has made me sense those two qualities in just the same way.

Now and then at the Academy we were given opportunities of hearing (and seeing at close quarters) world famous artists. Paderewski came once, to rehearse his Polish Fantasia with Sir Alexander, who was to conduct it for him at a Norwich festival. It was Sarasate another time, to rehearse Mackenzie's *Pibroch*—a piece which seems to have gone out of favour these days, though I can't think why, for it is a fine work.

The students clustered round him as he walked out, and I elbowed my way up to him, but all I got for my enthusiasm was

a look straight through me from jet-black eyes as cold as marbles. The tuner who was overhauling our piano just then told us that he often travelled with Sarasate on his tours. He said his technique was marvellous, but he never practised, and his violin remained in its case from one concert to another.

The Philharmonic Orchestra gave a series of concerts every year, and Mother always took season tickets. One of my "never forgets" was the first performance in London of Tchaikovsky's "Pathetic" symphony, conducted by Mackenzie, when it took London by storm. It was repeated at the next concert and after that Henry Wood took it up and made it and other Russian music the rage.

There were oratorios too. *The Messiah* at the Albert Hall, with Albani, Clara Butt, Edward Lloyd, and that old war-horse nearing the end of his career, Santley, was an impressive affair. Santley again, in *Elijah*, hammering out "Is not His Word", and Edward Lloyd singing like an angel "If with all your hearts"... He was the only singer I ever heard of who had the strength of mind, and the sense, to retire at the peak of his fame.

The most stupendous performance of *The Messiah* I ever heard was at the Crystal Palace, when white-haired old August Manns conducted many hundreds in the Triennial Handel Festival, soon after Mother and I arrived in England. It took place the very week that Prince Edward of Wales was born to the Duke and Duchess of York, and the whole audience rose as one man to its feet when the great chorus burst into "For unto us a Child is born".

That, I think, was the biggest among the many thrills I had during those first five years in London. I treasure them still.

My harmony professor at the Academy was F. W. Davenport, a dear man who was married to the daughter of Sir George Macfarren, a former Principal of the Academy. I did some modest composition with him, and the publication of two of my songs at Metzler's brought me into contact with James Coward, who was manager there. He was a past master on the Mustel organ, on which he never wearied of extemporizing on themes from Wagner's operas. We did lots of concert work together.

One of those concerts was a recital of his own things at the Small Queen's Hall. Among them was a Romance for violin and piano which I memorized in the 'bus—the old "Favourite" —between Oxford Circus and West Kensington. It was an experiment on my part, and it taught me the value of visualising notes as my safest aid to memorizing them. I tried out the method at the College of Music in Cape Town, years after-

wards, and one pupil, Kathleen Borcherds, was brilliant at it.

Little did I know that James Coward's small nephew—Noël, was even then rising like a star on a distant horizon . . .

I shall always associate Chopin's Scherzo in B Flat Minor with my first proposal. Ethel Barns was playing it while her brother was asking me to marry him in the passage of their house. I felt dreadfully uncomfortable, because I was standing with my back to the wall, the passage was very narrow and I couldn't get away.

My suitor, not content with my response, came to see Mother about it, but he forfeited her co-operation from the outset by telling her that he loved me so much that he would gladly marry me "tomorrow and no questions asked"! I couldn't understand Mother's indignation at the time and was quite sorry that she had snubbed him.

Ethel Barns was in her last term at the Academy when I got there. She was one of Sauret's best pupils, as well as being a very fine pianist and something of a composer. I think it was she who introduced me to a Miss Overbeek, a composer who had just written incidental music for a play that Gordon Craig was to produce in one of London's suburbs. He was comparatively unknown then. He was a handsome young man, but the glamour surrounding him as the son of Ellen Terry was his supreme attraction for me. I met him while the play was on and I was fiddling in the incidental music, and he came to see us one day and talked about his mother.

That brings me to the plays I saw in London. Mother considered it part of my education to see every Shakespearean play that was being produced—incidentally, she was a great theatre fan; it was her only extravagance.

It was *Henry VIII* first, at the Lyceum, with Henry Irving playing Cardinal Wolsey and Ellen Terry as Katherine. Ellaline Terriss's handsome father was the Henry. What a sensation there was soon afterwards, when he was murdered at the stage door of the Adelphi theatre!

Irving put Edward German on to the musical map when he engaged him to write the incidental music for that production. I wonder if his heirs are still getting royalties for those *Three Dances* which jumped into instant popularity and have been best-sellers ever since?

I was too young and ignorant to appreciate Irving's art. That throaty roll in his voice and his spasmodic way of dragging his feet as he walked obscured for me all that was fine in his acting. I much preferred the Buckingham of Forbes Robertson, and still remember the dignity of his speech and appearance on his way to the scaffold. I saw him later, too, as Hamlet—a part that

suited him to perfection.

As for Ellen Terry, I simply adored her, especially as Portia. There was such irresistible gaiety in her scene with Nerissa before they went to Antonio's trial and in the backward toss she gave to her gown as she strutted across the stage imitating a man's stride; and what lovely tones there were in her husky voice as she spoke those "mercy" lines! Her sense of humour must have been a sore trial to her producers sometimes. Once, as Cordelia in *King Lear*, she had to fight a fit of giggles as she and Irving (King Lear) were being led away as prisoners; his chains fell off and she had to pick them up and fasten them on his wrists again.

Beerbohm Tree's Shylock was quite different from Irving's dark-visaged one. He made up with flaming red hair and beard which accentuated his wonderful blue eyes. In the *Tempest*, too, he had red make-up for Caliban. His daughter, Viola, made her first stage appearance in that production as Ariel.

I could enthuse indefinitely about those lovely Shakespearean plays I saw, but must go on to others that impressed me. *Tosca*, for instance, when I saw the "Divine Sarah" for the first time. It was in French and I have forgotten all about it except her wonderful voice and her tigerish growls as she tore at the door behind which her lover (Mario) was being tortured.

Eleonora Duse was unforgettable in *La Dame aux Camelias*. She was the most natural actress I ever saw. She wore not an atom of make-up and she moved on the stage—or simply lay down on it—exactly as a lovely feline creature might have done.

Operas were an expensive luxury. We were treated to stalls for *Lohengrin* and *Tristan and Isolde*, but Mother could afford only gallery seats otherwise; so, as we disliked peering down over people's heads, we did not often trail up those endless steps.

How glorious Jean de Rezske was in *Lohengrin* in his blue-and-silver costume as the Knight in Elsa's dream, and how beautifully he sang! Melba's voice, pure as a bell and free from the vibrato that is such a canker with operatic singers, didn't touch me, I am ashamed to say, but her appearance as Elsa was ideal.

Later on, we were present at the first London production of the Siamese twins, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Il Pagliacci*, when Mascagni's Intermezzo took the place by storm. It was hummed at every street corner. Lady Hallé, even, honoured it by playing it at St. James's Hall!

All I can remember of *Tristan*, curiously, are the weird intervals and haunting tone quality of the cor anglais solo opening the third act!

Of course, Mother and I did not spend the major part of our

time in gadding about to concerts, plays and operas. We both had a single aim in life. To that end, Mother aiding and abetting me, I spent hours and hours practising every day—six or seven, on lucky days—between my lessons.

Secretly, I begrudged the time I thought wasted on those plays and operas. Looking back now, I feel that they enriched my life as much as any fiddling did. Probably, in telling of the things that happened I have telescoped into those first five years some that came only later.

There were, for instance, other happenings of far greater importance in the first five years—the Boer War and the Jameson Raid preceding it. Flaring headlines in the newspapers, little paper boys screaming "Spe-shull!" outside our windows; remarks thrown at each other by bus drivers, as they passed, about "them Bo-ers". All are fleeting impressions from another planet to me now.

More exciting still were accounts of the Kimberley and Ladysmith sieges—keen topics of speculation—and London went quite mad with joy over the relief of Mafeking. What a hero Baden-Powell was! On the day the news came I cycled through the streets with a Union Jack flag swathed round me, another on my handle-bar, and shouted greetings to anyone who looked my way. War despatches to the *Daily Mail* from young Winston Churchill—the dare-devil—and stories of his escape from the Boers made good reading, but nothing was so thrilling as that Mafeking day . . .

Mother took me on a Cook's tour to the Continent one summer. We went to Paris for the first time, on our way to Switzerland, and we tourists, armed with Baedekers, were piloted round the usual sights—the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, Luxembourg, Père La Chaise and Notre Dame. I fancy we "did" a few other churches as well—Mother believed in getting her money's worth—swarming round our guide as he gabbled historical information for the benefit of those who cared to listen.

We visited Lausanne, Neuchatel and Geneva, revelling not only in the glorious scenery and snow-covered mountains but in the delicious jugs of hot coffee, the croissants and honey which introduced me to the delightful French fashion of petit déjeuner.

There were other trips abroad later, far more enjoyable, when we could go where we liked and do what we liked without being hustled in and out of charabancs and trains like schoolchildren out for a picnic.

We were living now at North Finchley, and I had got to know my way by train to King's Cross and then to the Academy by

bus, quite well. We moved out all that way from Bloomsbury to be near a dear friend from Durban, whose house was next door to us. Her name was MacColl, and she had come to England after her husband's death to have her two girls educated. She was a fine pianist, studying with Tobias Matthay, and we practised a lot together. She often accompanied me at concerts and City banquets.

Oh, those banquets! Do they still carry on in the same way, I wonder? We artists—generally four singers, an instrumentalist and an accompanist—used to be herded together in an anteroom until the magnates, full of rich food and the benevolence accruing to it, were ready to sit back, smoking their expensive cigars, and listen to us as, one by one, we were ushered in to punctuate their speeches with our solos.

Mrs. MacColl was my accompanist at the concert Florence Fraser and I gave at the Small Queen's Hall. She was Sir John Fraser's daughter from Bloemfontein, and was known as "The South African Nightingale". One of her songs was Purcell's *Nymphs and Shepherds* and my opening piece was Porpora's Sonata in G Major. Beyond those two items and the fact that I wore a dress of white satin with fashionable long rucked-sleeves of chiffon, I remember not another detail of the whole affair.

Jamie and Charlie, meanwhile, were living at Eshowe, in Zululand; Jamie, senior clerk to Mr. Osborn, the magistrate, had secured a junior post in the same office for Charlie. They, with Dr. Balfe, the district surgeon, shared a bachelor establishment of three thatched huts, built in Native fashion. Bishop Carter—who afterwards became Archbishop of Cape Town—lived with them, too, at one time. Mother and I paid them a visit just before we left for England.

Our breath was taken away one day at North Finchley, when a letter arrived from Charlie, telling of his engagement to the "most beautiful" girl in the world, Nancye Robinson, who had recently come to stay with relations at Eshowe. Mother looked with jaundiced eyes at the photograph of the lovely girl which Charlie had sent to soften the blow of the shock, for she thought he was far too young to be embarking on holy matrimony. (She ignored the fact that Papa had been two years younger when she walked off with him.)

Charlie could wait for no mother's consent, and the wedding came off a few weeks later. Harry was the best man. He told us afterwards of Charlie's agonized search through all his pockets for the missing ring, his own exit from the church to hunt for it along the path outside, and then its final discovery

in the one pocket that Charlie had overlooked. Poor Charlie! He was always the shy one of our family. What tortures he must have suffered!

Meanwhile I, too, had not been idle, though my attempts at falling in love had been abortive; Mother's apron strings held me too fast. Soon after Rob Goodman appeared on our horizon, however, it seemed that I had met my fate. He was a student of art at the Julian studios in Paris. He was a South African who had come from Durban where his master, the painter, J. W. Morland, was so impressed by his talent, that he got subscriptions raised to send him overseas for more study. As the future Gwelo Goodman he more than fulfilled his early promise and his first master's faith in him.

Coming to us with a letter of introduction, we saw a great deal of him during his stay in London en route to Paris. Then he wrote, begging us to go over for the Easter Carnival. That was an exciting week. I never hear Dvorak's *Carneval* overture now without thinking of the riot of sound and the masses of confetti that filled those streets, Paris seemed quite mad; every man, woman and child careering about in a frenzied fight to get the most fun out of the festival. The first two days were wild enough, but when it came to having to protect our faces, with things that looked like meat safes, from the hard pellets that took the place of confetti, we felt we'd had enough.

A blurred memory of the visit we paid with Rob to the Julian studios comes back to me. Mother nearly swooned at the array of front-view charcoal drawings of life-size nudes which met our gaze as we entered the largest room. "*Don't look up*" she whispered urgently, so I left with a very hazy impression of the famous school.

Mother was not at all partial to Rob as a future son-in-law. Come to think of it, no man who ever came near me seemed to meet with her approval. I was an impressionable girl, so I suppose there was some excuse for guarding me like a prize orchid.

But her moods were often unpredictable. In the middle of holding poor Rob at arm's length she would feel sorry for him and be very kind. In one of those spells she invited him to spend a week with us the Christmas after that Parisian Easter, and he came to Finchley full of spirits and bounce, all of which oozed out under her constant chaperonage before two days had passed. Perhaps this was because she was so unsympathetic when he unrolled a canvas which had just won a prize at Julian's—a life-size painting in oils of a lovely Titian-haired damsel with not a stitch on. Even though it was a side view, and Rob stressed

the value of the flesh tints which had been so admired in Paris, she remained cold and unresponsive. The visit ended in gloom.

Rob painted a portrait of me when he came to London to set up a studio in Chelsea. But the fluence had left me by that time, and I shed so many tears over his disappointment that the work was literally a washout and was never finished.

One of my friends was Ethel Ireland, daughter of 76-year-old Alexander Ireland, the author and one-time intimate friend of Carlyle, Emerson and other literary giants. She kept house for her brother Jack, studying composition with Stanford at the Royal College of Music. He was as solemn as an owl. Perhaps his fame as John Ireland, the celebrated composer, was oppressing him even then. I have never seen him since that time, but Ethel came out to the Cape in 1928 to visit her son at Michaelhouse in Natal, where he had a post as music-master for a time. I wonder if he is the Anthony Ireland now coming into fame as a London actor?

My Grandfather, Jacobus Stuart (1803-1878) who came from Amsterdam to settle in South Africa in the 1850's. He wrote "De Hollandsche Afrikanen en hun Republieken".

The five of us with our mother in Durban about the turn of the century. L to R—Jim, the eldest, Harold, Charlie, Mother, Phil and me. This was taken just after Phil's wedding.

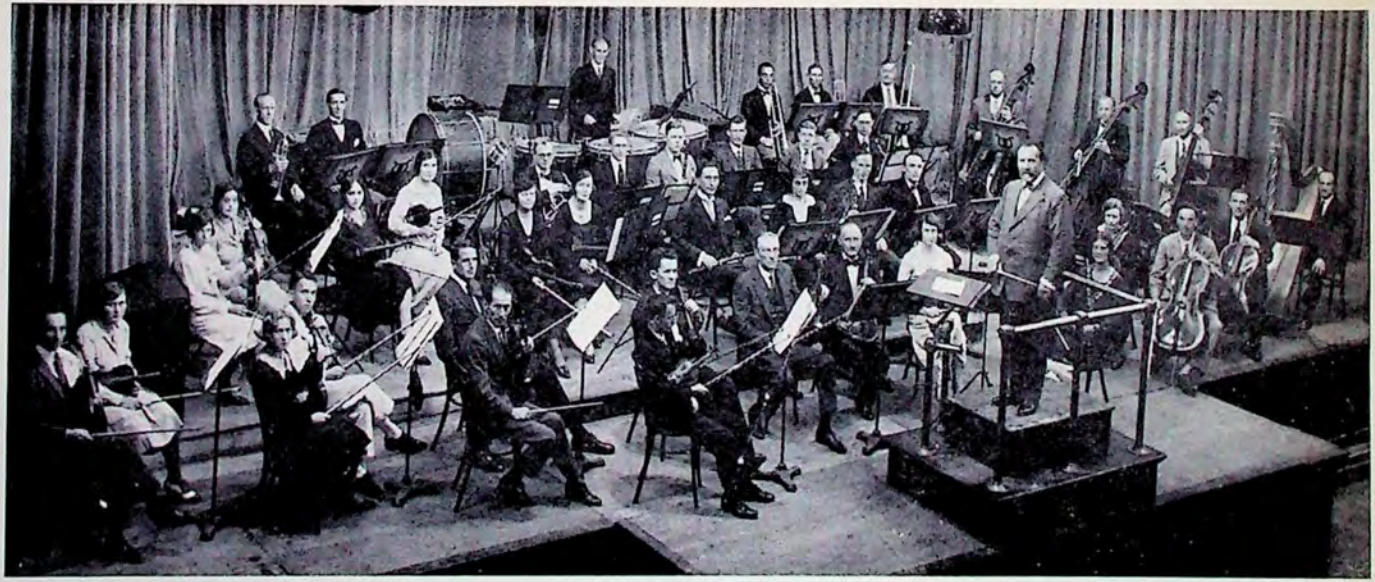
My mother, photographed by W. Watson Robertson in Pietermaritzburg just after our return from London in 1897.

My father, Martinus Stuart in the uniform of the Natal Carbineers about 1880.

Harold, my third brother, after his admission to the Natal Bar.

With my children Charles and Tuku in Cape Town after World War I.

Some snapshots from our family album:—



Playing in the Cape Town Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood in January 1931. Ellie is the third from the left in the front row; I, in a white dress next to the big drum. Many Cape Town concert goers will remember this gala occasion and recognise some of those still playing with the orchestra to this day. Alfred Gibbs, the leader at that time; Issy Chosak, the tympanist; Inger Boberg, seated behind Ellie; Granville Brittain, principal 'cellist—are some easily recognised.

In the dress my mother made for my concert
in the Durban Town Hall in 1897.

CHAPTER FIVE

MOTHER began to feel homesick. Phil had returned to South Africa. I had won my final Certificate of Merit—the highest award at the Academy after bronze and silver medals—and my Teacher's diploma. It seemed a good time to make a break and pay a visit to the boys—let alone her first grandchild, Hilda, born to Charlie and Nancye just before he took up a post as Native Commissioner in Rhodesia in the Chartered Company under Rhodes.

He had left Nancye and the babe with her people for six months while he prepared a home for them, and Mother and I landed in Durban just as he arrived back to fetch his family.

We all had a happy meeting at the Royal Hotel; Harry there, too, very much taken up with his sweetheart, Janet Runciman.

I was thrilled to get an engagement for a concert in the Durban Town Hall the week we arrived. 'Ten guineas' seemed a princely fee. It must have gone to Mother's head, too, for she donated it to the Musical Society, which gave the concert, before I set eyes on the cheque. Otto Siedle sang at that concert. I reminded him of it forty years afterwards and he, too, remembered that his solo had been Mozart's "Non piu andrai" from *Don Giovanni*. He had a fine resonant bass voice and he passed on his gift for music to his daughter, Perla Gibson, famous during the war as the 'Woman in White', singing to the troops as they sailed to and from Durban.

I met Renzo Rotondo, an Italian 'cellist, that evening, and he asked me to go on tour with him. Mother was taken with the

idea and we three started off soon afterwards. Concerts didn't need much arranging in South Africa in those days. One had only to book a hall and put up posters a week or two in advance and people would flock to whatever entertainment was being advertised.

Rotondo was an excellent 'cellist and a good all-round musician. He played my accompaniments at the small places where there were no good pianists, and I played his. We enjoyed the fun of it all.

Sometimes our concert hall was the dining-room of the solitary hotel—hastily cleared out after the evening meal. A piano would be pushed in and two tables put together for a platform. We always had packed and enthusiastic audiences on those informal occasions and Rotondo shamelessly charged double for standing room. We visited all the small mining towns round Johannesburg—very primitive then—vastly different from the Roodeport, Krugersdorp, Springs, Benoni and Germiston of today. We brought singers from Johannesburg, but we were the "stars".

I do not remember much about the more important concerts in the bigger towns. Some were at the big old Wanderers Hall in Johannesburg, sponsored by James Hyde (conducting a band) and his singer-wife, musical pioneers there. Others were in Pretoria, where we found better musical appreciation and very lovely flowers in dusty gardens. Receptions were given for us there, as well as in Johannesburg. It was the fashion for rich society women to form committees to sell tickets for visiting artists; it helped the cause tremendously by bringing artists and audiences together socially and, incidentally, it saved impresarios a mint of trouble.

We played at Bloemfontein, Kimberley and even De Aar, on our way back to Natal, meeting with warm hospitality everywhere.

There was a lovely interlude at Harrismith, which was still more or less in the hands of the military. Martial law was in force and we had to have a permit to give our concerts. General Rundle and his staff were stationed there and sat in the front row each time. He gave me the one and only game of golf I ever had. His A.D.C., Captain Webber, took me for a drive in a spanking turn out, a high dog-cart and four white horses . . . my head got turned a little.

I met my Father's sister, Aunt Agatha (who married Grand Papa's young friend, K. J. de Kok) and her husband and children during that visit to Johannesburg, and my cousin Karel and I lost our hearts to each other. Both our families were violently opposed to marriage between cousins, so the

affair was nipped in the bud. Mother hurried on preparations for our return to England and booked our passages in one of the small Rennie boats, the *Illovo*. The Captain was very fond of music; he put his chart-room at my disposal, and up there, alone in my glory, I practised to my heart's content.

We gave up our house at North Finchley soon after we got back to London. Mrs. MacColl was returning to Durban with her girls and there was no point in our staying on without her. Mother hunted round and fixed on a large six-roomed flat in Queen's Club Gardens, West Kensington, 8 Playfair Mansions. All the blocks of flats in that long square had literary names; we were delighted to find our Baker Street friend, Miss Clynton-Fynes, occupied a small one in the Dryden block.

We looked up other friends by degrees. Kate Eadie, a professional pianist, was one. Vivacious, with sparkling brown eyes, she was Denis Eadie's sister, to whom I had been introduced by Ethel Barns. She had accompanied me first at an evening party where I had deputized for Ethel, (fee, one guinea-and-a-half) and on many other occasions. She lived with her brother, who had the attractive charm of George Alexander (London's actor-idol at that time), in whose footsteps he followed. I like to remember that I knew him before he became famous.

Then there was Ethel Ireland again. It was through her that I came to know Dr. Dudley, who had spent most of his life in South America and now, at the age of nearly eighty, was living alone in a huge house in Cromwell Road, Kensington. He was passionately fond of music. He knew Elgar well, and two of Elgar's friends used to visit the old man regularly. Elgar immortalized them in his *Enigma* Variations under their initials, H.D.S.P. and B.G.N.

Hew (Douglas Steuart) Powell played the piano extremely well; Basil Nevinson—a retired barrister and a brother of the famous war correspondent, Henry Nevinson—played the 'cello with a vast amount of pent-up emotion but not much technique. They had both been college friends of Elgar at Oxford. I was terribly impressed when they introduced me to the great man when he came up to London to hear Richter conduct his *Enigma* Variations at their first public performance in the Queen's Hall. That was a wonderful experience: but how I should have loved to know that I was destined to take part myself in many future performances of those variations, in the Cape Town Orchestra; and to get to know and love them more and more as I listened—with a critic's ear—from a seat once more in the audience . . .

We three, Hew Powell, Basil Nevinson and I, used to meet every Thursday to play trios to the old doctor. We would arrive in time for tea, served on a silver tray with muffins and crumpets by Mead, his butler, whose wife, a superlative cook, was the only other servant.

Ethel Ireland often came too, and once she brought Jack as well. After tea we would run through a trio or two—the old man sitting back in his low armchair, tears streaming down his cheeks if we played his favourite Mozart, his feet almost in the fire which was kept burning all the year round whatever the weather happened to be, because his old bones were cold.

Presently Mead would hover at the door, dreading a baleful glance as he waited for a chink in the music to announce dinner, and a muttered Spanish curse if he chanced to appear during a long slow movement.

Then, after a choice little dinner—hardly a mouthful of it eaten by our host, whose digestion had been ruined by a lifetime in Chile—we would all troop upstairs again; Mead would make up the fire and we would start on the real work of the evening, Ethel and Hew Powell taking turns at the piano and B.G.N. spluttering with frustration over passages beyond his powers of execution, but enjoying himself tremendously all the same.

Those were happy times, and the joy they were to our audience of one inspired us all to give of our best.

After Mother and I returned from our second visit to Natal I cycled over from Queen's Club Gardens to see the old man. I found him ill in bed. He chuckled sardonically, "Turning up my toes, you see!" He asked me to bring my violin next time, and a day or two later, as he lay dying, I stood at the foot of his bed and played to him.

I was back again with Sauret; private lessons this time, once a week, at his house in St. John's Wood.

Having won my final Academy award, those doors were supposed to be closed to me, but I went there, too, every week, to listen to him giving other lessons. I think I learned more from them than from my own expensive ones, for Sauret had a way—exasperating to the legitimate pupil—of turning to me with his remarks, and when I went to his house for my own lessons he often spent the precious hour making me try over his new compositions.

No doubt some of the concerts and plays I have already mentioned came into this period of our lives; the Mustel organ recital with James Coward, for instance, and other engagements he got for me. I joined one of his parties once for a concert at Todmorden, near Manchester, where we were taken over a

cotton mill and I was presented with a dress length of khaki drill. I had it made up afterwards into a coat and skirt, but it was so hideously unbecoming that I hardly ever wore it.

We were living very simply at the flat. Mother made innumerable sacrifices for me to have those lessons and all the advantages she herself had been denied.

But she was adamant where money and the spending of it were concerned. Her horror of debt led to an incident about this time that left an indelible memory.

I had a standing account at Augeners, the music publishers in Great Marlborough Street, off Oxford Circus. Somehow or other, the bill was mislaid or overlooked for two terms. A fresh one arrived one morning while Mother was still in bed. She took one look at the fearsome amount of five or ten pounds—I forget which—and promptly set about giving me a lesson I should never forget... Without a morsel of breakfast, she *walked every mile to Great Marlborough Street and back* to pay that wretched bill!

We did most of our own housework and cooking, and a charwoman came in so many times a week to sweep and polish. I remember that woman very well; her name was Mrs. Page. One eye, smaller than the other, gave her face a perpetually comic twist; it was only the excessively solemn expression of the good eye that made you realize she was not trying to be funny. One day a girl singing abominably out of tune next door made Mother exclaim: "Do listen to that flat singing!"—"These flats, Ma'am?", said Mrs. Page, winking interestedly.

A letter from Harold one day told of his approaching marriage to Janet. Would Mother grace the occasion and give her blessing in person? Of course she would. In many ways Harry was her favourite child, though she always set her face against any 'softness' towards her children. But if ever his casual ways annoyed her his sunny disposition and happy manner could always melt her heart. Each of us, I hope, inherited some of her gifts and qualities, but in Harry's mercurial and emotional temperament she must have sensed a nature more akin than the others to her own.

She longed to see him again. Preparations for leaving went ahead. The flat was shut; arrangements were made for me to stay with friends in Holland Road, conveniently near for my weekly trios in Cromwell Road. And so another chapter ended.

Mother was simply furious when she returned to find that I had got engaged to Hew Powell in her absence. He was more than double—and looked three times—my age, was delicate, had

very little money and not the remotest prospect of getting any more. (It was monstrous!) He lived with his older sister who devoted her life to doing exquisite church embroidery, in which she gave lessons. They had enough to live on and no more. Hew's bad health in youth had upset his intention of going into the church and now, with an income which allowed him modest everyday comfort, he had given up all hope and ambition of earning any more. He spent his summers—except the one when we played sonatas and strolled about in Kensington Gardens—visiting rich friends in Scotland, Lincolnshire, Malvern (Elgar), and occasionally the Continent, and the rest of his time in London either at his club (United Universities) somewhere off Piccadilly or in going to concerts.

The sum total to Mother was—Pre-POSterous . . !

But he was too gentle a soul to be curtly sent about his business. His natural dignity and his age—was he not nearly as old as Mother herself?—protected him from the electrical storms which broke over my head; besides, when we played to Mother our music soothed and charmed her savage breast.

So the engagement ambled on at an andante pace, and Hew continued to take me to Saturday and Monday "Pops" and other lovely concerts. Poor Mother, from our drawing room window, would see him coming round the square, dressed in his well-worn long frock coat, spats and glossy top hat, and be overcome with what she thought was the "tragedy of it all", and hide herself when she heard his knock at the door.

The impasse I'd got myself into made me want to let off steam. I started an Orchestral and Chamber Music Society. I was seized with the desire to play concertos with an orchestra and, at the same time, have opportunities for indulging in unlimited chamber music.

I went to see my old professors about it—Mr. Davenport and dear old Henry Eyers (whose classes for sightreading and musical dictation had been among my chief delights at the Academy). They were both interested and sympathetic and prepared to become my joint musical directors.

I gathered a committee of friends together; we drew up a constitution and actually enrolled quite a number of members whose subscriptions were to supply the life blood for our project.

Everything went swimmingly for a while—then a sudden twist of my kaleidoscope changed the pattern of my activities.

I was giving violin lessons at the time to a charming girl of fifteen, May de Saumarez, second daughter of Lord and Lady de Saumarez, who were spending a few weeks in their London house. I was only too happy to accept their invitation to follow them to Shrubland Park in Suffolk, one of their five beautiful

homes in England. (Their real one was in Guernsey.)

It was my first, and only, experience of a stately English home. I had, with Mother, been to see Lord Salisbury's place at Hatfield and other great country houses, but now I was an inmate in one of them, sharing the simple pleasures and occupations of its owners.

May was a talented girl. She initiated me into the joys of watercolour sketching, a hobby I have delighted in all my life since. I grieve to think that I tore up all the daubs I perpetrated under her guidance—one, from my bedroom window, a panorama of many miles of exquisite English country.

Lord de Saumarez was a haughty gentleman of high degree, cold by nature, but his wife was a darling, so simple and unaffected. Once she peeped in at my door and found me dressing hurriedly for dinner after a late game of tennis. It didn't take a second for her to drop on her knees to fasten up the hooks I was wrestling with at the back of my dress.

As if to wean me still more from my Orchestral and Chamber Music Society, I found another appointment waiting for me when I got home. This was to accompany a family of mother, father and two girls—respectively fifteen and thirteen—to Cornwall for a month, and then to travel with them to the South of France where they had taken a villa for the winter. I was to take over the musical education of the girls while their German governess attended to their other studies. The proposed salary was generous, and all my expenses would be covered. Mother, of course, was delighted; secretly she hoped that absence would make my heart less fond.

I was anxious about my pet Society. I couldn't bear to think that it would fade away. Hew and other members of the committee promised to carry on, roping in new subscribers in my absence, so I had to leave it to them and hope for the best.

CHAPTER SIX

WHAT a lovely place Falmouth was. Its tropical palms and shrubs made me think of the south coast of Natal. I revelled in the rich Cornish cream, but never got enough of it except in the tea rooms, because at our home meals the dish would be handed first to Mrs. Fynn and then travel round to everybody else till there was only a scrape left for me, sitting at her right hand. I have felt ever since that I can never make up for those lost helpings.

I went sketching with the girls and Miss Rosenberger—she would not be called Fraulein—seascapes mostly at that stage in my painting career, because water attracted me, and Pendennis Castle, though picturesque, was beyond my powers.

I met some sweet people there—Fox by name—they were Quakers; and went for a night to Penzance to visit some of Hew's cousins.

We stayed only a month in Cornwall, then took a P. and O. boat to St. Raphael, stopping for a few hours at Gibraltar on the way. Miss Rosenberger and I were dumped into the second class, to our great indignation. Our friendship, begun on that little voyage, lasted for years after I returned to live in South Africa.

St. Raphael was a primitive little place, but our Villa Méryem seemed like a palace, with its pillared hall and wide marble staircase. It was bitterly cold at night, expecially when the mistral blew everyone indoors, for there was no fireplace in the

house. But I loved the sharp brightness of the atmosphere, the vivid colouring of the sea and flowers and the gaily-shuttered houses.

We settled down to a routine of sorts. The two girls shared their morning lessons with Miss Rosenberger and me, with a dip in the sea, usually, before déjeuner at midday. Mrs. Fynn, upstairs, had her daily massage in bed after breakfast, given her by a trained nurse who was another member of the household. She was a semi-invalid, but I suspect that too much money was the root of her evil and that a little working for her own living would have done her more good than lying in bed.

Mr. Fynn was not there at first. I was perturbed by the spicy stories Miss Rosenberger told me about his goings-on with two of my predecessors—who had been summarily dismissed by his wife—and we predicted interesting developments when my turn should come to meet him. But we needn't have excited ourselves. The gay Lothario turned his attentions to the attractive Irish masseuse who, with her blarney, captivated her unsuspecting patient while making havoc of the husband's heart with her black-lashed blue eyes. While Miss Rosenberger and I sketched with the girls, these two spent their afternoons a-cycling.

Cannes was not far off. We went there several times—once, to see the Battle of Flowers. What an intoxicating sight it was! All those carriages and their occupants covered with exquisite blooms, Parma violets, carnations, daffodils and mimosa. I shall never forget the wild excitement of it all. One carriage was a mass of pink and white carnations, but in it sat a huge fat creature in grey, a man beside her in black, and a girl, plain and fat, too evidently the daughter. The trio certainly lacked charm. Another, a dog-cart, was a bower of marguerites; and a very imposing affair was a great four-wheeled cart or wagon smothered in white heather and red ribbons. Everybody in the procession had hundreds of small bouquets in baskets; they flung them right and left, generally at rival carriages. I got a huge handful before I came away. It seemed such a shame to leave the masses withering in the road, but I suppose that was part of the fun.

Miss Rosenberger and I went independently and waved to the Fynns who had engaged a huge landau, decorated specially for themselves with violets, arums and beautiful red camellias—the two horses drawing it also decorated. They pelted us with the flowers we had all slaved to make into bouquets the day before. Their carriage was lovely and they won two prizes, a banner and a bronze cup.

Mother meanwhile was planning a surprise for me. She knew I wasn't very happy with the Fynns, so she came over to spend the Christmas holidays with me. (So typical of her!)

We went to Cannes first and shared a bedroom in a small pension. At the Villa Méryem there was a proper bathroom, but at Cannes the chambermaid brought a hip-bath to our room draped in a huge sheet, into which she poured jugs of water. When I stepped into it I lost my balance and tumbled over backwards, enveloped in the sheet while the water cascaded over me. I didn't think it a bit funny till long afterwards.

After Cannes we spent a few days in Nice, a much bigger town and full of interesting shops. I still have some of the beautiful embroidery we bought at one of these.

We went to try our luck at Monte Carlo while we were there. Mother was as excited as I was. We had a look at all the rooms—holding our breath, almost, as we peeped into the very quiet, dimly-lit one where colossal sums were being won and lost, the gamblers sitting round the green table, rigid and expressionless. The silence, only broken by an occasional "Faites vos jeux, Messieurs!" was uncanny. I felt a weight lifted as we tiptoed away.

We were happier in the big common-or-garden room downstairs, though I could see that Mother was nervously looking round at first for the pickpockets and adventurers she was convinced were lying in wait for us. However, like moths round a flame, we finally ventured to place our modest five-franc pieces on the red and black roulette before it spun round again. (We always chose red and it was more often kind than not.)

The climax came when Mother unwittingly put her coin (*en plein*) on one of the numbers displayed—1 to 36—on a green background. Presently, when the coin had harvested 36 times its value, a bystander suggested that Mother should pick up the pile of silver the croupier was pushing towards her. She looked at it incredulously, literally slow on the uptake, but soon recovered. I can still see her now, crimson with excitement, holding up her black satin skirt to receive the shower of coins. "Come away!", she breathed, and scuttled as fast as her legs could carry her to a distant corner where she was able to gather up her wits and her wealth.

I won five louis myself that night and wrote to London the next day to order a new cycling costume, a coat and long-skirted affair which was "just the thing" in fashion at that time. Alas, on a subsequent visit with the Fynns—Mother never risked her luck again—I lost that five louis (and more), for I went on backing red, and black kept coming up.

On our last morning at Nice, as we were waving goodbye to

the hotel people, I slipped on the marble doorsteps—there was so much marble everywhere—and sprained my wrist. Fortunately it was my left one. Though it was bandaged up in a sling for many weeks I was at least able to go on teaching, keep up my beloved sketching and go on with the German lessons I was having with dear old Miss Rosenberger. She and I became more and more attached to one another, and this seemed to put us both out of favour with our employers who, with the Irish masseuse now completely one of the family, used to gather in Mrs. Fynn's bedroom and have jokes and fun which they never invited us to share. I got very homesick at last; besides, my poor Society was wilting badly in my absence.

I plucked up courage eventually and told Mrs. Fynn that I wished to go home.

Sure enough, my society had gone under. I did not realize then—as I have done since—that the fate of such an undertaking depends almost entirely on the one indispensable member of its committee, the secretary who handles correspondence, deals with the countless difficulties and irritating trifles that are like grit in a machine, and bears the brunt of everything without losing control of the steering-wheel. Poor dear Hew had been a broken reed. The scheme was not sufficiently established before I deserted it. It needed oceans of energy and enthusiasm and, with all the will in the world, Hew lacked both.

It was in the following year that Phil—engaged for several years to Janet Runciman's younger sister, May—wrote inviting us to his wedding. He was now in Rhodesia, serving as an assistant Native Commissioner in the Chartered Company under Rhodes.

Would I be bridesmaid? As it seemed unlikely that I would ever be a bride myself, and as Phil and I had always been very closely united, I jumped at the idea. Mother did, too, for several reasons of her own, which I was only to discover later.

Our flat was shut up again and we travelled out to Durban once more on the same Rennie boat with Captain McGregor. This time we did not put in at Teneriffe or Las Palmas; there was quarantine trouble, so we sailed on to Cape Verde for our fuel. We went ashore and the Captain introduced us to some charming officials in the shipping office. We were so sorry for them, stationed in that heat on that god-forsaken rock of a place. One of them wrote me several long letters afterwards, but I never saw him again. The weather was glorious as we steamed away. I practised for hours every day in the chart room, learnt to read the sextant and was a better sailor than ever before.

We arrived in Durban at the end of June, Harold coming in the tug to meet us before we landed, full of excitement and joy at the approaching birth of his first child. Esme was born a few days later. When we went to be introduced, Janet was looking sweetly pretty in a pink wrap—so appropriate for the mother of a girl—and as calm and collected as if Esme were her tenth child. Harold was the excited one, ecstatically pleased and proud.

During that visit to Durban in 1900 I met and played with Lady Tullibardine (the Marchioness of Tullibardine who afterwards became Duchess of Atholl), whose husband was with his regiment. I thoroughly enjoyed the mornings we spent having music together. She was a most attractive woman and an extremely talented pianist.

Durban was buzzing with preparations for the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York, later George V and Mary of England. Mother and I were staying with Jamie in Silverton Road. (Shall I ever forget the thick red dust we had to struggle through on our way to and from the tram!)

Among the various occasions was a monster public gathering in Albert Park, where a pavilion was erected for all the chief Government officials to be presented to the Royal pair one by one—retiring backwards very gingerly as there was not much room, so as not to tumble down the steps.

Jamie, oblivious in his library to all that was going on, was reminded by Mother that he had no regulation top hat to go with his morning coat, so the day before this event he rushed down to Greenacre's to get one.

Harry, Philip and I stood in the great crowd, anxiously waiting to bask in reflected glory when our illustrious brother should appear in the procession. We scanned each carriage eagerly as it swept past—no sign of Jamie in any of them . . . We were beginning to think that some accident had happened when suddenly a voice near us exclaimed: "Good Lord—who's the man in the hat?"

We peered at the individual with a hat resting on his ears—almost down to his eyebrows. Yes—it was—it was *Jim!*

We all upbraided him when he got home.

"Why on earth?"

"It was the only one left."

"Then why didn't you stuff envelopes in the crown?"

"I *did!*"

He was unperturbed. After all, he had kissed Queen Victoria's hand, and the Duke and Duchess of York were not yet the King and Queen.

Another tale went the rounds when the Royal pair attended a ball at Government House in Maritzburg. As they moved slowly round the room bowing to the guests, a gushing lady darted forward (she was a magistrate's wife and ought to have known better). "I must—I *must* have a flower!" she cooed, and caught at a spray of the shower bouquet near the hem of the Royal gown. But the flower she coveted was wired; she tugged—and tugged. Royalty stood motionless; waited for the flower to loosen—then passed on.

Our little ship was back in the Durban harbour, and it was time for us to go back to England.

Mother and I were in Maritzburg, spending the last few days with a dear old friend, Mrs. Macdonald—"Don", matron of Grey's Hospital—when I was startled by a sudden ultimatum. Mother said:

"You either write at once to Mr. Powell" (she never used his Christian name) "to break off your engagement or I shall leave you behind and go to England by myself".

It was sheer bluff, of course. Mother would never have deserted me in any circumstances, but she was a born actress and she took my breath away. Also—need I confess it?—I had grown rather weary of the indefiniteness of my position. I loved going about with Hew and playing with him; I wasn't pining to get married; but I did feel that an engaged girl ought to know, within a dozen years or so, the approximate date of her wedding —if only to have something to say when people asked questions.

So, with a certain amount of relief, mingled with the sadness I felt at having to hurt Hew, I bowed to the inevitable and posted the letter.

I think it was on that voyage home that we went to hear an opera at Teneriffe. I forget which one it was, but it was a poor affair. The singers were mediocre and badly dressed. While the prima donna—not long before her confinement, poor dear—was singing her big aria, a fly kept buzzing round her mouth. I was terribly afraid she'd swallow it. Perhaps she had been drinking some of the sweet syrupy Frontignac, two bottles of which we smuggled home with us.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MOTHER and I picked up the threads of our lives again at No. 8, Playfair Mansions. We hunted up Mrs. Page and things went on much as they had done before, except that Hew no longer came after the first sorrowful visit, and there were no more trios at Cromwell Road. It was all very melancholy; so many things that I had cared for had gone out of my life. I went to see my old professors and friends at the Academy, but there were changes there, too.

Mother and I went to concerts, picture shows, and saw Ellen Terry and Mrs. Kendall in that last wonderful production of *The Merry Wives* at His Majesty's—Ellen Terry as adorable as ever in her old age.

I posted a letter Lady Tullibardine had given me to Jacques Blumenthal, the composer whose songs had made him famous a decade earlier. Sims Reeves made his song *My Queen* the rage, and it was *the* tenor song of the day. Phil sang it charmingly. Street singers with beautiful voices took it up and made small fortunes over the money it earned, thrown from the windows at night. Torrington Square, where we once lived, was long and narrow, ideally suited to open air singing, and we often heard "Where-and-how-shall-I-earliest-meet-her . . . my Queen?" floating through it on summer nights.

Small wonder then that I was enchanted to receive a very cordial reply from the composer, enclosing a card for an evening party at his house in Queen's Gate the following week; would I care to bring my violin? Of course I was delighted, but "11

p.m." seemed terribly late for the beginning of a party. Mother made me have a nap first so that I shouldn't be too sleepy to play, and took me herself in a hansom to the door.

I did enjoy those parties! I went to more afterwards, and revelled in seeing the crowds of celebrities who trooped into that great drawing room; actors and actresses, coming on from their work at the theatres, and all sorts of other distinguished people; Beerbohm Tree and Lady Tree, George Alexander and Kirkby Lunn, all of whom would have given me their autographs if I'd only had the nerve to ask for them.

The Blumenthals were charming to me. Mrs. Blumenthal was an Australian, and she called me "Sister Colonial". They took me to a concert at Queen's Hall one night, to hear a new work by Richard Strauss. His name was new to me then—I only knew of Johann, of Viennese fame—and I still squirm when I remember the quizzical smile on old Blumenthal's face as he looked at his wife when I said that I had only heard the *waltzes*.

Parties were all very well, and I practised as usual and did some teaching, but I began to realize in the months that followed that it was time I started to earn my living. Did not (I asked myself) my medals, final certificate and teacher's diploma, locked away in a drawer, stand for something? Above all, did not my Royal Academy Associateship (conferred on me the year after I left the R.A.M.) entitle me to a professional status?

But every avenue seemed to close as it opened. Mother would not hear of my accepting a post which was offered in Belfast, and she frowned on my suggestion to apply for one in a school nearer home, where I should have had to be a resident.

I can't believe that, with her clear-sighted vision, she still clung to the dreams she had had of a brilliant career for me as a concert artist. She had heard too much of the many heart-breaks suffered by outstanding talent—which mine was not—going to waste for lack of influence and money; and, what was still more galling, of the necessity for time spent on endless waiting about in crowded agents' offices for auditions.

So what were her hopes now?

I became more and more restless. I remembered how the Lady Warden at St. Anne's had twitted Mother about my music being a "mere accomplishment". Had it, indeed, come to that? Or was I going to justify her faith in believing that I would be capable of earning my own living? Those periodical tours in South Africa amounted to very little, and a private teaching connection would be hard to build up with all the competition in London. Besides, I longed to settle down to work that was really worthwhile.

More snapshots from the family album:—
Top (L to R) My eldest brother Jim; My father, Martinus Stuart; My second brother Charlie.
Centre: At my son Charles's house. (L to R) "Ermine" Herbert, Ellie's sister, Ellie, myself and Charles.
Below: My brother Phil at the time of his marriage and Tuku, my daughter, about 1930.

The best photograph of Ellie in my possession —taken after he had recovered from his first operation in 1926.

In Cape Town after my return from London in 1926 where I had spent a year with my children.

After a happy luncheon with us at Klein Westerford in Newlands (L to R) me, Harold Samuel, little Boris Moiseiwitch, Benno Moiseiwitch and his wife.

Beethoven trio—Ellie and Granville Brittain rehearsing with Lily Kraus for a chamber music evening.

Interviewing Noël Coward at the Mount Nelson hotel in Cape Town, when he gave three shows for ENSA funds in 1944. (L to R) Noël Coward, a representative from African Consolidated Theatres, myself, Ivor Jones who edits the entertainments page of the Cape Times (my boss to this day) and Matthew Pam, also of the Cape Times editorial staff at that time.

Historic occasion—handing over the box with the Fynn papers in Justin's Durban office, after we had brought it from Cape Town. Present were (L to R) Henry Francis Fynn (grandson of the author); myself; Dr. Killie Campbell; my niece (Charlie's daughter) Muriel Thompson—also known as Miranda Stuart, the writer; Justin Stuart, son of my brother Harold; Ellie, and finally Huntley Stuart, my brother Phil's son, who arranged the broadcast of the proceedings.

At my portable typewriter on which I write my notices as music critic for *The Cape Times*.

The trend of these thoughts was suddenly changed by a letter to Mother from Harold. Jamie had had a nervous breakdown, and had been given six months' leave to go to England. We were dreadfully anxious, but when he arrived we saw that he must have benefited very much by the voyage, for he seemed perfectly fit and cheerful. Always a bookworm, he spent every spare minute in his room, writing, writing . . . His life in the different magistracies where he had been stationed in Zululand had bred in him a vast interest in the Natives. In after years he gave dozens of lectures at the Colonial Institute and elsewhere in London.

Life was slow again after he went home, but its tempo quickened by degrees. I was playing a great deal with Kate Eadie at the time, and between us we concocted a wonderful plan for taking a concert party on tour to South Africa. Mother approved, and joined in a general discussion of the prospects.

The financial aspect did not worry any of us at first; South Africa was the back of beyond in those days, and concert parties from England could always be assured of strong support. The singers we approached were all vastly intrigued, and we had several jolly evenings planning everything, and Kedie (K.E.) and I sketched out designs for all sorts of glamorous frocks.

As a preliminary flourish before we should sail, we arranged to give a concert at the Wigmore Hall. It was styled "Farewell Concert by Beatrice Stuart and her Concert Party, prior to their South African Tour". We all sold tickets and agreed to share the profits. (There were none; the expenses swamped them all.) Some of the newspapers were mildly gracious, but the *Daily Telegraph* was devastatingly sarcastic. It said something to this effect: . . . Why were we giving a Farewell concert—or one at all? Was it for the pleasure of going off on a short trip with the sound of applause in our ears? (And a bit more in the same strain—the sort of stuff a journalist loves rattling off.)

We were all very discouraged by it, and I do not think any of us cut out the notice to paste into our albums.

Kedie wore pink at that concert—one of the creations designed for the tour. I wore apple-green satin and played, among other things, Bach's A Minor Concerto. That is all I remember about that concert, for things began to happen soon afterwards that swept all recollections of it from my mind.

Several relations and friends of the soprano—or was it the contralto?—began to sit up and take notice. Where were the contracts? they asked. Who was financing the tour? Who was our business manager, and what were the salaries to be?

Nasty, niggling questions like that were flung at us. It seemed

that Mother, Kedie and I were the arch villains trying to lure unsuspecting victims to a foreign country on false pretences.

All this, I know, gives the impression that we three had behaved like irresponsible children, but Mother and Kedie, at any rate, were no fools. The financial basis of their scheme was practical and sound.

I fancy that in the end everybody agreed that this was so. But the tour never came off; all our squibs had got damp. Guarantees that had been promised never materialized, and there were no agents at that time at the other end to share the task of fitting in dates and engagements. Poor Kedie was very disappointed. She had looked forward so much to that visit to South Africa. I never saw her again after we left England the last time, but I used to think about her with nostalgic affection when I read about her brother's success as an actor.

Time passed quickly enough now. Tour or no tour, Mother was determined to get back to Natal. We paid farewell visits to all our friends. One of them was to some connections of ours at West Croydon who were on friendly terms with Coleridge-Taylor, the composer, who lived not far away. I was very keen to meet him, for I had heard so much of his *Hiawatha.* (I saw the stage production of it only many years later at the Albert Hall—a remarkably fine performance.)

He was a cultured, sensitive man, of unmistakeable negroid type, married to an English girl who had been his fellow student at the Royal College of Music. They christened their little son Hiawatha.

As we sat chatting after tea, I told him that I had recently been playing some of his violin pieces and would be so pleased if I might play them with him before introducing them to South African audiences. He consented graciously, adding, "Do they like good music out there?"

Mother was always a great one for sales of all descriptions. She had a wonderful flair for picking up bargains, and nine times out of ten they were things we really needed. But sometimes even the bargains were dear at the price. One, I remember, was a horrible round settee which stood for years in the middle of our drawing room. Though Mother had it cleaned—at some expense—and re-covered, no one ever sat on it, because you got a crick in the neck when you tried to talk to the person sitting at your back.

Now we had to prepare for our own sale. We were forced at last to get rid of the masses of flotsam and jetsam that had accumulated in our box-room and on the shelves of our kitchen

—the various oddments that had been included in the job lots Mother had so often brought home in triumph. When everything was finally spread out when our turn came no doubt other people, too, found countless "bargains".

Unfortunately, Mother sold our Bechstein as well, the lovely piano which Herr Eberlein had ordered from Germany for me when I first studied music seriously. We never had so good a one again.

Among other things we brought away with us, however, was Aunt Eliza's old mahogany chest-of-drawers and cupboard with sliding shelves and her dear little walnut gate-legged table, which lets down its flaps when you want it to and doubles up suddenly when you don't. I still cling to them all.

The three months after Mother and I landed in Durban in 1903 passed in a whirl. Jim had taken a house for us in Norfolk Road on the Berea. It seemed an ideal arrangement—he in his library, I in a studio and Mother to keep house for us. Life for me held possibilities for a successful teaching career, with occasional concerts thrown in to vary monotony.

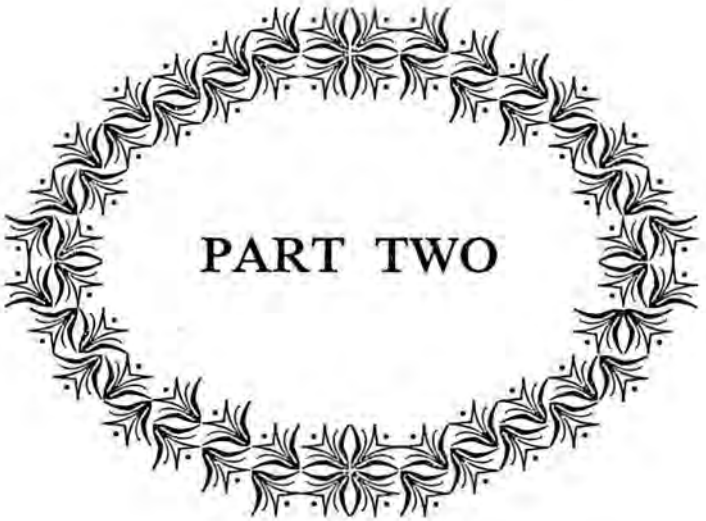
Ada Forrest, that lovely singer, was back from the Academy where we first met and was making her name as one of Natal's most celebrated sopranos. She came to suggest having a joint concert at Harrismith. I remembered the happy time I had had on my first tour and jumped at the idea. I wrote to my old friends there; they were enthusiastic; of course we must come.

Ada went ahead and met me at the station.

"How slim you are, dear!" she exclaimed as I got out of the train. It was in the days of frilly petticoats—two, at least, to make one's dress stand out. (The fashion has come round again.) I had to confess that I had put all my clothes at the foot of my (top) bunk; the window had come down in the night and everything had slid into Van Reenen's Pass . . . Fortunately, my dress was still hanging on a peg.

When I got home again, one of those sudden twists of my kaleidoscope changed my whole life again. My cousin Karel turned up unexpectedly one morning from Johannesburg, and we found that the old attraction still existed. This time, Mother's defences came down; Karel swept them aside and we were married three months later.

Theo Wendt was in Durban at that time, conducting *The Quaker Girl* on one of the periodical tours of the Wheeler-Edwards Company, of which he was musical director. I had seen him first at the Royal Academy; he was just leaving as I entered there. He played my wedding march. Little did I know he was to play another part in my future life, and I in his.



PART TWO

CHAPTER EIGHT

NOTHING I had ever experienced was quite like life in Johannesburg. I was appalled at the state of the streets—so many were untarred, with rough surfaces inches thick in red dust.

Karel's beautiful big house in Troyeville was bounded by three of these dusty roads and it was difficult to go anywhere without spoiling one's clothes. He used to come home, driving in a dog-cart from his office in Rissik Street—even that was untarred—with his eyelashes caked with dust, and his collar and tie a sight to behold. All businessmen suffered in the same way.

Mikky and Nora—Karel's youngest sisters—were fond of tennis, a game I had not played since I was a child at Stuartstown, and they used to come back from their parties with wide red hems to their long-skirted white frocks. How much easier to keep clean would have been the sensible shorts and all-in-ones of today, and what a sensation they would have created then!

Karel's house sheltered his parents and an unmarried sister, brother, nephew and niece until one being built at Norwood was ready for them, and I was only too happy to have the benefit of Aunt Agatha's advice in the running of our big establishment.

She was another unforgettable character in my life. Hers was a nature whose honesty and high integrity were as unswerving as the north star. She had no pleasures outside her home, for her sole happiness lay in devoting her life to the service of her husband and children. I don't think she had ever been to a theatre or place of amusement. Music was a closed book to her,

though she listened indulgently when her children sang bits from musical comedies or I played the violin. She and Uncle Karel were ideally matched, for all that he was an inveterate tease and always making fun of her puritanical ways. They lived to see their golden wedding, and in those fifty years no cross word ever passed between them.

Music came back into my life by degrees. Karel loved it and encouraged me to play at concerts though there was no necessity now for me to earn money. He was a very successful lawyer, and he had special clerks to cope with the transfers of properties that poured into his office in that time of prosperity.

I played at occasional concerts and went to many more. The Cherniavskys came to South Africa for the first time; Leo, sixteen years old, with a violin, in a velvet suit and wide collar, looking like an over-grown Little Lord Fauntleroy; Jan, the pianist, with a Paderewski-shock of curly red hair, and Mischel, with a 'cello almost as big as himself. They were an attractive trio and they took Johannesburg by storm.

I met Otto von Booth, an old violinist of the Joachim school, and often played in string quartets with him. We went sometimes to play at the house of Sir Willem van Hulsteyn, an amateur 'cellist and an ardent lover of chamber music. He left his whole beautifully-bound collection of works to the College of Music in Cape Town, where it has been in constant use ever since. "Scrappy" van Hulsteyn, his daughter, grew up to become the actress, Marda Vanne.

Karel bought me a riding-habit and I learnt to ride again—not having been on a horse since I was a child—and got to know some of the open country round Johannesburg which is now covered with rows and rows of streets and houses—Norwood, Orange Grove, Houghton Estate, Mountain View and Killarney. There were no picnic spots but the air was crisp and exhilarating, away from the dust in town.

Sometimes, feeling very grand and important, I spent the afternoon being driven round in our victoria, alone, dropping cards on the people who had called on me. It was like a game, and I enjoyed the novelty of it all.

One day, as Aunt Agatha and I sat sewing in the morning room she said, "Have you noticed anything about Moran's figure lately?" (Moran was our Irish cook.) I said I thought she was getting rather stout but hadn't liked to mention it.

"Well", Aunt Agatha went on, "I saw a ring on her finger for the first time today, so I said to her, 'Are you engaged, Moran?' She hung her head and said, 'Worse, Ma'am, I'm—*married*'!"

After my marriage, Mother and Jim went to live in Maritzburg, where they bought a house. At the bottom of the garden there was a summer house, secluded and quiet, ideally suited as a study for Jim. For years his principal aim in life had been to collect and preserve for posterity Zulu history during the stirring times of Tshaka, Dingaan, M'Panda and Cetewayo. Now he could go ahead.

He invited old men of standing from every part of Zululand to visit him. He paid all their travelling expenses, giving them besides free food and quarters. As many of those men were between the ages of 70 and 90 they had first-hand knowledge of events in the tragic period of Tshaka's reign, 1816 to 1828.

Before and after office hours he would be in his study taking down stories from the lips of the octogenarians seated round him, talking, talking—writing, writing . . . sifting, like wheat from the chaff, the facts that were to help Jim in his work. They were invaluable later when he began editing the famous Diary of Henry Francis Fynn, whose travels through Zululand in the eighteen-twenties made such fascinating reading.

How annoyed Mother used to be when the scores of old men cluttered up her back yard! All the same she was ready at a moment's notice to help Jim when he mentioned at breakfast one morning his regret at being unable to attend the sale of a collection of books on old Natal which included a small pamphlet about Zululand. Without a word to him, she went to the sale and presented the thing triumphantly in the evening, describing the tussle she had had to wrest it from a 'tiresome man'.

"So *you* were the other bidder!" said Jim. "I sent a man to the sale, but told him not to bid more than five pounds!"

I never realized till long afterwards what a bitter blow we must have given Mother, the year after our marriage, when we decided to go to England for the birth of my first child.

I should have sensed, even before I became a parent myself, that a mother who dotes on an only daughter considers it a foregone conclusion that she should be at hand when an event of this major importance takes place. But the thought of going to England again; of choosing the latest thing in cradles and christening cloaks; of looking on while Karel floated a big brick-making syndicate which was going to make our fortune—(townships were springing up in all directions in Johannesburg, the thousands of houses going to be built meant thousands of transfers and legal documents for the office in Rissik Street)—everything beckoned and intrigued me so much that sentiment—I say it with shame—had no room in my plans. I delivered

the blow as thoughtlessly and blithely as if I had been telling Mother that we were going to spend a week-end in the country.

A friend in Johannesburg gave us a letter of introduction to the widow of George Steevens, the famous war correspondent of the Boer war who died in Ladysmith. He must have written to her as well, and very charmingly, for we had an invitation from her soon after we landed; would we come and spend the next week-end with her? She lived at Merton Abbey, in Wimbledon—Nelson's old home. I was enthralled at the prospect of seeing it.

When we arrived on the Saturday afternoon, Mrs. Steevens welcomed us in a brusque sort of way. Short, curly grey hair and a brisk, breezy manner—those were my first impressions of her. She and her surroundings were entirely unconventional, Bohemian, in fact.

There were five or six other people there; Heinemann, the publisher; his sister; a Miss Maude (a novelist); a couple of young Americans, and the mother of our friend Ralph Stokes in Johannesburg, a sweet woman to whom I immediately lost my heart.

After supper—a very gay meal—this new friend took me aside to a back drawingroom for a chat about her son. We could hear the others talking without having to join in. Presently, Mrs. Steevens came in, and quite soon they were both interestedly asking me what plans I was making for my great event. I told them that I thought of going to a nursing home.

"My dear child", said Mrs. Steevens, "how dreary for you!"

"Yes, I know", I replied, "but there is no alternative. I am away from home".

Then my breath was taken away, for she exclaimed, "You shall do nothing of the sort! Do you know what it would mean? The expense of it all?—no, you shall have it here, and you shall have your boy with you all the time!"

I could only stammer, "How very kind of you, but of course —" when she broke in again, saying that she wouldn't hear of my going anywhere else unless to friends.

Then she pointed out all the advantages I should have in that great house, where she was quite alone, and I should be able to sit out on the lawn all day and do just as I liked.

It sounded like a fairy tale.

She made me call her 'Grannie', there and then—a pet name all her friends used.

Next day I confided in Mrs. Stokes. Karel and I could not possibly accept this hospitality without at least paying for our board. She passed this on to Mrs. Steevens, and the end of it all

was that a sum of five pounds a week was agreed upon—"if it would make us feel more comfortable".

Mrs. Steevens was thorough. She sent for the local doctor that very day to come and examine me. He judged that August 23 would be my great day. Through him a nurse was also engaged, and he advised me to be back at Merton Abbey by the first of August. It was then early in May.

Feeling that the infant had all but arrived, Karel and I returned to our hotel to carry out the programme we had planned for the next few months. We shopped to our hearts' content; had all our things sent to Merton as had been arranged, leaving only the light luggage we required for the visits we intended to pay.

We spent a lovely fortnight at Hove, near Brighton, with the Macleans, parents of my old Academy friend, Jessie. Dear people! They had pressed the invitation on me as soon as they heard of our arrival in England. I had often spent holidays with them in my student days, and now they included Karel in a warm welcome.

We visited other friends afterwards, a doctor and his wife at Torquay for a week or two, finishing up with a stay at a very nice sanatorium not far from them in Devonshire. (I had as much clotted cream there as I wanted.) The proprietor was very religious, I remember, and he wore tie-pins with biblical mottoes on them—one was 'Christ for me'. He was rather a fraud, though. He professed to being a vegetarian and used to look reproachfully at my eggs and bacon at breakfast, and make me feel uncomfortably carnivorous over lamb and mint sauce at dinner, and then we heard tales of how he would go into the pantry when no one was about and have a good plate of meat all to himself.

While we were there an elderly parson and his young wife turned up on their honeymoon. They sat opposite us at table, and I used to feel so sorry for the poor girl. Her husband insisted on helping her to the sugar on her porridge, and never would stop when she had had enough. I wonder what became of them, and if he continued to have his sweet way to the bitter end?

It was as we were leaving the place that we got a letter from Grannie. It was a bombshell. She bewailed the fact that she had had severe monetary losses and that unless we paid her double the amount agreed upon she would not be able to have us to stay with her.

As Merton Abbey stood on thirteen acres of ground, the produce of which included an abundance of eggs, poultry, fruit and vegetables—not to mention an unlimited supply of milk,

butter and cream—five pounds a week had seemed more than adequate for our 'keep'—but we had insisted.

Nowadays, of course, one would think nothing of paying ten pounds a week for two people's board, but it did seem a lot then, as it was meant to cover merely the cost of our food. However, we couldn't bear to be thought mean, and in any case it was too late to make other plans. So I simply wrote back saying, "Yes, certainly".

I sent Grannie's letter to Mrs. Stokes at the same time. She was horrified. It was "far too much", she wrote—"do come and stay in our flat instead. We are going to Switzerland for a month and it would give you time to look for another for yourselves; besides, it would only cost you your food, because there would be no rent to pay."

It was very sweet of her, but we dreaded causing trouble between her and Grannie, so the suggestion fell through.

We arrived at Merton Abbey eventually on—of all uncomfortable days of the year—August Bank holiday, a terribly hot day. To our surprise, Grannie—who had said she would be in Scotland for the whole of August—was there to greet us. She took us up to our room, the famous Lady Hamilton room we had slept in the time before. It overlooked the equally famous walk known as Nelson's "quarter-deck". I loved the historical feel of everything and the way the floor of the room sloped down towards the window. Everything was so authentic.

Dinner was very simply served that night, and though Karel and I had resolved to help household economy by refusing all wines and spirits, only home-made ginger beer was offered; incidentally, it was our staple drink during the rest of our stay.

The next morning Karel presented Grannie with a cheque for £25. Let's show her that we mean to play the game, we said, and it seemed a nicer arrangement to pay lump sums in advance.

The following days went by very peacefully. Grannie, who appeared to have given up all idea of going to Scotland, bustled about looking after her poultry—she had hundreds of fowls and ducks—and other things on her estate. I led a placid existence, sewing baby clothes and taking walks about the place. Karel amused himself by taking little jaunts to London now and then. Wimbledon, thirteen miles from town, was very much more of a suburb than it is now.

Another paying guest turned up when we had been there a week; he was Grannie's solicitor. His name was Bicknell, and we learned later that a brother or cousin of his had married one of my bridesmaids, Ellie Bennett, in Natal.

We were a pleasant party. Grannie adored cards, and the

three of them played every night after dinner while I sat in a corner with my sewing before an early bed. Karel told me queer stories of Grannie's luck at cards. It was so persistent that the two men took to sharing their losses after she had gone to bed.

Three weeks went by. Then, about six o'clock on a Sunday afternoon—August 22—just after the doctor had dropped in to see me ("any time now"), Karel, who had been walking up and down the "quarter-deck" with Mr. Bicknell, came to take me for a stroll. He was nervous and excited. He said, "Don't be upset, darling, but I'm afraid we shall have to leave Merton Abbey".

"Leave?—but why?"

"Well, Bicknell's been telling me that Grannie says she can't afford to keep us; in fact she wants me to pay a hundred pounds down and another hundred in a month's time!"

I burst out laughing. "How perfectly ridiculous! Of course you won't—we'll go at once."

"But where can we go? You know what the doctor has just said. I'd rather pay up than have anything happen to you."

Poor Karel! He was so wretched, but I felt all the exhilaration Mother would have had in a similar emergency. I was ready for Grannie. I tore myself from Karel's restraining arms and went straight to her in her little study.

"Grannie, dear", I began, "I'm so sorry we've got to go".

"Yes, dear, I'm afraid it has to be. You see, I've been going through accounts with my house-keeper, and I find I can't afford to keep you . . . but where will you go?"

I said that we would probably get a flat.

"It would cost a fortune!"

"Or a nursing-home—"

"But don't you know that all good nursing-homes are closed at this time of the year?"

And so we went on. Everything I suggested was turned down. Grannie was utterly taken aback by my attitude of independence. She didn't credit me with any knowledge of the world, nor did she stop to think that the years I had spent with Mother in London had taught me quite a lot about flats and house-keeping generally.

Presently Karel—on tenterhooks—rescued me. I'd really had as much as I could stand.

We were all quite cheerful at dinner; Mr. Bicknell's presence was our salvation. Afterwards, Karel slipped out, on pretence of posting a letter, and went to tell the doctor what had happened.

"My dear fellow", said he—"don't you know Mrs. Steevens?"

This was a surprise. It explained and shed a light on quite a number of things we had been puzzling over.

The doctor was very helpful. He gave Karel the name of another doctor in London, but assured him that he would come himself if necessary.

Nothing more occurred that night. We dispersed to our rooms, two of us, at least, to lie awake. My brain was in a whirl and the nightmare of perhaps being taken ill before we could get away haunted me. And there was all that packing to do . . .

Next morning a message from Grannie came as my breakfast tray was being taken away; would I come to see her?

She kissed me fondly:

"Dear child, I'm afraid you've had a bad night? I can't think why you want to go! How has it all come about?"

I said of course we couldn't think of staying unless we paid twenty-five pounds a week, and we simply couldn't afford it.

"Nonsense! I've told Mr. Bicknell that if Karel pays me fourteen guineas a week, and his drinks (?) I shall be content".

But I was not to be shaken, and soon made an excuse to leave the room. I dreaded all that packing. One of the maids, a nice German girl—Dora was her name—came to help me. She nearly wept with sympathy. She kept saying, over and over again, "It's a shame! It's a shame!"

We got on so well with the job that Karel and I decided not to wait till the next day for our move, as we had thought we should have to do, but to go that very afternoon. Grannie was lunching in London and the coast would be clear.

But still we wondered—where to go? Nearly all my friends were out of town, even my nurse was away in the Isle of Wight. At last I thought of Augusta Wilson, Hew Powell's cousin, who had been my very dear friend all through that episode. The fact that she and her elder sister were living in a small house in South Kensington with their mother of ninety should have given me pause. But I was getting desperate and "Ladybird" (my name for Augusta) was the one and only friend I could turn to in this crisis. She would advise me, she would help us to find a flat or a nursing-home and a place for us to store our pile of luggage—that in itself was a problem, for it included a cradle, basket, bath, and other things.

Grannie, never suspecting it was a final good-bye, came to kiss me before she went to town. She found me busy packing.

"Why all this hurry?" she said in the most innocent way. Downstairs at the hall door she argued for twenty minutes with Karel, wheedling and raving alternately; he was too obstinate and pig-headed to know what he was doing; he didn't realize

what a move for me might mean; he was going to be the cause of my death, and so on, ad nauseam. Karel bowed his head to the storm and—saw her off to her bus.

The packing over, he took all our big trunks and paraphernalia to the station—he never told me if he'd had to engage a pantechnicon—and sent them off to the warehouse of a friend in London. Then back with a closed brougham to fetch me and our handbags. It had poured with rain all day and a sharp thunderstorm broke just as we moved off. We were as gay as larks. It was my first outing for three weeks and I felt like a bird out of a cage.

As a striking finish to this tale, I feel that my baby should have been born in that brougham on the way to South Kensington. But I must forego that dramatic touch and go on to Ladybird's horrified amazement when she saw us come in at her gate.

"Why—how—?", she cried, running out to meet us with anything but a smile of welcome on her lips.

I quickly explained our plight. She was full of sympathy; of course we must come in, we'd soon cope with the situation.

I slept in her room that night, Karel in a lodging nearby, where we both stayed the next night. Meanwhile he flew round to various house agents; hunted up flats and came to fetch Ladybird and me to see one he liked the look of near by, at the top of Earl's Court Road. It was in a newly-built block, fully furnished, plate, linen, everything—even a telephone—all for four guineas a week!

We were installed the following day at 149 Colcherne Court. The porter found us an excellent woman who came and 'did' for us from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. She was a comfortable body, and a peach of a cook. Her name was Trevor. Nora Simmonds, an old friend from my student days we were taking out to South Africa as nurse, came next. The midwife followed a few days later.

And my son? He arrived—conveniently and prosaically—later still, on September 7.

CHAPTER NINE

WE SAILED for the Cape three months later. Dire news awaited us. All that possibly could, it seemed, had gone wrong in our absence. Crowning everything else was the utter collapse of the huge brick-making scheme into which Karel and all his friends had poured their faith, backed by monster overdrafts at the bank. ("Up like a rocket and down like a stick!" was Mother's caustic comment when she got the news.)

We decided to let our big house in Troyeville. (It became a nursing-home in after years.) Karel's people had already left it, and it was much too big for us without them. The rent was fixed at forty pounds a month for a couple who wanted it, and we agreed to leave what furniture we could spare and to go, ourselves, as soon as possible, for they were in a great hurry to take possession.

An uncomfortable period ensued when, at the point of signing the lease, Karel discovered that the man not only had no money for the first month's rent, but no employment, no references and no securities of any kind.

The wife came to see me, and in a poignant interview, positively implored me to give them shelter for a few days—her husband, herself, two children and two servants—as they were being turned out of their house that very day. I hadn't the heart to refuse, and the whole crowd rolled up in a lorry with a load of furniture at seven that evening. I nearly wept with mortification as Karel, who was adamant, went out to the gate to turn them away. I heard the woman say, "But your wife

said we might come!" and Karel replied, "My wife's only a baby!" (How furious that made me!) He said afterwards, "Do you know what would have happened? We should never have got rid of them!"

Poor things, I never heard what eventually became of them, but the immediate sequel proved that Karel was right. The people who took them in were forced to sell the house over their own heads before they could get them out. Such was life in the Johannesburg of those days.

Karel had a property of five acres at Victoria, the suburb some miles out of town, which is now known as Norwood, beyond Orange Grove. He intended to settle there eventually, and had put up the coach house and stable before starting on the house we were to live in. This was a custom in Johannesburg then, for people who were rich one day and poor the next found it convenient to have a pied-à-terre until the house of their dreams was built. Sometimes the dreams came true, and carriages and horses ousted the humans who then moved into the newly-built mansion. More often, the dream never materialized and the stable and coach house—with modest additions—became the permanent establishment.

We had a tenant at Victoria who ran a dairy farm. When he left, Karel put in the modest additions—a verandah, wooden floors, an extra window or two, and a tiny bathroom-lavatory and a galvanized iron kitchen at the back. There were three rooms; the long, large middle one—originally intended for two carriages—the stable on its right and the saddle-and-harness room on its left. A ladder outside led to a big over-all loft. When our fortunes dropped to bankruptcy point we settled there quite happily.

Karel sold the victoria and Cape cart and horses of our opulent beginnings, keeping only the Scotch cart that was used for building purposes—carting those ill-fated bricks!—and the little Basuto pony, my special mount for the rides we had taken in our palmy days. On one of these I had first visited the Victoria property, and was introduced to the man and his wife who were living with our tenant. They were an English couple, Mr. and Mrs. Duncan Vale. He, poor man, was in the last stages of consumption, and she was nursing him and earning their keep by helping in the work of the dairy.

I lost sight of her for some months after his death, but when we couldn't find the right tenant for our big house we hunted her up and installed her there, to run as a boarding house. We knew little about her then, but something in the set of her mouth, the expression of her eyes and the gleam of her chestnut

hair made us feel that if anyone could make a success of the venture, she could.

As things turned out, however, it worried the poor dear nearly into her grave, and it was almost with a sense of relief that an ultimatum from our harassed bank manager forced the sale of the house and toppled it into the hands of the bond-holder.

There was nothing doing for Nan Vale in our new humble abode, so she found her way back to England and we carried on with the dairy at Victoria. Our late tenant had handed over his entire connection and a dozen cows and calves, complete with buckets and bottles. I never heard what the business arrangement was, but I do know that for a time I played a dairymaid role, filling bottles of milk for all the neighbours. I dressed for the part in long shapeless linen overalls, and made a point of seeing that the bottles were spotlessly clean. Nora Simmonds helped me when she wasn't looking after baby, and we enjoyed the fun of it all. For a time . . .

I supposed I got bored with it in the end; moreover, it became necessary to earn money, and music was a better paying proposition. The cows and calves disappeared and I played at concerts instead.

About this time, Pierre de Beer, the young Dutch pianist, came to live in Johannesburg. He had originally come from Holland to play in a trio at the Mount Nelson Hotel in Cape Town.

We had lots of music together, and among many concerts in and around Johannesburg, we played several times at Lourenco Marques, where Pierre's sister, Angelique, was living with her Portuguese husband, Doctor Lommelino. She was a highly-talented, temperamental creature, with Pierre's blond colouring and a beautiful white skin. Had she been less brilliant as a pianist she might have made her name as an opera singer. At one of those concerts she sang the big Santuzza duet from *Cavalleria Rusticana* with a visiting Belgian tenor, tossing off the accompaniment at the same time.

She and her husband staged terrific quarrels from time to time—never mind who was present. They enjoyed having an audience. Had they used English, what they said would have been unprintable, no doubt; in the Dutch-Portuguese version they adopted it seemed merely picturesque. I was terribly shocked the first time—especially when Angelique turned to their little girl, aged six or seven, shouting, "Look at the scoundrel! that is your *father—!*" But when I saw how affectionate the two were to each other afterwards I took all the other storms in my stride.

My reactions to the bullfights I was taken to see were much the same. I could hardly bear, at first, to look on as the picadors used their darts to goad the poor bull into furious rushes as they tormented it and skipped about. I covered my eyes with my hands, then I found myself peeping through my fingers, and at last was ashamed to realize that I was being infected with the excitement all round me. The letter I wrote to Mother about that first bull fight is still in existence. It said: ". . . The Portuguese are delightful people—so light-hearted and enthusiastic and hospitable. The day after the concert they took me to see a real bull fight. I nearly died with fright. Real fierce bulls, goaded to madness by the red flags waved in their faces, and the spikes stuck into their necks by the torcadors—and the *rush*—and finally a man tossed into the air! I shrieked at the sight and went off into violent hysterics until I had to be taken out to calm down, and to have a double dose of bromide administered by Doctor Lommelino. They all laughed at me and assured me that no one was ever killed—but what I saw was enough for me."

On my next visit I was taken to a sham bullfight arranged in my honour. The 'bull' was a Native, carrying the hide and horns of an ox—mounted on wood—and the 'toreadors' were men with coloured Japanese flags. It was all very funny, and the invited audience was convulsed.

I was glad to learn that Portuguese bullfights are not the cruel exhibitions to be seen in Spain. At Lourenco Marques I saw no goring of helpless horses, and no bulls were killed. One by one, seven were brought into the ring, but as far as I could see they all lived to fight another day—if with less zest than the Lommelinos.

I was introduced to wonderful food during those visits. Luncheon parties lasted for hours, with one course after another of delectable dishes. At one of these feasts, I sat next to a friendly little man, the Port Captain, who told me about his wife and children in Lisbon. I told him about my baby. Presently, he asked, "Do you milk your baby?"

Enlightenment came when he added, "My wife always does."

Most of the mines in and around Johannesburg had big recreation halls where concerts and other entertainments were held for their employees every month. These were subsidized—in some cases so handsomely that their committees (who were obliged to strike a balance every month) could offer very good fees for the concert parties they engaged. There were no concert agents proper, so they wrote to some helpful go-between and he undertook to choose five or six artists and shepherd them into

the train at Park station. I was usually the violinist; Mrs. Harold Vickers was invariably the star. She was not actually beautiful, but she had an engaging manner, and the Scots songs she sang in a lovely soprano captivated and won the hearts of all the audiences. Ethel Mann—our contralto—was another favourite singer, and Alfred Bertwistle, who had a beautiful baritone and knew how to use it, was always in demand. Laurie Glenton, our go-between, was a versatile musician—he was the conductor of the Philharmonic Society—and played all the accompaniments. And, for good measure, he threw in humorous songs at the piano in a not-too-wonderful-but-adequate tenor. His style was nearer that of the Corney-Grain-Grossmith type, of bygone London fame, than any I have heard since.

One day we all trekked to the Cullinan mine. It was very hot and the journey to Pretoria and then miles and miles further on to the mine made the expedition gruelling. There was one small hotel there then, but primitive as the surroundings were, the community—which basked in the fame the finding of the big diamond had brought it—was a thriving one.

About this time Lady Farrar wrote to me. She wanted me to teach the violin to her two eldest girls, Helen and Muriel. Gwen, the third, played the 'cello, and had a successful stage career in London afterwards as an entertainer.

Sir George and Lady Farrar lived at a lovely place called Bedford Farm—now St. Andrew's School for girls—about eight miles from us at Victoria, and I used to drive there in state in a 'spider' which was sent for me. One day one of the back wheels came off and I had to walk the last mile and a half.

Lady Farrar was a charmingly pretty woman, a gracious hostess in a beautiful home run on English lines. She and Sir George gave big luncheon parties on Sundays, and it was there that I first met Patrick Duncan, who was knighted later and became Governor-General of the Union of South Africa.

The Farrars were among the few privileged people who owned a motor car. Lady Farrar went driving swathed in yards and yards of chiffon to protect her complexion from the clouds of dust, for closed cars hadn't come in yet. Most women took to wearing 'motor veils'; I never went out without one. (Chiffon was only one shilling and sixpence a yard.)

The Farrars had a family of five girls when I first knew them. Lady Farrar showed me all the pretty baby things for the hoped-for little baronet she was expecting; everything was 'blue for a boy'. (She never would have a pink cradle.) But her hopes were dashed again; the baby was another girl, and it was the last of the family.

My own second baby was due some weeks later (no turmoil this time). I was even driving about in our recently acquired ralli-cart, giving lessons in Parktown and Doornfontein, garbed in a long white alpaca coat with the fashionable three-yards-long chiffon veil round my hat and face, until Mother came up from Maritzburg to take over the house-keeping three weeks before the great event was due.

She was horrified. "You must stop this nonsense at once!" she cried. "Who ever heard of such foolhardiness?"

So I meekly subsided into easy chairs and gave my lessons at home. I was spending that last month at Phil's house in town, so as to be near the Doornfontein nursing-home.

Mother came to see me there one morning dressed in black. I thought it queer, but she didn't tell me of the tragedy till after my confinement.

Mrs. MacDonald—our 'Don' of my childhood days—was the widow of an officer in the Indian army, and had lived for many years in India and spoke Hindustani perfectly. At Grey's Hospital she ruled the Indian staff with absolute authority. For all her sweetness to us and her charming manners in society, her autocratic bearing was always in evidence. After her retirement, when she lived in the house in Loop Street which had been our old home, she kept an Indian cook and a little maid from Mauritius. Mother, staying with her at one time, said to her:

"Don, you must be careful. I don't like the look of that man. He may be a good cook but he seems a dangerous fellow, and you are too imperious with him."

Prophetic words . . .

Don was dressing for early Mass one morning—she was a staunch Roman Catholic—when her little maid ran screaming with terror to her room, falling to her knees for protection, the Indian after her, brandishing a knife.

Don stepped in front of her—commanded him to leave the room. Alas, her power over him had gone. The girl had insulted him and if he could not get to her, the one obstructing him would suffer. The girl slipped out, leaving Mrs. Macdonald to her fate. Round and round the room the maniac chased her, stabbing her to death.

Mother recalled a curious story Don had told her, years before, of a fortune-teller in India who looked at her palm.

"You will meet your death at the hands of one of our people," he said.

CHAPTER TEN

WHEN the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and Princess Patricia came for the opening of the first Union Parliament, there were great doings in Johannesburg. A big mayoral reception was given at the Wanderers'—the only place, before the Town Hall was built, where large gatherings could be held. It was a gorgeous occasion and all Johannesburg turned out for it. The two great rooms were used, a band playing in one and solo artists singing and playing in the other. It tickled my vanity to be one of these, but when I realized that my solos might just as well have been the buzzings of mosquitoes for all the attention they received, I wasn't so pleased.

A musical evening at Government House, the night before, in honour of the Royalties, was more interesting. My friend, Violet Vivian, was the violinist and I was her accompanist. She was a lovely girl, tall, with dark hair and black-lashed eyes the colour of grass springing up after it has been burnt. (Incidentally, she was my daughter's godmother and Tuku was named after her, most ineptly, as it turned out, for no one since her schooldays has ever known her as Violet.)

Lord and Lady Selborne were at Government House then, and no guests were invited, only the small and very select house party.

Violet and I made our way up the stairs rather clumsily, clutching at our trains, and dropping our curtseys not too gracefully to the regal figures standing in a row just outside the drawingroom, Lady Selborne presenting us to the Duchess, and Lord Selborne passing us on to the Duke. The Princess, lovely

and stately Patricia, was seated in a far-off corner and we were not taken up to her. It was Lady Tullibardine's brother she married when she became Lady Patricia Ramsay.

I am sure that not a single soul enjoyed that evening. The Selbornes—unlike Lord and Lady Methuen (stationed at Robert's Heights in Pretoria)—were not fond of music. There was a faint well-bred chorus of 'Thank yous' when each piece ended, but the only remark came from the old Duke who, sitting beside me to turn my pages, observed, "What a difficult piece that was!" He had played the violin himself in his youth and was the only musical one in the room besides ourselves.

Afterwards, when the Royal party signalled the end of the dismal evening by walking solemnly round to shake hands and say goodnight to everyone, we noticed that Lady Selborne and her daughter dropped almost to the floor with quick jack-in-the-box bobs, and Violet and I wondered afterwards if our self-conscious curtseys had not been a trifle under-done.

I was delighted to get a letter from Lord Methuen one day, asking if I would give his daughter, Seymour, violin lessons. Lady Farrar had given him my address. He and Lady Methuen were delightful people, simple, natural and very friendly. I loved those visits to Pretoria. Lord Methuen's coachman would meet my train and drive me up to Robert's Heights in a spanking turn-out of dog-cart and two horses, and back to the train after luncheon.

Seymour was a slender slip of a girl, fifteen years old. Her fair English colouring reminded me of May de Saumarez, and the two girls were alike in other ways. There were an older sister and two brothers in the family, and the aura surrounding them all was as cultural as it was simple and unconventional.

Lord Methuen played the violin himself, and was proud of possessing a Strad. Lady Methuen was an excellent pianist and the four of us often played together after Seymour's lesson was over. Lord Methuen was a great wag. He would chuckle, before we began,—"All the five-shilling seats taken, I see!" or—"People are moving about so much I can't hear myself play!"

I helped Lady Methuen at several charity concerts she got up in Pretoria and actually prevailed on her, once, to join me in a duet. Her family chaffed her unmercifully afterwards, for the way she behaved on the platform. She was chatting brightly as we went on, quite ignoring the audience, then, in the tumultuous applause at the end, when I held out my hand to draw her forward, she just shook it warmly from her seat at the piano.

"I thought that was what people always did at concerts," she said.

In Pretoria more pupils cropped up, and for a time I gave

piano lessons at the Girls' High School—(when Miss Aitkin was the Principal)—deputizing for a teacher on long leave.

I saw Lord Methuen in the street one day. His game leg—hurt in the Boer war—made him limp as he hurried over to speak to me. Without any preamble, he said: "Oh, I say, couldn't you reduce your fees? I find them appallingly expensive!"

I burst out laughing; it was so ingenuous, and he looked so boyishly concerned. "Of course!" I cried, and cut the fees in half.

The Methuens gave a wonderful garden party at the Heights before they left. All Pretoria came, and so did General de Wet, the Boer War leader who played the Elusive Pimpernel to all his pursuers—Lord Methuen in particular—during the war. As he approached, Lord Methuen, with a wide grin lighting up his face, gripped his hand and said, fervently, "*At last!*"

One day I had a letter from Mrs. Sammy Marks, wife of the South African millionaire and Member of Parliament. They lived at Hatherly, on the way to the Cullinan mine. She wanted violin lessons not only for her second daughter, Dolly, but for herself. I was filled with admiration for her sporting spirit, for she had taken up the instrument in middle life and had no great aptitude for it. It amused me, though, to hear her say—as she invariably did when I pointed out her faults—"Yes, I know!"

When I first met her husband I could not reconcile his insignificant, shabby appearance with millionairedom; but I had not been in his company for more than a few minutes when I was struck by his grasp of any topic under the sun, and the shrewdness of his wit, which made all the conversation round him dull by comparison. He could engage in half-a-dozen conversations at the same time with the wizardry of a champion chess player who, blindfold, takes on a number of opponents. Someone might be discussing recipes for bread-making—Sammy would rap out a better one. Or, in an argument on farming, politics, gold-mining—what you will—he would be equally at home with expert knowledge.

His sayings were always being quoted. One story goes that when Cecil Rhodes died some of Abe Bailey's admirers thought he might be heir to his mantle. Sammy accosted him in the lobby of Parliament House one day:

"Say, Abe, vat is dis I hear about Rhodes's mantle? Take my vord; ole cloes never fit!"

His youngest son showed signs of being a chip off the old block. His mother told me of his remarkable memory as a very small child. He was with her one day on a trip to Johannesburg. On arrival at Park station she took a cab, only to find after she

dismissed it that she had left a valuable box of jewellery behind. The child remembered the number of the cab, and it was traced and the jewellery was recovered.

Karel's practice was slow in picking up again. He set up his office in Randfontein—a dreary one-street dusty town of tin shanties in those days—hoping, Micawber-like, for better things to turn up there. He came home for week-ends. We were now living in one of a row of semi-detached, double-storeyed houses in Hillbrow Terrace, on Hospital Hill.

Karel was an able lawyer with a fine brain and plenty of initiative, but times were bad and we had to struggle to keep afloat. I let one of our rooms to a friend, a teacher of singing who went out for all her meals. I had other friends staying with me from time to time and Betsy, my fat, good-natured Native maid was the children's bodyguard when I went out to train the young and not so young in the way their music should go. What a mountain of a creature she was! She looked for all the world as if she should have been attached to the Grenadier Guards, only she was black and wore voluminous long skirts.

She and my two-year-old girl—two-feet-square—went for a sedate walk every afternoon, to the great amusement of all the neighbours. I shall never forget the day that Tuku went head first down the stairs. My friend, Nan Vale, of the dairy farm days at Victoria, was staying with me at the time. She was back from a year's course in midwifery in London—she adored babies—and very much in demand for the growing population in and around Johannesburg. In between her cases she stayed with me, and one morning as we stood chatting on the landing, Tuk started her journey head first, sideways, down the stairs.

I remained petrified at the top while Nan—more practical—dashed after her, trying to grab the tight little bundle in a scarlet romper. It had no frills to catch hold of, and as each bump sounded I gave a squeak of dismay—bump! *squeak!*—bump! *squeak!*—till Nan laughed so much that only the turn in the stairs saved my precious baby from carrying on to the bottom. Miraculously, she was none the worse, or I could never—after these many years—be telling the tale so flippantly.

I think the seed of Nan's and my friendship, sown in the days of adversity, began to flower after this incident. It has borne rich fruit ever since.

Tuk was two-and-a-half years old when I began longing to play with an orchestra. What was the use of practising concertos, I thought, if I was never to perform them with their proper accompaniment? I was having quite a lot of chamber music—quartets and so on—but thoughts of the orchestral

society I had tried to start in London kept recurring until I visualized a similar venture there and then.

I discussed the project with a number of people and finally started off in a friend's drawing-room with two first violins, two seconds, two violas, two 'cellos and a piano. Our first piece was Dvorak's *Violin Concerto*, which I happened to be working on, and for which I had orchestral parts. I played, and conducted with my bow, alternately. Very ambitious, no doubt, but one of my favourite mottoes has always been 'Nothing venture, nothing win', and concertos were my aim, after all.

We held our rehearsals in Mrs. Rogers's big drawing-room, just opposite. Her three daughters, Grace, Freda and Ruth, were my dear friends, and their 'cello, violin and viola took part in the ensemble. On the Sunday night before our second rehearsal, I was at a supper party at the house of Stephen Black, uncle of the man of the same name who wrote a play which was very successfully produced in Cape Town. His daughter, Eleanor, was my pupil—my little son used to call her Elever Blacker—and a younger daughter, Dorothy, went on the stage and is now a well-known London actress. Poor Eleanor, who took up nursing in World War I, was drowned on passage to England in the *Galway Castle*.

At that supper party I met Arthur de Jongh, a well-known impresario who was just then arranging a tour of South Africa for Marie Hall, at the top of her fame as a violinist in London. (That was in 1910). A sudden thought struck me, and on the spur of the moment I said to him:

"Would you care for my orchestra to accompany Marie Hall when she comes to Johannesburg?"

He was taken aback; he did not know that I had an orchestra. (I did not tell him that I hardly knew it myself yet.)

He asked questions—I parried them all.

How many players had I got? Would there be thirty?

Oh, yes.

What concertos would I be prepared to accompany?

I quickly scribbled a list of all I had ever studied, the parts of which I knew I could borrow.

My enthusiasm gained the day, for De Jongh said he would write that very night—the mail left on Mondays—to Marie Hall.

Everyone was jubilant when I announced at our practice the next evening what I had done. The possibility of playing for an oversea celebrity was soon noised abroad, and by the time Marie Hall cabled—three weeks later—"Mendelssohn, Johannesburg", excitement was at fever heat.

After that people tumbled over each other to join the orches-

tra. We had two regular practices a week in a big schoolroom nearby—Mrs. Rogers's drawing-room was far too small to accomodate everybody—and at odd times I coached the fiddles in my own drawing-room till fingerings and bowings were 'just so'. There were plenty of good string players at a loose end then, before cinemas—bioscopes, as they were called—absorbed them all, and I roped in all my own best pupils.

Then Dave Foote came along to help. He was the conductor of the old Empire Theatre, a sound and accomplished musician who never won the recognition he should have had. Slight and spare of figure, with black hair and penetrating black eyes, he had a modest bearing which belied his talent as a composer and first class director of his fine band of players. His natural diffidence made him shrink from any exhibitionism in his conducting, so that he deliberately used his bâton in a lethargic sort of way that deceived all but the men under him. It broke his heart when the post (for which he was in the running) as head of the newly-formed S.A.B.C. in Johannesburg was given to the English conductor, Lyell Tayler, after his resignation from the Durban Orchestra.

Dave was a real brick. He used to come to our practices and give me valuable advice. Sometimes he conducted and I played the solo, which was always, of course, the Mendelssohn concerto. I coaxed in other soloists as well, to practise my own conducting, and when Marie Hall arrived three months later I think most of us could have played that accompaniment by heart!

Meanwhile, our Concerto Society had been properly launched, with a committee and legally-drawn-up constitution to support it. Of course there were subscribers—a hundred or more. They provided our life blood. It was their money we were to use for engaging the wind players Dave Foote had promised to lend us from the Empire, as well as a sprinkling of professional strings.

Our last rehearsal was in full swing when we brought Marie Hall in triumph to the scene. We had to do a lot of wangling to get her there in time, for she had been playing in Pretoria the night before. I went over to hear her because the Mendelssohn concerto (with piano accompaniment) was on her programme and I was anxious to hear her interpretation. There was no convenient train on that Sunday morning, so a friend and I fetched her over in his nice big car.

Dave Foote was holding the fort with the orchestra as we walked into the hall. This was the old German school. All the players were assembled—Dave Foote's men and certain other wind players from the Police band. Everyone stood up. It was

almost like receiving Royalty, we were all so keyed up. Marie Hall was excited, too—it was a leap in the dark for her. She slipped off her coat, tuned up her fiddle—a lovely Strad—and off we went, not a stop till we got to the last movement. I could see she was pleased; she could feel our enthusiasm . . .

She rehearsed twice more with us before the concert. What a night that was! His Majesty's Theatre was packed from floor to ceiling. I was furious when Arthur De Jongh wanted to sell some of my players' chairs for seven shillings and sixpence each. There were sixty of them on the stage, so I suppose there was some excuse for him.

Marie was dressed in white satin, so was I. My rostrum was a soap box covered with turkey-red twill, and she looked very tiny as she stood beside me. At the end there was tumultuous applause and a procession of bouquets. Marie threw her arms round me, and there was a shout from the audience. Mother and Jim, who had come from Maritzburg specially for that concert, sat in the fourth row, bursting with pride. But she said to me afterwards, à propos Marie's embrace, "Very pretty, my dear, but don't let it happen again!"

When Marie returned to Johannesburg at the end of her tour, she asked me to play Bach's double concerto with her. The strings of my orchestra accompanied us and Dave Foote conducted.

We were well-established by that time, thinking no end of ourselves. We had given several concerts of our own; Seymour Methuen joined the strings for one of these, and Pierre de Beer played Liszt's *E flat concerto* at another, while the orchestra blossomed into such pieces as Grieg and Tchaikovsky string suites and Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and Saint-Saens's *Danse Macabre.*

When Teresa Carreño, the fabulously beautiful and gifted Spanish pianist came to Johannesburg, travelling round on tour with her manager, Benno Scherek (it must have been in 1911), there was actually a possibility of our playing the Tchaikovsky B flat minor concerto with her. But the fee of 150 guineas her agent suggested was beyond our pocket and my committee stood on their hind legs over the risk of running the concert. I slipped in 'Nothing venture' . . . but the answer I got was 'Nothing doing!'—so I had to give up what would have been a halo forevermore on all our achievements.

I went to all five of her recitals, though, and took a basket of flowers down in the tram each time. It was the same basket over and over again—green and white—for I fetched it from her hotel after each recital.

What a beautiful creature she was! With her dark eyes and

olive skin she had the regal bearing of an empress, and the fire and colour that smoulders in the heart of a ruby. Her playing reflected her vital personality. After her revelation of power in the Tchaikovsky concerto—which made the second piano accompaniment played by Scherek (an excellent pianist himself), sound feeble by comparison—there would come thistledown touch in Chopin's 'Butterfly' study and melting tenderness in her 'Teresita' waltz, which she wrote for her own daughter.

Our Society gave a reception for her—as it had done for Marie Hall—but I met her first at a dinner and reception at the German Club, where I had the honour of sitting on the chairman's left (next to Carreño's husband, Signor Taliapietro) while she sat on his right.

At a luncheon party at the Carlton Hotel she was the life and soul of the company—she was a born raconteuse—and afterwards Pierre de Beer and I played Grieg's *C minor sonata* and Maly von Trützler, a fine artist in Johannesburg at the time, sang some German lieder.

Carreño invited me to tea with her the next day. I was quite prepared for her start of surprise when I answered her first question, "With whom did you study, my child?"

"With Monsieur Emil Sauret, Madame!"

I said it with a twinkle in my eye, for Sauret was her first husband and many were the stories he had told me about her. Incidentally, she had four husbands; Sauret, Taliapietro (an opera singer), Eugen d'Albert, the famous pianist, and now Taliapietro, brother of husband number two.

She asked me if Sauret had ever spoken of her. I answered, with perfect truth, "He told me you were the most beautiful woman he had ever known".

Then she told me a story of their married life; it was most entertaining. (So was the one he told.)

He left her just before the birth of her fourth child; she was twenty-two. (She did not refer to the time when she ran after him with a carving-knife!)

But those storm-tossed days had gone. One had only to see the dignity and devotion of the cultured man at her side to know that Teresa Carreño had at last come into the haven which was to shelter her to the end of her days.

Then there was Paderewski. What a different story to tell! The great pianist must have come unwillingly to South African shores, or perhaps disillusionment set in as soon as he landed. Whatever the cause, the effect was to be seen in the way he walked on to the platform. Like the lion he so much resembled

physically, he had the air of supreme disdain with which the king of beasts regards the mob crowding round his cage. His face, set off by the famous mass of red-gold hair, now streaked with grey, was like a dead-white mask, untouched by the wild enthusiasm he had aroused. Rumour had it that he was a sick man—his wife travelled with him and prepared all his food—and that he had been the victim of one of those unhappy incidents that create such false impressions on visitors to South Africa.

On the voyage from Port Elizabeth to Durban, while he was practising, some hooligan shouted—"Stop that noise!" Paderewski replied quietly, "You are no gentleman!" to which the Goth, adding insult to injury, retorted, "And you are no lady!"

Whether this was the final straw to a sensitive man, sick in mind and body, I do not know, but all his future concerts were cancelled forthwith and thousands of music-lovers were also victimized.

It was during a holiday trip to Cape Town in 1912 with my children and their nurse that I first met Jan Luyt, the Dutch violinist. He had originally come from Holland in 1902 on a concert tour of South Africa. After his return to Holland where he married a fine lieder singer, he came back to settle in Cape Town to start a trio at the Mount Nelson Hotel with his fellow countrymen, Pieter Haasdyk, a pianist, and Willem van Erkel, a 'cellist. But he broke away from it for work nearer his own heart—the orchestra he founded, which was called the Cape Town Philharmonic Society. It had been in existence six years when I met him, and he was enthusiastically planning a Beethoven festival for the following April. There were to be two concerts, and he invited me to play the concerto at the first and the two romances at the second.

Of course Mother jumped at my suggestion that she should come round from Natal to join me, and I shall always have an affection for the old Cadarga Hotel in Mill Street, where we stayed, for it was there that I first met Ellie Marx. He came to call after the first concert and Mother said after he left, "What nice eyes he has!"

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A meteoric career in the Johannesburg of those times was that of Elsa Maxwell, an American who came out as accompanist to Dorothy Toye, a singer with a 'double' voice appearing for a season on the vaudeville stage at the Empire.

Dorothy Toye, in Pierrot costume, created a marvellous illusion of a tenor with a beautiful voice singing the 'Flower' song from *Carmen* and many other operatic arias. Disappearing for a minute behind a screen (while Elsa extemporized at the piano, where she played all the accompaniments without notes), she would then emerge as a soprano with an equally beautiful voice, impersonating Marguerite, Butterfly, or some other operatic heroine. The turn was a great hit, and Johannesburg flocked to see and hear it.

After a few weeks the 'star' passed from the horizon; Elsa Maxwell, the satellite, remained. How little any of us realized the extent of her powers at first! She was nothing much to look at. Bright, intelligent grey eyes illumined a round, otherwise unremarkable face. Mouse-brown hair was drawn smoothly into an unfashionable coiffure; her figure was as unremarkable. Make-up was not in general use, but I doubt if she would have bothered to use a spot of lipstick, even if it had been. Her *joie-de-vivre* was infectious, and she was a born entertainer. She would sit by the hour reeling off popular tunes or the latest musical comedy hits. I heard jazz for the first time as she hummed and played it—her body swaying to its lilt—on my piano. Her musical talent was undoubted, but she played everything from ear, never having had a lesson in her life. The songs she

had composed and published were written down for her; I myself wrote several violin and piano compositions from her dictation at the piano.

She had an ingenious way of telling a story (with a grain of truth in it) that disarmed everyone who listened. I feel now—looking back—that her imagination ran riot with her and that she made herself believe—and hypnotized her listeners into believing—the yarns she invented about her past exploits. She could only have been about twenty-six then, but some of the tales of her experiences (when they were checked) doubled her age.

In an incredibly short time she had all Johannesburg at her feet. That is, all the people that 'mattered'. All the upper ten took her up; she was given carte blanche in the arranging and managing of numerous entertainments for charity, and she once gave a wonderful musical evening at Arcadia, Sir Lionel Phillips's house in Parktown. He invited her afterwards with Renée Juta—the author daughter of Sir Henry Juta and sister to Jan, the artist—for a week-end, but the poor man got more than he bargained for; the two young women developed measles, chicken-pox or something equally infectious and had to remain in quarantine for weeks. Unfortunately, too, Lady Phillips happened to be in England at the time, so the unlucky host was saddled with the whole responsibility and—no doubt—all the doctors' and chemists' bills.

Shortly afterwards, Elsa Maxwell, feeling that she had given Johannesburg all the 'hot air' that was good for it (and herself), shook the red dust of the city from her feet and departed as unobtrusively as she had arrived. For many years now she has been a queen among hostesses in New York society; Noel Coward has written about her in his *Present Indicative;* her parties are celebrated, graced by Royalties and celebrities thick as peas in a pod, invitations clamoured for by all who want to be 'in the swim'.

I would love to see her again, if only to see if one of her bright eyes will give me a wink to show that she remembers the 'hot air' she was so fond of giving us in Johannesburg.

Grand opera, like murder, will out. It happened in Johannesburg several times. I remember one bout took place the year before I started the Concerto Society. Signor Galeffi, the Italian conductor who had previously come from Italy with a travelling operatic company and remained on as a teacher of singing, suddenly took it into his head to put on two weeks of it at the Standard Theatre. I led the scratch orchestra he conducted in *Carmen* and *Il Trovatore* and got to know the music by heart.

Dolly Vickers was the Carmen as well as the Azucena. Both rôles were unsuited to her particular Scottish type of temperament, but she was induced to take them because she was goodnatured and it was easier to find other singers for the Micaela and Leonora parts (much more suited to her voice).

The operas were very successful from the box-office point of view. Good, bad or indifferent, when does opera ever fail to attract bumper houses? And when does it ever happen that expenses do not swamp most of the profits—costumes, scenery, lighting, and a hundred other items? I do not include such things as fees for the singers, for in amateur productions they are usually so overjoyed and willing to give their services that their hard work is forgotten in the pleasure of joining in, and in the hope that their names will appear in laudatory press reports. (This, of course, refers only to South Africa, as I have no statistics of what goes on elsewhere.)

In poor Galeffi's case I am sure he did not make the 'pots of money' attributed to his venture.

The cast was excellent. Johannesburg has always been fortunate in its singers. Perhaps the altitude has something to do with it. Mirvish, the Jewish tenor, who later made a big name for himself abroad, took the principal rôle in both operas. He was a little, black-haired, black-browed man, with no pretensions to good looks. (Why is it that these are usually reserved for the baritones and basses of grand opera?) I shall never forget the figure of fun he presented in the last act of *Carmen*. He was insignificant enough in the first one, in which the heroine falls for him, but when he crept on to the stage while she waited outside the bullring for Escamillo, he looked too pitiful for words. As the heart-broken lover, crazed and worn out for want of sleep, no doubt he had to wear a forlorn and jaded look, but his make-up was altogether too realistic, with a three-days' growth of beard and thick black eyebrows on a chalk-white face. Even Dolly Vickers gave a perceptible start, and her "Is it *thou?*. . ." was so apt that it drew a giggle from the audience.

The two seasons of opera that the Quinlan Opera Company put on at the same theatre some years afterwards were very different, though there was an uncomfortable incident once at a matinée, when the painted background in the *Hansel and Gretel* Dream scene got stuck halfway as its angels were going up to heaven, and they had to stand in mid-air till the end of the act.

Their *Madam Butterfly* was beautifully done, with Jeanne Brola, that gifted singer, as Cio-cio-san. It was the first time I had seen the opera and I was so pent up with emotion over her acting that I could not trust myself to speak till I got home.

Her's was a warm, generous temperament, that infused into all her rôles—'Louise', 'Marguerite' and others—a feeling of absolute realism.

On the second visit (in 1913), a few days before *Butterfly* was repeated, Brola and her husband came to see me. (I had had lunch with them the day I took her some flowers.) She wanted help in finding a suitable child to take the baby's part in the opera. At the performance in Cape Town the child had screamed, pulled off its wig and run off the stage. (How any little child can bear to be closely embraced by a strange woman who shrieks into its ear through a long aria passes my comprehension. I am filled with sympathy for 'Trouble' whenever I see that opera.

A prima donna in an Italian company visiting Cape Town some years ago was wise enough to bring her own child with her, and she was the picture of docility, well-drilled and imperturbable during the ordeal.)

I fetched in my three-year-old daughter for Brola to see. I said, "Here is a lady who wants a little girl to act with her". "*Me!*" screamed Tuk, in ecstasy—her grandmother over again.

Brola was delighted with her. She knelt down and tried different attitudes; would have engaged her on the spot, but for the fact that the stage manager was also looking for a child.

Tuk could talk of nothing else all afternoon. "Will I have to wiggle my legs, Mom?" she asked. However, all hopes of a future operatic career for Tuk fell to the ground, for Brola came again to say that the stage manager had already appointed someone else.

That second visit of the Quinlan Company clashed with a dramatic company appearing at His Majesty's Theatre, two streets away and almost opposite the Standard.

Frank Wheeler, an impresario well-known throughout South Africa for the excellence of the shows he brought from England —musical comedy (in conjunction with George Edwardes at Daly's theatre in London) as well as drama—was then sponsoring W. J. Holloway's company in such plays as *Milestones*, *The Butterfly on the Wheel* and *Get-rich-quick Wallingford*. Shortly before their arrival I received a note from Frank Wheeler's manager, Barlow Coulthard, asking me to come and see him. When I was shown into his office the next day he told me Mr. Holloway had conceived the novel idea of having high class music between the acts of his plays. He was bringing a musical director-cum-solo-pianist from England and proposed engaging two violinists and a 'cellist to make up a quartet. Mr. Coulthard took my breath away by suggesting that I should be the solo violinist and leader. In those days one was very

"precious" about musical prestige, and the idea of playing at a theatre, even as a soloist, was completely foreign to me.

The salary offered was generous, but I begged for time to consider it.

Critical developments in my life about that time—of which I shall tell presently—decided me, two days later, to accept the offer. It was for four weeks in Johannesburg, but it extended into a tour of the Union which lasted nearly four months.

I deposited the two children with Mother in Maritzburg, so had no anxieties on their account.

At our first general meeting of the Concerto Society, our president, Lord Methuen, had spoken strongly against the "extravagance" of engaging so many professional players for our concerts. He urged us to concentrate on building up our resources rather than indulging in public orchestral concerts. We had already given six and our funds were running low. It was sound advice, so we decided to turn to chamber music for a while. Two series of quartet concerts which followed were so successful that we felt encouraged to go on with them.

Now that I was obliged to hand over the management and leadership to a deputy, I felt the same qualms as when I deserted the society I started in London. But this committee was a strong one; our Society was well-established; I could only hope for the best.

I found life at a theatre behind the scenes most intriguing; utterly different from any previous experience. Theo Ward, the English musical director, was the link which separated the actors on the stage from—or joined them to—our profession. He had been so long associated with the theatrical world that he had the air of being an actor himself, with his tall, erect figure, longish greying hair (brushed straight back from his forehead) and generally well-groomed appearance. His look of distinction was enhanced by the gold fob-chain attached to his watch in the right trouser-pocket of his immaculately tailored dress suit. When he stepped into the orchestra pit to his place at a grand piano—raised above the usual level—I found myself lifting my head a little higher as I followed him.

He, too, had studied at the Royal Academy, and many were the stories he told me and the reminiscences we exchanged. We struck up a great friendship and spent all our spare time together on tour.

Very luckily for us, as it turned out, Mr. Ward knew Leonard Rayne, the well-known actor-manager and prominent figure in South Africa's theatrical world for many years, who was the lessee of the Standard Theatre; and when the Quinlan Opera

Company came along we were given the entrée to a box at his theatre for any of the operas (or bits of them) we cared to see. So that after we had had our fill of *Milestones*—I saw that clever play by Arnold Bennett six times before I could tear myself away from it—we would race over while the acts were on to hear what we could of the operas. In that way we heard snatches of *Tristan*, *Tannhauser*, *Lohengrin*, *Louise* and *Butterfly* (with Brola again).

Once, Theo would not risk going because a new play had been put on, and he was not sure how long the acts were, but he allowed me to slip over alone to *Die Meistersinger*.

My luck was out. As I reached the box, Quinlan himself went in—and shut the door. I was too shy to force my way in; I was excited and tired; no one was about, so I sat on the step outside and was having a comfortable little weep when Leonard Rayne came along. He was concerned—could he do anything to help? I told him my trouble as lucidly as a red nose and handkerchief would permit, and he took me into the box. To my final dismay, Mr. Holloway, my employer, was sitting there, naturally wondering what I was doing away from his theatre. I heard very little of that act for I slipped out at the first convenient moment.

The notorious tram strike of 1913 cut short our season in Johannesburg. When rioting began in the streets, two shots came through the building in Commissioner Street where I was living, and things looked very serious indeed. I remember an exciting moment after a matinee one day, when I had to cross Commissioner Street to get home, and saw a line of soldiers far down the street with their rifles aimed at people forbidden to cross from one side to the other. Perhaps the violin case in my hand saved my life?

Finally, when the doorkeeper at our stage door was shot, plans were made for our company to move on to Natal as soon as possible. We had great difficulty getting away. We sat for hours and hours on our suitcases at Park station, where the strikers were preventing the engine drivers from getting on with their jobs. Eventually, tired and hungry, we climbed aboard a train that somehow managed to slip away.

I never heard what happened to the unfortunate Quinlan Company. Theirs was a vast undertaking, and Quinlan's loss must have been staggering.

I could fill volumes with other happenings on that tour. The romance of Mr. Holloway's engagement and marriage, for instance, to the girl who played Nancy, Sam's Lancashire wife in *Milestones;* then the tragedy in Pretoria during the play *Butterfly on the Wheel*. At the climax of terrific excitement over a

divorce trial in the third act, a woman in the dress circle had a heart attack and was carried out. We heard afterwards that she lay dead in an ante-room till the theatre was cleared.

Amusing things, too, as when the electric light failed during the same play at Bloemfontein, and all the actors dried up in spite of lighting matches for each other to keep things going. How the audience laughed!

Annoying things. The periodical scenes with the stage-manager, who had his knife into us because our music was so popular, and sounded the 'buzzer' to raise the curtain before our piece was finished.

A contretemps happened on the first night of *Milestones* in Johannesburg. Theo and I had to play a song refrain before the curtain went up, and then dash round to the back of the stage to play it again for a man to sing it—two tones lower; another piano, of course; no music-stand, so the singer had to hold up my music for me, trembling violently with nervousness. Something was *very* wrong—I could not think what for a moment—then I realized that the piano was a quarter of a tone sharper than the one in the orchestra pit! So I had to play sharp accordingly, and avoid open strings like the very devil!

Pleasant things. The way people came up to us after the play was over to thank us for our music and to ask us to visit them; the encores insisted on (adding fuel to the burning feud between ourselves and the stage-manager) and the rumours that the refreshment bars were feeling a draught because fewer people in the audience were patronizing them during the intervals.

It all conduced to a happy feeling—which persisted throughout the tour—that playing in a theatre did not, after all, necessarily let down the musical profession.

Karel's fortunes had recovered from their slump twelve months before I went on that tour. Encouraged by an architect friend, he embarked on having a house of our own built in Soper Road on the Berea in Johannesburg. It was charmingly designed and things might have gone smoothly but that an error on the part of the architect led to a big law-suit with the builder. It ended unhappily for us, and we were plunged for the second time into a state of bankruptcy.

I was teaching Lady Dalrymple's son, William, at the time, and he will remember, if he ever reads this, how the little finger of his left hand used to curl up, and how, to cure this—and keep me from nagging him—he tied a match to it to keep it straight.

Lady Dalrymple was one of the sweetest of women; extremely pretty, with fair hair and the bluest eyes I ever saw, and very

fond of music. She sang charmingly when I first knew her as plain 'Mrs. Dal'. When she heard of our trouble she immediately set about getting up a benefit concert for me, gathering all the influential friends in her exalted circle into a committee to sell tickets. (She herself never went anywhere for weeks without bunches of them in her handbag; people used to see her coming and—though she was loved by everybody—dart out of sight to avoid her.)

All I had to do was arrange the programme.

A dear friend at that time was Wilfrid Burns-Walker, a fine baritone singer who had a distinguished career in Australia before coming to Johannesburg to start a teaching connection. His fine-drawn handsome face and aristocratic bearing commanded attention as soon as he entered a room, and it was not long after his first recital—at which I assisted him—before his studio, furnished with exquisite taste, was besieged by would-be pupils.

Needless to say, he was the first one I roped in for my concert. Dolly Vickers was another, and Robert Lloyd (an excellent pianist) played all the accompaniments. It was a monster programme, the crowning glory of which was my orchestra's support of me in the *Violin Concerto in D Minor* by Wieniawski, conducted by the eldest of the Cherniavsky brothers, Gregor, an extremely fine violinist.

Shall I ever forget the beaming joy on Lady Dal's sweet face when she came afterwards to pour a shower of cheques and golden sovereigns into my lap?

That sum of £232 was like a gift from heaven. It helped to pay off those awful law-suit expenses, but it did not stem the tide of reverses that continued to flow until, bereft of nearly all our furniture, Karel and I were driven from our house into two rooms in a Commissioner Street building.

It was at this critical juncture in our lives that I was faced with another crisis, one towards which Karel and I had been drifting for some years.

Had our differences concerned merely the loss of money and all our possessions, the bond between us would have been strengthened, as in the early days of Karel's first bankruptcy. The cause of our final irrevocable separation was far graver and more vital, but its story has no place in these memoirs.

In accepting Barlow Coulthard's offer, I felt that a Gordian knot had been cut. Though I went back to Johannesburg from Cape Town after the last three weeks' season of the Holloway tour, it was only to prepare for my return to the Cape.

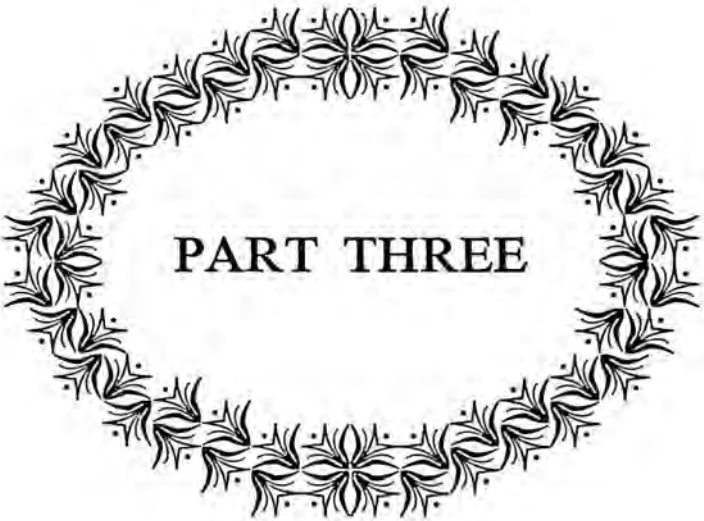
All my spare time from work at the theatre during those last

three weeks was spent with new friends in Cape Town. I had often heard of the valuable work being done by Dr. Barrow-Dowling and his wife, musical pioneers who came from England many years before to settle in Cape Town. The 'old Doctor', organist at St. George's Cathedral, had his finger in every musical pie. He was literally a purveyor of music. looked up to by all who came in contact with him. He had a striking appearance—dark brown eyes with beetling brows and white hair—and a stentorian voice. A game leg made him limp badly—but lightly, all the same—as he trudged to and from his various appointments. In his family circle he was a typical Sir Oracle, and his stories at table quelled all other conversation. His wife, as individual a personality in her own direct and much quieter way, was his staunch ally, who accompanied his choral practices and followed her own profession as a pianist.

Theo Ward and Dr. Dowling had been fellow students at the Royal Academy, and we were often invited to the house to share mutual reminiscences.

When I met William Henry Bell, principal of the South African College of Music—afterwards Professor when the Cape Town University took it under its wing—he asked me to join his staff. Ellie Marx, his principal violin teacher, had for some time been anxious to leave Cape Town, but had not found a successor to whom he could hand over his connection; he, too, pressed me to take his place.

The prospect of starting life afresh in new and congenial surroundings seemed heaven-sent. I came back to Cape Town —my children with me—in January 1914, filled with hope and enthusiasm.



PART THREE

CHAPTER TWELVE

WE spent the first month after our arrival with Mr. and Mrs. Bell at their house in Claremont. They were very good to me. Their two boys—Oliver and Brian—were much of an age with my two.

What a dynamic personality Mr. Bell's was! Though no one was ever less of a 'professor' in manner, dress or appearance, he could have run rings round many who put on learned airs. He did all the talking on any topic that cropped up—you only listened. You felt stimulated for hours afterwards, his enthusiasm was so infectious. He extracted every ounce from life by the boyish zest he had in the mere act of living.

Sunday mornings were regularly set aside for climbs up the Claremont side of Table Mountain, when he was invariably the leader of a party lagging far behind as he sprang ahead. Coming home, hours after a refreshing rest and snack, he would continue to expound on any subject under the sun until it was time to go to bed.

My first home in Cape Town was at Nooitgedacht, the century-old homestead in Oranjezicht which had been almost destroyed by fire many years before. Two wings remained, joined by a wide front hall fifty feet long. Behind this, the rest of the original mansion lay in ruins that had never been carted away. Stone steps led up to the front door at each end of a wide, flagged verandah, which was supported by massive white pillars. A double teak door opened into the hall; a staircase against one wall—its narrow wooden banister resting on slender iron rails—led to the upper floor, which was roughly partitioned

into three large rooms communicating with one another. These rooms had long windows almost to the floor, through which one could step onto the roof of the verandah. I tried sleeping on this once, but a raging southeaster was blowing, and the attack of laryngitis which followed left me voiceless for a week, and I never tried again.

In front of the house a gloomy cypress towered like a sentinel in the dilapidated remains of a garden, round which a stony path zig-zagged down to the gate leading to Belmont Avenue.

To the left of the house, near an orchard of countless guava trees, an avenue of old gnarled oaks stretched for hundreds of yards. This was a lovely vista on an autumn day, when the sun shone through trees shedding their tawny leaves.

The whole place—with its air of desolation—breathed of antiquity. As one turned in at the gate one stepped into a bygone world.

I loved the place; its ghostliness gave it an atmosphere of peace very soothing to tired nerves.

It amazed me to find—after the high rents in Johannesburg—that I was to pay only £6 10s. a month.

The artist, Edward Roworth and his wife had lived here before. It seemed to attract artists. Beatrice Hazell, the fruit and flower painter, 'Biddy' to her friends, spent months on end with me.

She came like a healing ray of sunshine when I most needed comfort during those first months in Cape Town. I had a governess for the children, but she was a young girl. I had nothing in common with her and was often lonely and depressed. Biddy, with her warm motherly heart, was my mainstay, nursing me tenderly when I came home after a heavy day's teaching, or when the fits of depression were more acute than usual.

Her's was another striking personality. Her lustrous dark brown eyes and curly mop of iron-grey hair—piled high on her head, Edwardian fashion—gave her an arresting air, and she had an authoritative way of holding forth on subjects which interested her that drew and held attention. She had a passion for flaming colours; reds and yellows, the brighter they were, the better she liked them. She would go into raptures over a bowl of nasturtiums or a bunch of purple grapes, and wherever she happened to be staying her room always had colourful rugs and cushions and bits of attractive pottery spread about. She invariably dressed in perfect taste, whether in flowered painting smocks or the smart tailor-mades—a crimson hankie peeping out of a breast pocket—that suited best her trim little upright figure.

Unlike most artists, she had a flair for having everything "just so" about her, though she thought nothing of littering streets with bits of paper and string she threw out of windows.

Unfortunately, her mania for eliminating unbeautiful things sometimes clashed with other people's ideas. I found her exultantly clearing out the wardrobe and drawers in my room, ready for a secondhand dealer she had summoned for the next day. A great pile of what she called 'rubbish' was heaped up on the floor, and I saw a fork sticking out. I cried, "Biddy, what *are* you doing? That is one of my best silver forks—and here's another—they are heirlooms that Mother gave me!" Biddy was unperturbed. "They are very ugly, and you will never use them!"

It was with the greatest difficulty that I saved those forks, plus a perfectly new blouse, the colour of which was not to Biddy's taste.

Allerly Glossop—known to her friends as 'Jo'—was another artist who stayed with me at Nooitgedacht. She was a great person, breezy, lovable and eternally youthful in her outlook on life. An inveterate smoker, cigarettes, cigars and even pipes were all grist to her mill and ruination to her throat. Her voice sounded at times like a nutmeg grater, and she had the perennial smoker's cough. It gave me a shock when I first met her to find her so like my Merton Abbey hostess. She had the same trim, wiry frame, the same short grey hair and the same bluff, jovial manner. But there the resemblance ended. Jo had no hidden depths, no surprises. She was sincere to the backbone.

I shall never forget a winter she spent at Nooitgedacht in her bedroom-cum-studio in the middle room upstairs. The roof was in a dreadful state—when did a modest rent vouch for a weatherproof house?—and the centre leaked in several places. Basins were set at the worst spots and Jo slept under a big black umbrella.

But she did not mind, oh, bless you, no. She took everything as it came and continued to turn out masterpieces of Natives riding Basuto ponies against backgrounds of purple mountains bathed in a rosy sunset glow, or cows in marshy meadows reflecting the blue of a summer sky.

A mint of trouble would have been saved if Biddy or Allerly had come sooner than they did. When I moved into Nooitgedacht with the children and their governess—Miss Stewart—the maid, Edith, who had worked for the Roworths stayed on as general help. She was a German-Afrikaner buxom-wench-of-a-girl who soon sized me up as a nit-wit.

She came with a wonderful suggestion one day:

"Why doesn't Madam have my mother to be her house-

keeper? She could do the cooking and I would still be Madam's maid and keep the house clean".

It sounded really fine. Miss Stewart had her hands full with the children; I had to be at the College of Music at nine every morning and often did not get back till evening. Edith managed the indifferent cooking. The new scheme promised peace and prosperity for all concerned.

Going into it more thoroughly, I discovered that Edith's Daddy and five brothers and sisters would be coming as well to look after me. My bright damsel helped me over that hurdle very competently; she said Mommie would do all the catering and providing of our meals, everything would be thrown in for mere house-room. There was something of the whithersoever-thou-goest flavour in the plan that should have warned me . . .

I had plenty of house-room. Both wings could be spared, for we four could take quarters upstairs and leave the fifty-foot music room below as a living room during the day. I only stipulated for a free passage through the left wing to the bathroom, an ancient makeshift of a place which we arrived at by going two steps down to the diningroom, two steps up to the kitchen, and over a cobblestone yard to where the old slave quarters were.

What finally clinched the agreement was the incident, a few nights later, when my abigail banged three times at my door to say that someone was trying to get into her room through the ruins. Annoyed at last, I jumped out of bed and told her to go out with me to satisfy herself that her imagination was playing tricks. So there we were, I in front with revolver in one hand and torch in the other, my handmaiden cowering behind me, and the wind fluttering our nightgowns as we stumbled over those ruins.

Of course no one was there, but I felt afterwards that a houseful of people might ensure having undisturbed nights.

"Mommie" proved to be a broken reed. Catering was not in her line. Neither was she a good cook nor, it seemed, was she prepared to do anything else for our comfort. After a week of being half starved I told her that other arrangements would have to be made. I gave her the option of staying on at a nominal rent or of leaving forthwith. She flatly refused either alternative. I should have remembered that bugbear—to landlords—of possession being nine points of the law. All my arguments fell on deaf ears.

From that time on she barred the door from the hall for our passage to the bathroom. Wet or fine Miss Stewart, the children and I had to trail right round the house to it—comical figures in dressing-gowns, often with mackintoshes and umbrellas. Lessons

had to be put off while I paid visits to my lawyer.

A day came when I attended court and was presented with an ejectment order. Armed with this I went home in triumph. As good luck would have it—and for the first time—I found only my own family in the house. I dashed round locking doors and windows. Now, I thought, they shall know what it is like to be locked out! I put all their belongings on the verandah where they could be collected without inconveniencing us. Nothing would have induced me to have them back in the house again. I found boxes in their rooms, open and half full—of *my* things; blankets, sheets, crockery and even a silver spoon or two; all were evidently to be spirited away. I made a large pile of these in the music-room, and was still busy when Miss Stewart called out, "The young man is coming up the path!"—Mommie's eldest, aged twenty-one.

"Get my revolver!" I cried.

By the time it was brought, Mommie's son-and-heir had climbed through the diningroom window—the only one I had missed fastening—and was in the kitchen. I found him there and levelled the revolver at his head. Oh, yes, it was loaded and my finger was on the trigger, but I never tremble in a crisis—only when I played at concerts.

"Out of my house this moment!" I said, very quietly but firmly. He gave one glance at the weapon and wilted . . . it was safer in the yard. So he slithered out through the door and I locked it up again.

Daddy and Mommie serenaded us that evening outside the front door. They stormed and threatened but it was my turn to be adamant. They did not dare to break in.

Only the older generation remembers that the College of Music once stood in the open space in Stal Plein at the top of Parliament Street near Government House. Before that the grey, dingy old building was the Claridge Hotel, a ramshackle affair which used to shudder and shake whenever a southeaster swept up Plein Street.

There was a stone staircase one climbed to the three upper floors if the lift was not working, or if David, the old Coloured retainer and shifter-of-pianos, was not there to take one up. The old lift was too temperamental to be trusted alone. Pierre de Beer was caught in it once, halfway up, and engineers rescued him hours afterwards. His colleagues chatted to him as they passed, and Ellie Marx used up a packet of monkey nuts, tossing them into his cage to cheer him up. He said it reminded him of the Zoo.

Bit by bit I began to enjoy life once more. I was interested in

my work at the College and loved the walk down every morning, after it had moved from its first home in the Bank of Africa building in Strand Street. It was interesting, too, to come to a town where no one seemed to hurry, after the rush, even in those days, of life in Johannesburg.

I find it amusing to think back on the factions I dropped into. The College had been started in 1910 by Madame Niay-Darroll, a pianist and fine teacher, whose vision and energy had been supported by Mrs. Griffith-Vincent (a singer with a beautiful contralto voice), Ellie Marx, and several other teachers.

But her strong personality clashed with the equally strong one of the new principal, Mr. Bell, who, coming from London where he had been on the staff of the Royal Academy, was appointed Director of the College in 1912. Though she remained on his staff for a time, they were at daggers-drawn until she left.

The Barrow-Dowlings, strongly entrenched and apart from the College, had their own separate following. Dr. Dowling had been for many years not only the organist of St. George's Cathedral and a teacher of singing and trainer of every school choir in the Peninsula, but the indefatigable director of a thriving choral and amateur orchestral society. (No choral conductor since his time in Cape Town has had his success.)

With their staunch friend, Ellie Marx, the Dowlings were opposed to the Dutch violinist, Jan Luyt, whose orchestra was in rivalry with their's. It was not surprising that good fellowship did not exist between the two violinists, though to do them justice I never heard either criticize the other, and they eventually took part in chamber music together.

Eveline Fincken, Mrs. Griffith-Vincent, Jessica Grove, Mrs. Jan Luyt, Madame van Pelt and Walter Spiethof, the College singing teachers, were all more or less at loggerheads, some on professional grounds, but in Eveline's case it was because Jessica had ousted her as the bosom friend of the *Cape Times* music critic, Olga Racster, whose pen name was "Treble Viol", and who also boasted the title of Baroness Wagstaffe.

In addition to being an able music critic—she had studied the violin—Olga Racster wrote dramatic notices and had published several books, one of which was the colourful story of the woman who for years carried on a successful career as the naval surgeon, Dr. James Barrie.

In addition to Jan Luyt and Ellie Marx, Ellie's one-time pupil, Winnie Leffler, taught the violin; while Willem van Erkel, the Dutch 'cellist, took the few pupils for his instrument who offered themselves, and Mrs. Bell, Pieter Haasdyk, Anna

Marsh and Doris Heward (afterwards Mrs. Lardner) were the other piano teachers. Others joined the staff later, among them Pierre de Beer and Victor Hely-Hutchinson, Edward Sangster, the violinist, and Sybil Attwell, who taught speech training. (She had a most successful career afterwards in Edinburgh, where she founded her own school of speech training and dramatic art.)

Meanwhile, pretty, gifted Mina Freund—who was the first at College to teach speech training—was last on the list with Helen Webb who, struggling to find an honourable place in that field of culture, was the actual founder of ballet in South Africa, tucked away out of sight and hearing in a back room. She taught fencing as well as dancing.

Mina was the spoilt darling at the College. Her pupils adored her. 'Scrappie' van Hulsteyn was one. I remember her boyish appearance, the cut of her short yellow hair and the ringing tones of her voice. Now, as Marda Vanne, she carries the torch Mina Freund lit for her.

Mina, with her pink and white skin and butter-yellow hair, was incorrigible where punctuality was concerned. She was invariably late for her classes and no one could be severe with her, least of all Mr. Bell. Doris tells the story of how Mina came to her one morning with face of woe and blue eyes full of tears.

"Oh, Mina, what is it?"

"Oh, Doris, just think! I bought this hat this morning—it was so expensive and now—Daddy Bell *doesn't like it!*"

She had a soft, sympathetic heart which made her do a ridiculous thing at the City Hall one night when she produced *Julius Caesar* for her class of S.A.C.S. matriculation boys. (She played Calphurnia.) On the first night the boy who was to act a herald's part fell ill, and at his cue, his under-study was too petrified to speak. Calphurnia swept across the stage and, taking his hand and patting his shoulder said, "It's all right!" then walked him off to the exit in the other wing.

Another of her productions was *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on the lawn at Government House at the top of Parliament Street. (Tuk played "Cobweb".) The Cape Town Orchestra, under Theo Wendt, played Mendelssohn's incidental music, and as the moon was at the full success should have been assured. But best laid plans do not always come off. A wicked southeaster blew up and spoilt everything. The orchestra, huddled in dim light under the trees, had music blown sky high and could hardly see or be heard. Titania's crown was nearly lost, Cobweb's chiffon draperies ballooned to her ears and Puck was inaudible.

Another plan that went wrong was when Princess Arthur of Connaught—Prince Arthur was Governor-General at the time

—came to one of the College concerts. David had been specially warned not to take anyone up to the concert hall before the Royal party had been met and escorted to their seats. But how was anyone to guess they would come before anyone else? Or that they would just walk across from Government House round the corner? So, when the Princess asked David, "Where is Mr. Bell?" he replied, laconically, "You'll find him on the third floor, but I can't take you up in the lift".

Afterwards David said, "But the lady didn't *look* like a princess. She was like an ordinary person, and she didn't even come in a car!"

Willem van Erkel was a shy, sensitive man. Soon after he arrived in Cape Town he went to a music shop and, leaning confidentially over the counter, asked the assistant, "Have you any music from Ravel?" "No, sir". "Have you any Debussy?" "Certainly; take the lift and you'll find it at the end of the passage".

Ellie once found him and Daddy Bell in a heated argument on the first floor landing at the College. Adored by all his students, Daddy Bell did not care a button who listened, and Van Erkel was holding forth so violently that he was oblivious to all around him. Ellie got busy. He took hold of an elbow of each of the combatants and edged them gently, inch by inch, to the bathroom, inserted them carefully, and shut them in to finish their discussion at their leisure.

No account of what went on at the College in those days would be complete without mention of one of the most vital members on its staff. This was 'Cuckoo' Lister—afterwards Mrs. Prynne—who, as secretary, was the pivot round which all activities revolved. Always bright and cheerful, she was not only Daddy Bell's right hand, but a source of never-failing help to all who needed it. Her predecessor, who was among the first of those who started the College with Madame Niay-Darroll, was Jenny Sonnenberg the singer—Mrs. Griffith-Vincent's best pupil—who studied in Europe afterwards and became celebrated as one of South Africa's finest contraltos.

The Chamber Music Union was once another thriving part of Cape Town's musical life. It was founded by the English violinist Percy Ould, who had been leader of its string quartet for ten years before ill-health obliged him to resign and Ellie Marx took over his practice and leadership of the quartet.

A well-known personality was William Herring, a bank manager and an ardent lover of music, whose life's joy and ambition centred on playing the viola in a string quartet. If he had been told that a rehearsal could be held only at 4.30

a.m. and in the suburbs, he would have been on the doorstep fifteen minutes early, in time for a good tune-up.

Of such is the Kingdom of Amateurs!

He lived with his sister in their house in Green Point. She loved music, too, but for her it was also a means to an end, for she gave violin lessons in a modest way.

Their home was like a museum for the treasures it held. Heirlooms were displayed in glass cupboards, and a number of musical instruments had been collected through the years.

When his sister died in 1929, William Herring drew up his will, bequeathing the house and all it contained to the Municipality of Cape Town—with a large sum of money for its maintenance—to be used as a meeting place and happy hunting-ground for musicians.

Since his death in 1932, a curator has lived in the house—now known as the Herring Bequest Institute—guarding its treasures and helping its upkeep by letting some rooms to teachers and students with no studios of their own.

One of the closest and oldest friendships of my life began soon after I came to live in Cape Town. Etched in my memory is how I first met Toni Saphra in a tram one night, as she and her husband and Ellie and I were on our way to a concert at the City Hall. Ellie introduced us. They were already old friends, for they had met originally in 1900 as fellow passengers on the *Kinfauns Castle* when Toni, a lovely young wife with her husband and first baby, and Ellie, returning from London as a youth of twenty-one, were all coming to settle in South Africa.

I was attracted to the beautiful young woman with the curly, bright chestnut hair, and she, with her love of music, was drawn to me. There were many musical evenings after that, when I accompanied Toni in the Schubert lieder she used to sing so charmingly. Her sister, Maly Plaut, was musical too, and played the lute, an instrument I saw then for the first time.

But there was more to Toni than those informal, happy evenings. Her love for the arts and music in particular had, even in those early days, made her a figure of note in Cape Town's cultural set. She had been roped in during the beginnings of the College of Music as a member of a small committee to interview and examine candidates for scholarships—one of which she herself gave—and was one of the originators of the Nine Club, whose function was to entertain writers, musicians, painters, scientists and other celebrities among the arts from overseas. As its first secretary and then its president, Toni was privileged to meet numbers of interesting people much in the way that my life, too, has been enriched by similar contacts. She has been

living for many years now in Johannesburg, but the memories we share have strengthened the bond of our friendship.

Another dear person, the last of those who stayed with me at Nooitgedacht, was Mrs. W. J. Forman, the wife of a retired school principal who was doing relieving work all over the Union and had no settled home. Ellie Marx's sister, who had met her in Caledon, brought us together. She was close on seventy—too old and frail to rough it in country towns, so I invited her to take the wing vacated by Mommie and her brood. She settled in soon after and 'did' for herself very happily between the times she was not busy on her really charming pastel and watercolour sketches.

Yet another artist attracted to Nooitgedacht . . .

We came together very gradually, for she was not musical and her reserved manner made her rather unapproachable. She had the air of an aristocrat, with her elaborate coiffure of white hair set off by dark eyebrows and keenly intelligent black eyes; even her slightly mincing walk had a distinction of its own. I called her 'Marquise' after she admitted me to her friendship, and that name fitted her so well that other friends took it up. We had many happy times on sketching expeditions.

When, after three years at Nooitgedacht the place was condemned as unsafe to live in, it nearly broke our hearts, we loved it so.

It was eventually restored, partly re-built, and taken over by St. Cyprian's School for Girls. Our great music-room and the front teak door (through which I defied Daddy and Mommie) are, I believe, all that remains of my old home.

Marquise went house-hunting with me and we landed up at last in Rosebank at a big house which I christened *The Boltons* after the place in South Kensington where 'Ladybird' lived, and where my son might so easily have been born and wasn't.

The house had been well and solidly built by an architect for his own use, and besides having a nest of rooms upstairs which Marquise took as a self-contained flat, it had a sort of annexe of three or four rooms up a little set of wooden steps outside the back door. It missed being a very valuable property because the front garden abutted almost onto the suburban railway line, and the noise and coal dust from the trains took all the gilt off its gingerbread.

It was offered to me for £1,400 and I was a fool not to put my last blouse on it, for when the trains were electrified and the noise and dust were done away with, its value went up with a jump. My friends the Ben Jaffes live there now, and I daresay they would not part with it at four or five times that price.

The garden is fresh and lovely and there is peace and quiet for

the after-concert parties they have, when musicians, painters, writers and other cultured guests assemble in my old drawing room.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

WHEN war broke out in 1914 the Cape Town Orchestra was in Maritzburg on its first tour, and had to hurry back, all remaining concerts cancelled en route.

Patriotic concerts were the rage during the first World War, the orchestra always in demand as their backbone. When shiploads of the Allies visited Cape Town we had admirals and generals making speeches after the mayor introduced them, and we played all the different National anthems, appropriate marches, and sang "Land of Hope and Glory" till we knew it by heart.

At one of these affairs we had a man and woman to do a Russian dance. They were an ill-assorted pair, for the lady was on a higher social plane and had been roped in against her will. We played a 'Gopak' for them. It had only one page of music, which had to be repeated umpteen times for the endless variations of steps. The man loved it, and was quite an expert, but his partner grew more and more disdainful as he hopped and bounced backwards and forwards. The climax came at last when Theo Wendt signalled them to call it a day and they missed the opening in the curtain behind them and tumbled into it, upside down, backwards . . .

Adolph Hallis, the South African pianist, had a nerve-wracking experience when he made his first appearance at a symphony concert in Cape Town after his return from his scholarship studies in London. He was in the middle of the Tchaikovsky concerto when all the lights went out. He carried on bravely, but of course the orchestra could not, and no one

could see what Mr. Wendt wanted to do about it. Adolph went on with a repertoire of other pieces, Ellie Marx and Johnny Lamb striking matches alternately at his side to help him along, but he gave in at last. Then Theo Wendt at the piano and Herbert Fellowes, the 'cellist, got together and played Schumann's 'Traumerei'—well drawn out. Presently, someone came on with a small lamp, and Theo mouthed a question to the orchestra—"What can you play by heart?" A tough proposition, for no orchestral player is expected to memorize his parts. However, we came up to scratch—after those twenty minutes—with, of all things to play at a symphony concert, the Barcarolle from *The Tales of Hoffmann.*

As the familiar notes began, there was a shout of derisive laughter from Daddy Bell in the balcony; but anyhow, the piece did the trick and brought on the electric light again, and Adolph went on with the concerto.

A call to arms brought recruits each week to the City Hall for the Mayor to address them and bid them God speed. An orchestral rehearsal was usually going on but we would stop to listen and then play a march for the boys as they trooped out to the railway station.

The day came when six of our own members were among the volunteers; Ellie Marx, John Spink, Eric Bray and Herbert Fellowes (strings); Réné Caprara, clarinettist (who afterwards deserted music to become head of the S.A.B.C.), and Billy Hunter, the principal trombone player (who later married the pretty violinist, Inger Boberg.)

It was a harrowing occasion, beginning with the touching sight of those men down there in the hall while the rest of us were on the platform, busy at the job they had left—forever, perhaps, who could tell?

Mr. Wendt wept unashamedly; I could not see how many of the others were doing the same for the tears streaming down my own face. How we ever got through the march I can't imagine. A rush after that to see them off at the station, Theo Wendt striding along with the rest of us.

Poor Fellowes—one of the best 'cellists we ever had—was the only one who never came back. He contracted fever and dysentry at Dar-es-Salaam and died there. Ellie Marx was invalided back the following year. I did not recognize the bowed figure of an old man as he stepped out of the train in his 'wounded soldier' blue uniform. He limped with the weight of his leaden-heavy military boots, and he had lost most of his thick, curly chestnut-brown hair. What was left of it was lifeless and dull. He had aged ten years in as many months.

More months passed in the military camp in Wynberg before

he was discharged and fit once more, and then he returned to his leader's desk in the orchestra.

I look back now to Theo Wendt as the man who altered the current of both our lives. He not only prevailed upon Ellie to give up his long-cherished plan of leaving Cape Town and to remain as his leader and sub-conductor, but he invited me, six months later, to join the orchestra as well. I sat behind Ellie, ate sandwiches on the Pier with him and—with the exception of the war break—met him at rehearsals and concerts at least twelve times a week, and finally, after four years of it . . . married him.

Ellie Marx was born in Newport, Mon., Wales, on May 3, 1879. Learning the violin as a tiny child, he was actually playing in public when he was five years old. When, as a boy of twelve, he came with his parents and two sisters to live in Oudtshoorn, Cape Colony, where his father had business connections, his musical talent was soon noised abroad. Rumours reached the ears of a prominent and influential member of Cape Town's social community, Henry Juta—afterwards Sir Henry—through whose influence the boy was eventually sent abroad for serious study.

He was with a teacher in London for a time before going for further study in Leipzig, with the celebrated violinist, Arno Hilf, at the Gewandhaus. He finished up with the greatest master of all, Eugene Ysaye, at the Brussels Conservatoire, where he eventually carried off the Grand Prix of the year.

Hard years of struggle followed in London to make a living while helping to support two friends, a man and his wife from Cape Town. At last a heart-breaking decision had to be made to sell his violin. He took it to Christie's, but after two failures to reach the reserve he had placed on it, he was forced to let it go for what it would fetch, and the amount just covered the auctioneer's expenses . . .

In addition to teaching and playing, Ellie sometimes undertook management of concert parties touring South Africa, joining several as an artist himself. Some of the ventures were successful, but one, more elaborately planned, clashed with a rival company and involved him in debts which took years to pay off—just another of the episodes etching scars on his early life.

My first real link with Ellie was forged when he brought his sister, Gertrude Herbert, to see me soon after I arrived in Cape Town. She and I fell for each other and have remained closest friends ever since. They were devoted to each other and as like as two peas in three characteristics—gentleness, delicacy of

mind and rock-like integrity. They were equally gifted musically, and Gertie was Ellie's accompanist on his numerous tours before she married and went to live in Caledon. In other ways they were exact opposites. Ellie's clear and agile brain and witty tongue had her limping far behind, but nevertheless joining delightedly in the laughter raised by her endearing habit of dropping absurd malapropisms. Tuku, who always had a fancy for pet-naming, called her 'Ermyntrude'—since shortened to 'Ermine', the name most of her friends know her by today.

Sharing my work so closely and for so long with Ellie before I married him, I learned to understand and appreciate the qualities that made him loved by men and women alike. He was essentially a man's man, but his fastidious distaste for idle gossip and anything approaching bawdiness made a 'blue' story in his presence fall flat. He would simply look straight ahead into space . . .

Elsie Hall's sense of humour made a joke of it one day. They had been discussing the character of an unpleasant woman they knew.

"She's a . . .", Ellie began, and hesitated. Elsie, expecting him for once to give way to ill-natured gossip, pressed him to go on.

"She's a . . ." (whispering into her ear)—"a *cat!*"

Theo Wendt, who eventually had a Doctorate of Music conferred on him by the Cape Town University, did not take kindly to conducting from the floor of the City Hall when the platform was required for the dancing shows Helen Webb put on with such success. Many of her pupils won outstanding reputations in London afterwards. Dulcie Howes—Mrs. Guy Cronwright—was one of her tiny 'tots' in those days, and has carried on to brilliant heights the training that Helen Webb first gave her.

At that time dancing in South Africa had not the cachet of ballet today, in spite of Helen's zeal in aiming for it, so it was not surprising that it took some persuasion on her part to get Theo to put his precious orchestra at her disposal for such shows as *What the Moon Saw*, and others of that description. They were very charming, all the same, though the conductor of the newly-scheduled Thursday symphony concerts kicked mightily at being called upon to play those lilting trifles 'Summer Days', 'Laughing Eyes', and 'Demoiselle Chic'.

He succumbed to Mammon after a time when box-office returns told their tale, and dancing nights featured periodically on his Saturday night programmes, and thereafter he became one of Helen's warmest supporters.

Mr. Wendt started a scheme for giving lectures to Peninsula schools. He drew them up on educational lines, illustrated with descriptions of the instruments of the orchestra, and with suitable light music. He was too busy one afternoon for a lecture and asked me to deputize. I was pleased, but felt a little nervous of those who would be listening at my back. "Oh", said he, "I always feel nervous of the children!"

I gave several lectures and they started me off—with his consent—on a scheme of my own: regular talks on musical appreciation at various schools. Several of my orchestral colleagues illustrated these—Réné Caprara with his clarinet was one—and they were jolly and informal affairs.

On one of our vacations Ellie and I toured schools in the Cape Province, he playing the illustrations and chipping in now and then with a word or two in my talks. I feel that much of this crusading could still go on. Appreciation of music has a cultural value that could well be fostered. Much has been done already on a large scale, and public concerts for children are all very well, except that they entail endless worry for the teachers and those who are deputed to shepherd their 'crocodiles' by train or bus to the appointed hall.

The Orchestra, under its present title of the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra, has not maintained the prestige given it by Theo Wendt in the first ten years of its existence. He was a martinet ruling his players with a rod of iron. Absolute punctuality at work was an unwritten law of his reign; no player dared to creep in after the morning rehearsal had begun; he himself was always to the minute on the rostrum. Smoking at rehearsal —a habit these days—was unheard of. White ties at symphony concerts were *de riguer*, though 'tails' were not insisted upon since they would be concealed, anyway, as the men sat at their desks.

Changes came about by degrees—two World Wars did that —and discipline on or off the platform has relaxed to a vast extent. The audiences who came in their best bibs and tuckers to the symphony concerts in those days would be amazed could they see some of the patrons now—women and girls in beach frocks and sandals, and men equally informally clothed.

One special instance I recall of Mr. Wendt's high-handed authority where music was concerned. A young soprano, just back from study in London, was to make her first appearance in a big aria at a symphony concert. Her taxi broke down on the way to the City Hall and she arrived one minute late for her turn. Mr. Wendt saw her pass to the artists' room, but implacably raised his bâton for the piece following her song and

would not allow her to appear that night. She took the blow splendidly and had an ovation at the next concert.

Away from the rostrum he was another man. Slightly built and of less than medium height, he had a deprecating manner probably caused by a hesitation in speech—almost a stammer—that made conversation with him a long-winded affair. He was fond of visiting his friends but could never tear himself away when it was time to go. They would accompany him hopefully to the front door where he would stand for an hour—hand uplifted to get out a word—with always, just one more thing to talk about . . .

He was very annoyed when our Airedale followed us on rehearsal days and sat under Ellie's chair or mine. So one morning I shut Rex up in the room under the platform. Alas, a shattering howl was heard as Dimmack's prolonged trumpet A opened the *Rienzi* overture. Mr. Wendt's eyes were on us both in a flash. Something had to be done—and quickly. I rushed round and recovered Rex. Overjoyed at the success of his howl he trotted happily along with me to the ladies' cloakroom near the entrance of the hall. (A teak door—locked for years afterwards—bore the marks of his indignation at being shut up in such ignominy.)

Mr. Wendt got cross once at a rehearsal with a girl who was helping in the percussion department. (Students from the College of Music used to try their hands at the triangle, glockenspiel and the big drum.) The poor girl failed to give that single stroke on the Chinese 'tom-tom' in the last movement of the *Pathetic* symphony, and he called out impatiently, "Where is your 'tom-tom'?" But he pronounced it 'tum-tum', and the girl nearly passed out.

He was badly let down on another occasion when a young woman did a dance number on her own at a popular concert. She was a stranger to Cape Town whose talents had been lauded by some influential friend. Unfortunately the misguided man helped her to some Dutch courage before the show, and instead of tripping on in the traditional manner she bounded on to the platform with a hop-skip-and-a-jump that landed her at the furthest end on the first step of the orchestra seats, narrowly skirting the Steinway grand in the corner. She recovered, however, and went on with the dance, the exuberance of which brought her an uproarious encore.

We in the orchestra on the floor were unprepared for fresh music so Mr. Wendt's eyebrows expostulated as the damsel stood looking down at him, one hand resting nonchalantly on her hip. The eyebrows gave in as the applause continued and the long-suffering man made a sign—"What shall we play?"

"Anything, Mr. Conductor", cooed the lady, "something Italian", so Theo hastily called out the cuts in the tarantelle on our desks and the ballerina, now thoroughly in her element, hurtled across the platform again.

Needless to say, the cuts went wrong, Theo's left hand wriggled frantically and there was general chaos. But the heroine of the act was ecstatically pleased and her dance was one of the highlights of the evening.

Then there was the painful episode of the Italian tenor who appeared in Cape Town with a flourish of trumpets which took Theo so much by storm that he engaged him for a concert on the spot. After he had heard him sing he decided that, as he could not put him into grand opera, the best thing would be to take him to the wide open spaces of Muizenberg beach.

We used to give popular concerts there every Friday night in the summer. This was before the big pavilion was built, and we had to huddle together on a tiny bandstand, with a tin-shanty sort of roof to shelter us from the weather. That is, it sheltered the woodwind, brass, drums and basses, but the poor conductor and strings had to be in the front line of the battle and the breeze.

The audience brought rugs and cushions—even umbrellas—and sat on hard green seats trying to look as though they were enjoying themselves. How could they, with sand on south-easter nights whipping their faces whenever a gust of wind came along?

A southeaster was blowing the night the Italian tenor sang. It was his undoing, for the thatch of hair he wore curled over his forehead, and which at first sight seemed to be indigenous, was only so at one side, and towards the climax of his Wagner scena it stood straight on end like a plume and then fell, quivering, back to its place of origin. The hapless victim made furtive efforts to coax it back, but every movement could be seen and he had to submit to cruel fate.

As further bad luck would have it we accompanied him badly, for there were differences of opinion about cuts and the south-easter worried our music.

But the Caruso carried off everything in typical style; his right hand waved fulsome praise to the orchestra (while the left made stealthy movements towards his hair), and his grand manner persisted till he backed off the platform, still waving to the orchestra.

"He needn't put the blame on us!" growled Dimmack, in the background.

We used to long for southeasters on Sunday afternoons, for then the usual concert on the Pier would be cancelled. Some-

times we would have to chance it, and many were the times when half-a-dozen of the audience came to the rescue and crouched on the bandstand to hold our music as we played. Once a lot of it blew into the sea before anything could be done to save it.

The orchestra had a number of tours in the first years of its existence, and it was very jolly meeting old friends in the different towns, where they could not show us enough hospitality.

In Johannesburg, Ellie and I stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Burchmore and their daughter, Noël; dear friends who drove us to all the concerts and generally went out of their way on every occasion to be kind. Noël had a lovely voice, which was being trained by Wilfrid Burns-Walker. Other invitations came in too. On one day we went to a luncheon party, tea and dinner parties, after-concert refreshments, and finished up with a midnight banquet to the orchestra! No wonder I disgraced myself the next night—our one free one—by sleeping soundly all through the play we were taken to by the Burchmores!

The entire repertoire for an orchestral tour was very nearly lost at Port Elizabeth once, after the voyage from Durban. The discovery that the precious boxes of music had been left on the ship was made only shortly before the train was due to leave for Grahamstown. A frantic SOS to the ship, still in harbour, reached the friendly first engineer, who traced the missing boxes to the hold—of all impregnable fortresses! Two members of the company stayed behind to retrieve it and brought it on by the next train.

After a concert at Krugersdorp, Theo Wendt, Ellie and I lingered so long over a cup of coffee at a tearoom that we missed the last train to Johannesburg and had to hang about the station until a 'goods' bumped us along to Braamfontein—that dreary junction miles away from Park station—at two o'clock in the morning.

The place was deserted; not a soul was to be seen who could help us find a cab; only criss-cross railway lines and no lights anywhere. At last we saw one, in a Greek shop, only a hundred yards away. A man with a candle was moving about in the window. I ran over to it, leaving the two men to follow. I beckoned urgently to the man in the shop; he saw the figure of a woman in evening dress, pink chiffon round her head . . . One look was enough; he waved a violent "NO!" and put out the light.

Mercifully, a belated Good Samaritan turned up a moment later in a car.

I had a surprise one day when a letter arrived from Minnie, the first playmate of my childhood who, as Minnie Greer, had married Marrison Jackson, a Native Commissioner in Rhodesia, and gone to live with him there. She was visiting Cape Town for the first time, and wanted to know when and where we could meet.

I was delighted at the thought of seeing her again after so many years. The orchestra was giving afternoon tea concerts at the City Hall twice a week at that time, so I suggested that Minnie come to the next one and we would meet in the interval at a tea table and arrange a date for a long chat.

I looked round for her as I came on to the platform. Yes, there she was, close up in the third row, smiling brightly at me. It was surprising to find how little altered she was; she had the same Irish colouring, pink cheeks and dark hair, only now she was wearing glasses.

In the interval I had to search for her, found her at last, hurried forward with hand outstretched, looked into her eyes and . . . had a shock. "You are not Minnie!" I exclaimed. "No" she said, very surprised.

"Then why have you been smiling at me?"

"Because you smiled at me!" she said.

I met the real Minnie a day or two afterwards. She had not been able to come to the concert. She might have been the twin sister of the other woman; she had the same Irish colouring, pink cheeks and dark hair and—she was wearing glasses.

After our marriage Ellie and I took a flat in Criterion Chambers over a bar at the corner of Parliament Street and Church Square. It was conveniently near the City Hall and within an easy walk of the College of Music.

The flat, so called, was actually a suite of six smallish rooms on the second floor. One was fitted with a bath and another with a kitchen sink and blue-flame stove. It took us exactly four minutes to dash round the corner to the City Hall.

We had a succession of charwomen to 'do' for us, but no servant was satisfactory till Jantje turned up. He was a Coloured youth, gold-bespectacled, an Admirable Crichton for a blessed period of peace. He was an excellent cook and encouraged us to keep open house for any friends who cared to drop in for a meal.

I had a birthday soon after his arrival, and he flew off to the shops—he loved shops—to buy me a present. When I opened it I found the following inscription on a box of cheap stationery:

"To dear Madam, with love and best wishes from Jantje."

Our dining-room was next to the front door, and one morning

at breakfast Jantje opened it to the butcher's boy. We heard the following conversation:

"My mother died this morning."

A long whistle from Jantje.

"What a pity!"—and that was that. The door closed.

Alas, our easygoing ways and frequent absences were his undoing—and ours. I found my bills mounting unaccountably, my hospitality flowing abnormally. The last month's bill showed that I was getting a dozen eggs and a pound of butter every day; not only my friends were being entertained but Jantje's as well. Sadly, I parted from my 'treasure'.

I saw him from time to time afterwards standing at a kerbstone, spotlessly garbed in white linen coat and peaked cap—a chauffeur, gold-bespectacled, of irreproachable mien.

We had a pleasant time in that shabby old flat. One morning at breakfast Ellie said, "Let's knock down that wall and have a big room". We had no use for the one next to it—equally small—so I interviewed our landlord. He agreed on the understanding that we replace the wall when we left—after all, it was only lath and plaster.

So we had a really nice big music-room which was the rendezvous for many an after-concert party afterwards. Elsie Hall and her husband, Dr. Fritz Stohr, had recently arrived, and often came to them. She was wearing a lovely cherry-coloured brocade coat when I first met her in the artists' room at the City Hall, and when I got to know her better I made her promise to leave it to me in her will.

That was more than forty years ago; we are both still alive and the coat was worn out long ago.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

A highlight in my brother Jim's colourful career was his exploit in the Zulu rebellion of 1906 when, as Captain in the Durban Light Infantry, he captured single-handed the rebel chief, Dinizulu.

His *History of the Zulu Rebellion* is regarded by experts as one of the finest works on South Africa ever written. I have it on the authority of the late Mr. G. H. Wilson, one-time editor of the *Cape Times*, that the Duke of Windsor, when he toured South Africa in 1925 as Prince of Wales, used it extensively for his speeches in Zululand.

Another kaleidoscopic twist in Jim's life was when he met Oscar Asche, the most celebrated English actor of the day, during his South African tour with his wife, Lily Brayton, in Shakespearean plays. He invited Jim to England to assist him in producing his Zulu play, *Mameena*. The fee for superintending the training of the Natives—£800—promised well for a good holiday, and Mother (always game for a spree) was only too happy to join him. He girded up his loins, packed away his books and the two sailed away, gay as larks.

But the crowning point in his life was when he met Ellen Smith, an English missionary teacher in a school for Native girls at Ladysmith in Natal. It was love at first sight for them both and they were sweethearts for every minute of the twenty-five years of their married life. The first World War parted them for a time, for Jim went to France in charge of the Native Labour Contingent—just another of those adventures that cropped up so often and unexpectedly in his life.

An engagement to train the Zulu pageant for the first Wembly Exhibition, after he had settled in England with his wife and two little boys, was work more after his own heart. Day by day, for six months, he put those raw Natives through their paces in the stadium, sparing no pains for ultimate success.

At the crucial moment on the opening day, however, the man chosen to head the pageant as poet of the tribe chanting its 'isibongos' (praises) was paralysed with stage fright and nothing would induce him to carry on. Jim acted quickly. With the aid of burnt cork he was Othello to the life, plus shield, assegais and knobkerries as he led the pageant chanting the 'isibongos'.

Far above among the spectators, Nellie told her small son, "Look! that is Daddy down there, can you see him?"

An incredulous pause . . . then, as realization dawned, a burst of terrified tears . . .

Charlie, who was one of the first Native Commissioners appointed in the Chartered Company by Cecil Rhodes, left for Rhodesia within a year of his marriage. The Matabele rebellion had just come to an end when he went to live at the foot of Betsa mountain in the heart of the Matopos. Rhodes, living near by in the mountains, used often to send for and consult him on Native matters in the district.

Charlie's first task was to round up all the ammunition still hidden in the outlying kraals, a formidable one, for there seemed no way of outwitting the chiefs who were secreting it. He made several plans before a brilliant idea struck him. He had brought a servant from Eshowe, a loyal Zulu whom he could trust. He conferred with him. "Dick," he said, "these Matabeles are slow in handing over their guns. I want them. Now you must go among them and find out in a friendly way who has these guns. Examine them closely if you can and make a note of each one, and the name of its owner; then bring a full list of them to me."

This was an order after the servant's own heart. The Matabeles belonged to an alien tribe; they had been misbehaving themselves and it was up to one of the Zulu nation to assist in bringing them into line.

When he had made his rounds he brought in his report, and an official edict went out next day calling all the chiefs to Court for examination the following week. In due course each man was questioned, but one and all denied having kept any guns. Finally, Charlie's voice struck in from the bench: "You, there; you say you have no gun? What about that scratch on the left-hand corner of the gun in your hut? And you, over there . . ."

On and on he went, describing minutely the weapon each culprit possessed. A gasp of amazement ran through the crowd. Supernatural powers had been invoked! The South African Native is the most superstitious creature under the sun. The chiefs—to a man—brought in their guns without further demur.

Charlie was known thereafter as the 'Wizard of Betsa mountain'.

Apart from his eloquence as an advocate, Harold made a name for himself as a handwriting expert. In 1915, in a case hinging on a glaring forgery—which to him was without question—his failure in defence of a German client convinced him that the man's nationality had influenced the judge against him. He took up the study of graphology, determined that in future his arguments for or against would stand in the face of prejudice. He evolved his own methods by degrees for the detection of forgery, going to infinite trouble to photograph and enlarge—to an enormous extent—the various specimens submitted to him.

Too ill on one occasion to go fully into a case on which his opinion was asked, he sent a message:

"Whoever wrote that did it with his left hand."

That sealed his reputation. The suspected man had lost his right arm.

His daughter, Esmé, begged her father to bring out a book on his research: "Yes, and teach people to forge without detection!"

Defending a client, he had much of the dramatic power that won fame for that man of brilliance, Marshall Hall. Though he studied his briefs and extracted every point from them, he often won cases by a single flash of dramatic inspiration, carrying judge and jury by his eloquence.

He once defended an old Indian who had been accused of murdering his little daughter. Evidence against the man seemed overwhelming. The only witness for the defence was a little girl, another daughter. Harold asked permission for her to be placed on the table in front of him. When her evidence had been taken, he instructed the father to lift her to the floor. The child put her arms affectionately round his neck. Quick as light, Harold turned to the judge: "My lord, this is my defence; would a child act in this way had she witnessed the murder of her sister by this man?"

It was a stroke of genius . . . "Not guilty!"

Years afterwards, Harold, walking in Verulam—not far from Durban—met an old Indian, throwing dust over himself as he came towards him, abjectly fawning as he whined:

"Salaam, Boss, me plenty glad, me plenty glad . . . me killee little girl, you gettee me off!"

The tragedy of Phil's deafness which might have turned him into a morose, disillusioned man, never soured his nature, nor did it hinder him from going ahead with any scheme or work which presented itself. His gay, indomitable spirit faced every obstacle with never-failing optimism.

His life was full of ups and downs. After a spell in the Chartered Company in Rhodesia he entered the Civil Service in Johannesburg where, following in Jim's footsteps, he studied and perfected his knowledge of the Zulu language so thoroughly that he gave lessons, and eventually published a Zulu grammar which became a standard text book.

Like Jim, too, he was a prolific writer—except that Jim was bent on research and Phil's talent was purely creative—drawing on what he described as the 'incredible romance and tragedy of Zulu history' for his themes. His collection of Zulu tales, based on the life of Tschaka 'the Terrible', was published in 1938 by Shuter and Shooter of Maritzburg under the title of *An African Attila.*

When Sir Frank Benson, the celebrated Shakespearean actor, toured South Africa, Phil—in his capacity as Inspector of Native Locations—was commissioned to motor him round Natal. As they went along Phil told him about his book. Benson read it, was much impressed by one of the stories and suggested that Phil dramatize it for a play which he, Sir Frank, would produce in London. The generous offer was never fulfilled, however, for Benson died soon after he returned to England. Nevertheless, Phil went on with the play; his fondest dream was to produce it himself one day with a Zulu cast. It had immense possibilities, and perhaps it will see the light some day when the author himself is forgotten.

Mother lived on in their house in Maritzburg after Jim's marriage. She visited us all periodically—Jim and Nellie at Hilton Road in Natal; Charlie and Nancye in Rhodesia; Harold and Janet in Durban; Philip and May at Port Shepstone (when he was stationed there as Inspector of Native Locations) and me in Johannesburg and afterwards in Cape Town.

Sometimes two or more of us would meet on a visit to her. There was always great fun when 'the boys' got together. We all inherited her sense of fun and there would be gales of laughter over old jokes re-told by Jim—casting off his usual sober magisterial air—and Charlie (not shy for once) chipping in with an inimitable yarn of his own. Then Mother would tell

little stories, one about a phone call one evening when she was alone:

"Is that you, darling?" whispered an ardent male voice.

"Yes,"—whispering coyly—"but . . . not yours!"

She was a born actress. She could not help dramatising every story as she told it, and it was her boast that no stranger ever met and talked with her for five minutes before exclaiming, "What an actress you would have made!"

Her sympathy in times of trouble was instinctive. A neighbour ran in one morning to beg the use of her telephone. Mother knew her by sight only as the landlady of a boarding-house across the street. The woman was agitated as she spoke on the phone, and Mother heard her begging for some concession; obviously her landlord was threatening to turn her out because rent had not been paid. "Only give me time!" she implored. Mother threw down her sewing, ran to her side, and whispered in her ear, "Tell him the money will be there before twelve o'clock."

Mother was never well off, but such incidents were typical of her.

The great Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918 struck at the heart of Cape Town. Everything was suddenly disorganized, paralysed. So many of the orchestra members were taken ill that concerts and rehearsals had to be abandoned. In any case the public was too panic-stricken to think about concerts. The City Hall became a depot for the distribution of medical supplies and the mayoress, Mrs. W. J. Thorne, proved herself a wonderful organizer. It was not long before the birth of her third child, but she worked night and day, never sparing herself. She gathered a team of volunteers who, in cars and side-cars or motor-cycles rushed help to any household needing it.

It was a common sight to see lorries passing through the streets heaped high with roughly-made coffins to cope with the mounting death rate. One day I saw a hansom cab being driven along Parliament Street with a coffin standing up on end in it.

Theo Wendt, Ellie and I helped to clean vegetables in a soup-kitchen set up hurriedly in Roeland Street. (A recollection comes back of how poor, inept Theo wrestled with a large paraffin tin that would edge sideways as he tried to chop the carrots.)

Next day, Ellie and I were rushing out to Kenilworth to help nurse a sick friend. Trained nurses were at a premium, doctors run off their feet. Our friend died, as scores of others did, for sheer lack of proper nursing and medical attention.

When Ellie went to order the coffin at the undertaker's, the girl behind the counter complained that "Daddy had no time to eat in peace now". . . At the gate of the cemetery there was a dreadful pile of coffins waiting for burial—one on top of another—the mourners, many of them, too ill in bed themselves to follow them to their graves.

At the height of the panic I received a telegram from Jim in Maritzburg: "Mother not well. May and doctor in attendance."

I left in the train for Maritzburg that night.

I nursed her for three weeks before her death on November 9. For the first and only time since our childhood we were all at her bedside on the anniversary of her wedding day, October 24. The Armistice brought general rejoicings on the day of her funeral, but I was too shattered to take note of them.

Her's was an unforgettable character—a mass of contradictions—but its dominating integrity left an indelible impression on all who came into contact with it.

It was while we were living in Criterion Chambers that I first met Nita Spilhaus (Mrs. Simon). I had always loved her pictures, and it paved the way for a friendship the warmth of which has persisted ever since.

She once told me a story of her youth as an art student in Munich in 1897. She and a girl friend wanted badly to go to a public ball, but were unable to afford tickets; only a certain class of lady could be admitted free. Nothing daunted, one of them—was it Nita?—arrayed in an eye-catching frock, a three-quarter length black 'Havelock' coat and cape (very fashionable at the time), and long earrings, with—as a finishing touch—a dachshund on a lead, went boldly to the box-office to ask for "Tickets for two prostitutes, please!"

Nita, virtuous to the backbone, enjoyed telling of the escapade, which ended triumphantly (and harmlessly) for the two girls.

One day Nita said: "Pieter Wenning would be so glad if you would give him some lessons; can you do it?"

I was astonished. Wenning was known to me as a great painter, struggling in dire poverty to keep body and soul together by his art. What possessed him to take up the violin? However, I said I would be delighted.

He came to me—a tall, gaunt figure, with big bony fingers and hands quite unfitted for violin playing, but obviously sincere in his wish to have a try at it. He came twice a week, and

we laboured for an hour each time over a task quite beyond his reach. Near the end of the term he arrived one morning brimming over with enthusiasm. "I have just done two hours of the best work I have ever done!" he said.

"Fine!" I exclaimed, "I wish I could see it".

A little more talk followed, and then we went on with our lesson. The next time he asked me what I was charging him.

"What an idea!—you are an *artist*, and I am only too happy to help you."

He said no more. It was drizzling when he came to say goodbye, and raindrops glistened on the black-framed picture he handed me without a word. It was the most beautiful still-life I have ever seen. Just a crimson zinnia or two in a lovely blue vase against a pale blue background shimmering with the lights of palette-knife craft—truly worthy of having been the "best two hours' work" of an artist's life.

I never saw the dear man again, and was greatly saddened by news of his death not very long afterwards. I was away from Cape Town and heard only years later the moving story of a tribute to his memory that would have gone straight to his heart.

One of his pictures was being exhibited by Ashbeys, the art dealers, in a showcase at the railway station. Nita Spilhaus—grief-stricken by the passing of a dear friend and great artist in utter obscurity—went with another of his friends for permission to hang a laurel wreath round it, decorated with a purple ribbon . . . The mute tribute inspired Donovan, editor of *The Cape*—a popular magazine of those days—to write a touching article which appeared the next day headed 'The Purple Ribbon'.

The stark simplicity of the tribute, so in keeping with the character of that man of genius, was worth a ton-load of wreaths laid on his grave . . .

Twenty-five years had gone by with long spells of ill health and two major operations for Ellie when an art-connoisseur friend told me of a collector who would give £200 for my Wenning picture. (So had poor Pieter's fame risen through the years!) I could not bear the thought of parting with my treasure, and said so. However, when my friend pressed me to consider it I turned to Nita for her reaction. Her voice over the phone, without a moment's hesitation, was warm and urgent: "Take it, my dear, *take it!*—Pieter would have been the first to say so!"

Well—that decided me, and eventually I did so, but only after I had a fine photograph taken of my treasure to keep as a link with a precious memory.

At George, in the Cape Province, during one of the numerous tours Ellie and I took together, we once dropped into a bank to look at a valuable violin which had been placed there for safe keeping. It had belonged to an old Archdeacon Fogg who had taken a great fancy to Ellie and his playing many years before, always declaring his intention of leaving his violin to him in his will. Every time they met, the old man would say, "When are you coming to look at your violin?"

Once Ellie was tempted to borrow it for a time while his own was being repaired, and he actually got as far as travelling from Cape Town to make the request. But the journey was in vain . . . when he got there he had not the heart to broach the subject.

The years went by; the old man died; no will was found and the violin and everything else went to distant relations, not one of them musical. Ellie—always a man of few words—said nothing, but I sensed his thoughts as he gently handled the violin the bank manager allowed him to see that day.

We had dear friends living in George at the time, the Charles Vintcents who did such splendid work for St. Dunstan's blind men after their own son was killed in World War I. I wrote to Lilian Vintcent after our return to Cape Town, asking her to find out what the owners wanted to do about the violin; did she think they would accept £100 for it? And if so, I must see and identify it—above all, Ellie must on no account hear about it.

The violin was brought to Cape Town, but a hitch occurred; a telephone call misfired and the man left again without seeing me. My offer had evidently aroused the owners' interest, for I heard afterwards that the violin had been sent to be sold in London.

A year later, a message came; did my offer still hold good? Difficulties over customs dues had prevented the sale in England. This time nothing went wrong. I had the violin overhauled by experts in London, and at long last the old Archdeacon's wish was fulfilled.

Leslie Heward, coming from England in 1924, made it difficult for us—I was an 'extra' player then—to accept him as a fitting successor to Theo Wendt, whose age and dignity had created an aura of which we were secretly proud. It was difficult, too, for the general public to credit him with the phenomenal musicianship already acclaimed oversea, for he would blow on to the platform and spring on to the rostrum in the breezy fashion of a schoolboy, wasting no time in preliminary bowing to the audience. At twenty-six showmanship was a closed book to him. As for the players in the orchestra, any idea of "This young

fellow must mind his step with us!" was quickly dispelled. Though he made no secret of the fact that all symphonic work—most of our repertory in fact—was new to him, he soon impressed us with his uncanny musical ability. His ear, as sharp as a needle, detected inaccuracies instantly.

The orchestra was at that time under the management of the Publicity Association—'Jimmy' Dunn was head of this—and in June 1925, a trip to England was substituted for the annual three-months' tour of the Union. It was, for many reasons, an ill-considered venture and proved to be a costly failure, the orchestra returning with half the tour cancelled.

Leslie followed two weeks later with his bride, Lenore, whom he had just married in Westminister Abbey. Their romance had started during his previous work as conductor of the British National Opera Company.

They remained in Cape Town for another year, and ultimately Leslie succeeded Adrian Boult as conductor of the Birmingham Orchestra.

He was a life-long martyr to ill health—chiefly asthma—and when he died at the early age of forty-six a flood of tributes to his genius and his lovable qualities was collected and published in a volume edited by the well-known musicologist, Eric Blom.

William J. Pickerill, young, slim and good-looking, rose from being principal bassoon player in the orchestra to become Leslie's successor. He worked so hard and made such a success of his job that the Cape Town University honoured him with a Doctorate of Music. But his inexhaustible energy played havoc with his heart and he was forced to retire in 1946.

He recovered for a time afterwards and enjoyed another spell of activity as conductor of the Durban Orchestra before his sudden death in 1955.

It was during Pick's time with the Cape Town Orchestra—towards the end of 1930—that Sir Henry Wood and his wife arrived in Cape Town on a holiday visit. He tells in his book, *My Life of Music*, how he had no sooner arrived than he met a young man named Pickerill whose father and brothers had been connected with the Nottingham Sacred Harmonic Society. His breath was taken away when Pick invited him to conduct four concerts during his three-week stay, but he fell in with the idea and the concerts were a huge success. But there was very nearly a fiasco at one when Sir Henry flew into a tantrum and threatened to cancel the concert. On arriving at the artists' room he had been told that the timpanist, Chosak, had suddenly taken ill, and would not be able to play.

"Then I shall not conduct!" he said. "Who ever heard of Beethoven's fifth symphony without timpani? Such a thing has

not happened to me since I was twelve years old!"

A frenzied search went on to raid the cinemas for a deputy, but in vain. Finally, poor Chosak was dragged from his bed, and the situation was saved. Fortunately, the symphony was in the second half of the programme, and Sir Henry, placated by the impression he had made, carried on with the first which, mercifully, could dispense with timpani beats and rolls.

Chosak—a long-established member of the Municipal Orchestra who still operates in it—seemed none the worse, but actually the better, for his sporting effort.

Ellie and I organized a picnic for Sir Henry and his wife. On a glorious summer day, it was a unique and thoroughly harmonious experience, because it lasted without a hitch for exactly twelve hours! There were three car-loads of us, with Ellie, Pick and another man doing the driving. We started off at eleven o'clock from our flat on the main road in Rondebosch. This was over a butcher shop, and while we waited to assemble, Lady Wood looked at the window full of wares.

"And what is *polony*?" she asked. Margaret Hoskyn, always quick on the uptake, quipped, "It is what we eat in the Col*ony!*" (Incidentally, Margaret is not only a past mistress in the art of bons mots, but a teacher of the piano, a broadcaster and a writer of books on her subject.)

Our first stop was at Bishopscourt—untenanted at the time—where Pick took photographs and we wandered round that lovely garden. Then to Constantia Nek, and a half-mile walk to a secluded spot near a waterfall, all sharing the job of porterage (Sir Henry carried a cushion). We lunched, chatted and lazed for an hour or two, then went on to Miller's Point, beyond Simon's Town, where we had tea and gathered shells.

Sir Henry, next to the driver all day, was in wonderful form, blowing a bugle someone had lent him, to clear the traffic as we went along.

The picnic ended at eleven o'clock after a cold supper at our flat, with plates on laps, and cushions on the floor when chairs gave out.

Eric Grant later succeeded Stewart Deas as Principal of the College of Music after Professor Bell retired, and when he came to Cape Town, he told us of a conversation with Sir Henry in London. Pick's name had cropped up. "Oh," said Sir Henry, "I know Pickerill very well; seven of his family are musicians. But they all want to be conductors, and it cannot be done, my dear fellow, it cannot be done. There is only room for *one* conductor in a family!"

Geoffrey Miller, a one-time student at the College of Music in Cape Town, an excellent pianist, French horn player and all-

round musician, was another who rose from the orchestra ranks to become conductor—and pilot—through a difficult period. He remained, carrying on good work until Enrique Jorda, the Spanish conductor, arrived in January 1947, when he was made assistant conductor. In November 1953 he went to Maritzburg as Director of Music there.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

ALTHOUGH temperamentally Ellie and I were exact opposites, in fundamentals we were agreed. And this applied to the changes we made from time to time in our way of living. When he resigned from teaching at the College of Music I followed suit: when he got tired of playing in the Orchestra I got tired, too.

These changes synchronized with a change of abode. We were turned out of Criterion Chambers in Parliament Street when that building was taken over by a new management which turned the rooms into business offices. So we bought a house in Hof Street—No. 10.

Soon afterwards Ellie, having bounced himself and me out of all visible means of support, went into an enthusiastic partnership with our great friend Elsie Hall, the fine pianist who had come from England the previous year. They planned a concert tour of the Union. Arrangements were made in tip-top style; a manager was engaged at a generous fee to travel ahead to each town; they ordered stacks of tickets, posters and programmes . . .

By way of variety, they engaged a charming little singer, Pattie Price, to warble artless old English ditties between their more important sonatas and solo groups. (Pattie has since become celebrated for her songs at the piano and the Canadian tours that made her an international artist.)

Now, at the threshold of her career, she jumped at the nominal fee of a guinea per concert and 'all found' on the trip.

The three set off in high spirits. Ellie, always a prince among travellers, tipped royally at all the best hotels en route. They

gave eighteen concerts in all, with enormous éclat in every town . . .

The financial result? Staggering expenses added to the manager's big fee; eighteen guineas and an interesting 'all found' trip for Pattie, and exactly six-and-a-half guineas each for the two principals, plus the conviction that concert-giving in a small way in South Africa—as a paying proposition—is an exploded idea.

After his touring experience, Ellie languished for a while and found balm for his wounded feelings by attending to the private pupils on his timetable. I had a sudden urge to paint, and after a few weeks of it, hammer and tongs, collected enough innocuous water colours to hold a modest exhibition. It was quite successful and I began to have visions of changing my vocation; but the urge died a natural death and what I did in that line in after life was for the sheer joy I have always had in it.

An amusing interlude was when I led a little band of amateurs at the old Railway Institute. Concerts for the Repertory Society meetings, flower shows and other occasions were run there every month by a musical enthusiast, Morgan by name. He was a Welshman who had once had a fine tenor voice; his wife had also been a singer, and they adored music. Retired from a responsible post in the railways, his greatest joy was to conduct an orchestra. Somehow or other he managed to get a band together; half-a-dozen fiddles, a 'cello or two, and two or three wind instruments. He had no timpani but had raked out a big drum from somewhere, behind which his little wife crouched when she was not giving it a bang.

The professional nucleus which kept things together consisted of a pianist, myself as leader, and another violinist and 'cellist. When we were all ready to begin we would nod to the pianist and off we would go, little Morgan keeping time with bâton and knees.

I brought several of my friends into that band; my dear Ermyn (pianist), Muriel Hughes (Elsie Hall's sister, violinist), and Helen Fanning, an excellent English 'cellist. Though I fancy we all suffered a little from a superiority complex on those occasions, none of us had the heart to desert the little man. His beaming enthusiasm and gratitude for accepting his modest engagements found us, time after time, fiddling through *The Merry Wives* overture, Gilbert and Sullivan selections and other popular favourites.

Poor old man! The day came when the Railway Institute was turned into a picture house. His concerts died a natural death, and robbed of their interest, his own and his wife's deaths followed not very long after.

Rates and taxes on our house, meanwhile, were beginning to alarm us. We decided to look for something that would not be so expensive to keep up. We spent six weeks on the search. Agents sent us on expeditions with polite young men who seemed bent on showing us over quite unsuitable places—we learnt their patter by heart. At last we took a car independently, and that saved a lot of time.

Eventually we hit on a double-storeyed house at the corner of Union and Kloof Streets in the Gardens. It had been a boarding house, but though it was shabby and in bad repair we felt it had possibilities. With the removal of an ugly little wooden balcony and an equally nondescript verandah beneath it a splendid improvement could be made. We threw out our arms to express the spaciousness dear to both our hearts.

It had a number of rooms on the ground floor in addition to six large airy ones upstairs which could be let to people who did not require to be fed, and we should have a free roof for ourselves. What clinched it all was a big billiard-room which had obviously been built as an afterthought at the side of the house. This we visualized instantly as an ideal studio, for it had a separate entrance from the street through its own little garden.

We bought the house. That is, we put down £500 and took out a bond for the rest. We were so delighted by the prospects that we could hardly bear to wait for the improvements to be made.

We sold our Hof Street house to the B. K. Longs—'B.K.' was editor of the *Cape Times* then—and they were as impatient to move in as we were to get out. However, we did do the thing properly, and a building contractor was soon busy replacing the disfiguring verandah and balcony with others twelve feet wide, supported by imposing pillars. The whole place was transformed, but operations had scarcely begun when something happened that took our breath away.

Elsie Hall and her husband were leaving for England in the next mail boat, and two days before they sailed they came to see us.

Said Fritz: "We have come to take Ellie to England!"

These dear, kind people had been worrying about us. They thought Ellie needed a holiday. Fritz pretended that a syndicate of friends had clubbed together to pay the passage. We realized only months later that he—kindest and most generous of men—had shouldered it himself.

The suddenness of the idea took Ellie off his feet and he did not get on to them firmly again until he was on the deck of a P. & O. steamer which sailed two days after Elsie and Fritz left.

We had a mad scrimmage to get him off. There was not time

to do more than pack a couple of suitcases and mend socks that wanted darning. He just had to wait to buy things in London.

Poor dear, he fared badly with a suit he took to wear on the voyage. It was one of those loosely-woven tweeds, and by the time he reached London the seat of his trousers had so many long wisps hanging to a threadbare patch that he could not face the ordeal of going to a West End tailor's to be measured for another. So he sneaked into a small shop in Tottenham Court Road, his hands spread behind, and made a clean breast of it to the man behind the counter. "Oh, yes, sir", said he, "it *is* pretty bad, isn't it!"

By a marvellous coincidence he had a pair of tweed trousers that had been returned by a customer as a misfit, of the self-same shade and design, which he offered to Ellie. The customer must have been a large man, for its girth was nearly twice that of Ellie's slim waist. But it was no time to haggle; any port in a storm. Ellie shot off his own offending garment and, wrapping the new one round him, went at least decently clad to Selfridge's, where another stroke of fortune provided him with a smart readymade suit that might have been cut for him.

Elsie and he gave several recitals in and out of London. One was at the old Steinway Hall before a large and very select audience of the 'Upper Ten', who came in droves on hearing that it was to be under the patronage of Her Majesty, Queen Mary. (This honour was due to the fact that Elsie at one time gave piano lessons to the Princess Royal when she was Princess Mary.)

The notices were flattering and—wonderful to relate—expenses did not altogether swamp proceeds, for the two artists netted thirty shillings each towards their hotel bills.

Meanwhile, I kept home fires burning by taking on Ellie's pupils as well as my own. Staying with friends, I had no housekeeping worries, and had time as well to superintend the alterations to our house, just ready for occupation when Ellie came back.

Both children were with us now, day scholars in Cape Town. Each had had varied school careers, beginning with a kindergarten in Johannesburg where Tuk's education began with painting the back view of cats, when she was not being put to sleep on the lid of an upright piano.

I do not hold with the idea that disturbed education leads to unsatisfactory results. My children were late in matriculating, because each time they entered a new school they were made to go through the previous year's work again. I think they got a better foundation that way and that this accounted for their

shooting ahead afterwards. I am very proud of my children—and, I believe, with sound reason, too.

Our studio was a great success. We gave two seasons of drawingroom concerts—1923-1924—fellow artists rallying round in generous co-operation, and Elsie Hall little dreamed then that the reputation she was building up was going to lead to the Doctor of Music degree which the Cape Town University conferred upon her in June, 1957.

Another pianist was Victor Hely-Hutchinson, son of Sir Walter, who was at one time Governor-General of the Cape. In those days Victor was a small boy, and used to accompany his sister, Natalie—although he could barely reach the pedals—at the lessons Ellie gave her.

He had a remarkable gift for memorising music. After a couple of rehearsals with Ellie of Grieg's G minor sonata—which was new to him—he amazed everybody at a party we went to three months afterwards by making Ellie play it *by heart* with him. His was certainly the photographic memory, safest of all.

Eveline Fincken, that fine lieder singer, sang twice for us, and another pianist who played sonatas with Ellie was Anna Marsh, who afterwards went to Edinburgh University to carry off a well-earned Mus. Doc. degree.

Sir Max and Lady Michaelis came to those studio concerts, and were so interested that Sir Max lent Ellie his beautiful violin for some years before his daughter Hermione, developing a talent for music, claimed it.

One of our lodgers in the upstairs rooms was an old friend I had known in Johannesburg, Colonel F. H. P. Creswell. He was a Member of Parliament, and one night General Hertzog came to see him, and "F.H.P." brought him down to Ellie and me in our studio, where we four frivolled over a game of rummy. It was a feather in my cap for years, that I had beaten the great man at that game!

After we had been two years in that Union Street house, Ellie said to me, "How about taking Tuk to England for a finishing year at school?" He went on to suggest that we let the house and sell what furniture we did not want for ourselves. He had never taken kindly to letting the upstairs rooms—there were too many complications—and the house, of course, was much too big for us.

As always, Ellie's changes of mood found me following suit, but this time I had many regrets over having to give up our lovely studio, and I did not enthuse as much as I might have done. However, the plan went through. A maternity home was looking for new quarters and the owners were so eager to secure

our house that they offered a year's rent in advance. This lump sum plus the £200 which our surplus furniture brought in was ear-marked for Tuk's and my year in London and Ellie would go with us for the Christmas trip.

As for Charles, he had struck up such a friendship with a charming Irishman, a chemist who had a room in our house, that he relinquished his early dream of taking up medicine and decided to go in for pharmacy instead.

How strangely one's life can be affected by what happens to other people! This man had been a dipsomaniac—he told me his story. He was engaged to a girl he adored, and for her sake had not touched drink for two years. Now he was looking forward to their marriage. It seemed an excellent plan for Charles to live with him in my absence and to start his career as an apprentice in his shop.

Two weeks before our ship was due to sail, the poor man was reduced to utter despair by a letter from his fiancée breaking off their engagement. He fell headlong into the abyss he had tried so hard to avoid. We did all in our power to help him pull up again, but it was hopeless—he was doomed.

Ellie and I made a quick decision over Charles's future. We could not possibly leave him alone at that juncture, so we booked him in a P. & O. steamer following our ship, and for the next year I had both my children with me in London.

To finish the unhappy man's story, an arrangement Ellie had made to share a flat with him on his return seemed a capital idea, but as it happened it was a costly undertaking. Ellie went to the flat in due course, but his fellow-tenant drank himself to death before the lease expired.

We landed at Southampton on Christmas Day. It was lovely to be in England again. All the bustle and excitement of landing and passing through the customs, the thrill of seeing a burly English 'bobby' again, Tuk's pleasure at the English landscape, and the joy of meeting my dear brother Jim at Waterloo station made my pulses tingle.

Jim and Nellie and their two little boys, were living in England now, at Anerley, where we had real English beef and plum pudding in a Christmas feast the next day.

We took rooms at a hotel in Bloomsbury and wandered round for hours gazing at the shop windows. But it was very cold. I shivered in my knitted dress which had been so warm in Cape Town. I found women wearing long tubular coats and bought one, too, but I did not fancy the brick-pink stockings that seemed to be walking towards me in every direction. Frocks were much shorter than in Cape Town and I had to succumb to fashion by turning up all our hems and showing more of my

legs than since I was a child.

The motor buses roaring through the streets nearly deafened me. I thought of the old horse-drawn buses of my student days, the leisurely blue 'Favourite' from which I used to jump—without ringing the bell—as it reached the corner of our square; the patter of the old-time conductors as they reeled out names of places on the route. I missed the Cockney backchat of the leather-aproned bus drivers as they met and passed each other, all apple-cheeked and cosily strapped into their seats high up in the air; the Edwardian broughams and victorias filled with fashionably dressed women driving for their pleasure or down Bond Street on a gentle round of shopping . . .

Twenty years—and more—had made this a different world, changed into a hurrying, roaring mass of mechanized transport. There seemed to be more pedestrians, too, and many more policemen to hold up traffic for them when a great bunch wanted to cross a street. But I loved the police all over again; their fatherly benevolence and inexhaustible patience with the seething crowds impressed me more than ever.

We happened in at Frascati's restaurant for a meal one evening. The waiter handed us a bill of fare as long as a railway timetable; it quenched my appetite at once, there were so many expensive dishes. Ellie, who always did things royally, would not speak to Tuk and me for the rest of the evening because we shamed him in front of the waiter by choosing whitebait (one shilling) and lemon ices (ninepence) for our supper.

We went to see 'Ladybird' and her sister, Louisa Wilson, soon after we arrived. They were still living at The Boltons in South Kensington. Louisa had published a small volume of verse when she was a girl. I had had a copy for years on a bookshelf at home—to my shame I had scarcely glanced at it. Now, anxious to impress her personality on Tuk, I said, "This is Miss Wilson, Lisa Wilson who wrote the book of poems we have got at home; you remember it, don't you?"

To my utter amazement—and Louisa's gratification—the child recited the first verse of one of the poems!

I asked Tuk afterwards, "How *did* you manage to remember it?" "Oh," she said, casually, "it was the only one I did remember."

An introduction to her sister-in-law from a Cape Town friend led to our meeting over a cup of tea at Fuller's in Regent Street. She was Bunty, the widow of Charles Dawson, the artist; she sat for his posters of the 'Dawson Girl'. Before we parted I had taken the top flat in her house at No. 10 Queen's Gardens, near Lancaster Gate.

The most pressing thing was to find a school for Tuk. All

contacts were shut off in the Christmas holidays, and it was only by good fortune again and the wangling of friends that she was eventually installed as a boarder at St. Paul's in Hammersmith.

Ellie and I 'did' a few theatres and concerts before he returned to Cape Town, and then I got my flat ready for Charles's arrival the following week.

We had three nice furnished rooms, bathroom and box-room, and I soon got accustomed to climbing the hundred or more steps. There was no lift in that early-Victorian house.

Bunty Dawson lived alone in the rooms below. No. 10 was one of those tall narrow houses with two largish rooms-and-a-bit on the lower floors and three on the top one. On the ground floor, Bunty carried on the Art Correspondence Courses which had been run by her husband—he had died the year before. She was extremely capable and a good organizer. F. J. Mortimer, the eminent photographic artist, was a contributor on her staff, and he became a good friend to me.

Bunty was a most attractive young woman with a mop of red-gold hair—cut a la Buster Brown but effectively permed—and eyes so much the same colour that they allayed any suspicions regarding the real shade of the beautiful hair; besides, she had the creamy white skin that goes with this colouring.

I was delighted to find that she sang charmingly and was very fond of music. I played her accompaniments and went with her sometimes to her lessons with Frederick King, that old war-horse who had been a celebrated singing teacher even in my day at the R.A.M.

She took me to see Rutland Boughton, the composer who had jumped into fame—taking Gwen Frangcon-Davies with him—the previous year over the phenomenal success of his opera, *The Immortal Hour*. He was busy on two more operas, and when Bunty sang Etain's song (from the *Hour*) he engaged her on the spot as his prima donna for a tour he was planning in the autumn. We took the manuscripts home in high glee and I coached her in her parts for weeks afterwards. The tour came off eventually but it was badly managed, and there was not enough money at the back of it.

When Charles arrived he was feverishly anxious to find work. He haunted chemists' shops and came home one evening in high spirits because one in Piccadilly wanted an apprentice. I thought a hospital would be the best place to start off in, and an introduction from Mr. Mortimer sent us to the chief chemist at St. Thomas's Hospital. Much to Charles's discomfiture—thinly veiled—I sallied forth with him to the interview. He was at the age when mothers are at a discount, but I persisted.

Mr. Rodwell—a great little man at St. Thomas's—was

charming to us. Within three minutes we were chatting about—music. I could see he was very fond of it. Charles was a promising trumpeter in those days—it all helped.

And so it came about that Charles spent an interesting year under that cultured man's guidance, learning a vast amount about drugs.

Having disposed of my children, I hunted up my old friends, May Mukle, 'cellist, and Anna Stern, violinist, old fellow students at the R.A.M. We did some quartet playing together and May got me put up as a temporary member of a music club in St. John's Wood run by two sisters of the well-known pianist, Harold Bauer.

I heard lovely music at those informal meetings; Harold Samuel playing Bach at the piano; Leon Goossens in a quartet for oboe and strings, playing with the poise and style of the superb artist he is; the listeners sitting round on stools and cushions—musicians in their own right, a happy gathering of kindred souls.

On one of those nights I missed the last train from St. John's Wood and was waiting for the last bus to Bayswater when I was joined by a girl who had also been at the party. We walked on slowly for the bus to overtake us. It did, and went on despite our frantic cries and signals. Our thin slippers were not fit for walking, and we were getting desperate when a big car drew up, the driver the only occupant. He offered a lift and I said, "How very kind of you!" He had come from the country he said, and he had the speech of a man unused to London ways, otherwise he would not have risked a snub, nor would we have trusted him so instinctively. I asked him to take the girl home first and then he drove me on to Queen's Gardens. How grateful we were and how Bunty scolded me for my indiscretion!

For our Easter holiday, Tuk and I went on a ten-day walking tour in the Cotswolds. May Mukle had given me an introduction to the Robertson-Scotts at Idbury, who took us in as paying guests. Mr. Robertson-Scott was editor of the magazine *The Countryman*, a most interesting man.

We walked to Burford, that quaint old town, five miles away; Great Rissington and other old-world places, only coming back at night to roost. We carried knapsacks with sandwiches and watercolours and sketched en route. I treasure a sketchbook full of 'bits' that interested me in those parts—the little grey-tiled cottages at Burford with their twin dormer windows hanging over the old, old streets which ran so steeply down that sometimes the steps to the houses were many inches higher at one end than at the other. We spent a night there in the St. George's inn, built in the 16th century, and bought an adorable

antique brass candlestick as a keepsake.

We visited the ruins of Minster Lovell, a one-time abbey. It was a place to dream about, its peace and beauty were so exquisite. The legend of the ill-fated bride who once lived there (though places in Scotland claim her, too) is immortalized in the ballad, 'The Mistletoe Bough'. It tells how the bride ran away from her guests at a party the night before her wedding and hid herself in a chest in the hall. She was searched for in vain, for the lid of the chest closed and locked itself down on her, and the mystery of her disappearance was solved only years later when her skeleton was found in the chest.

When it was time to finish up our holiday in Oxford, we walked leisurely to the station a few miles away to catch our train, the only one for hours. But we had not been warned of the overnight 'summertime' change in the time-table; from a mile away we watched the blue smoke drifting as our train passed out of sight . . .

Our week in Oxford was full of interest. Oxford 'bags' had just come into fashion; they flapped at every turn, for there were many undergraduates about in spite of the Easter vacation. We found rooms in a queer little house with a winding stair which was run as a students' lodging-house by two sisters—little mouse-like women—who did all the work of the house themselves. The younger one waited on us. "What more can I do for you?" she used to say, to make us remember that her name was Watmore; I have never forgotten it. We met one of their lodgers in the street one day—a little Japanese, whose ultra-fashionable 'bags' made him almost square. His beady black eyes were smug with satisfaction as they beamed behind thick, hornrimmed glasses.

Of course we went over all the Colleges and sketched what we could—the weather-beaten pulpit from which John Wesley preached outside Christchurch; the picturesque bridge near Magdalen and bits of river scenery here and there, Tuk as thrilled as I over the historic interest in every stone and blade of grass.

We went back by bus to London because we could see more of the country that way, and because we would pass through Witney, where blankets come from. But it was mostly on account of what Arthur Hedges, the English flautist in the Cape Town Orchestra, had said to me when he came to see us off on the ship:

"If you ever find yourself in a little place called Wallingford, near Oxford, do go and see my father; he is the only baker in the town."

Inquiries in Oxford drew the information that Wallingford

lay on our route, though no one seemed to know anything about the place itself. Arthur Hedges had given me no address, not even the name of the street where his father lived. It was the proverbial needle . . .

But my imagination was stirred. The conductor of our bus had never heard of a Hedges bakery in Wallingford, it was a Sunday afternoon and of course the shop would be closed; still, we kept our eyes glued to the window as we drove into the town . . . yes, there it was . . ! "Hedges, Baker". We were so excited, we nearly left our suitcases behind as we jumped out of the bus.

The shop was certainly closed, and we knocked several times before a woman opened the door—a few inches. When I asked for Mr. Hedges she said he was resting and could not be disturbed, but a change came over her face when I mentioned I had come from his son in Cape Town. The door flew open, the old man was fetched, tea was brought in with cakes from the shop, and tongues wagged fast and furiously.

I, too, was smug after that achievement.

Charles had long been pestering me to give him a motorcycle. He got round my fears of traffic accidents by pointing out that his route to St. Thomas's lay nearly all the way through the parks, and that it would be a saving of time as well as bus fares. I gave in at last, and even allowed him to take me for a spin on the horrible thing, clinging to his waist with might and main and nearly slipping under a bus as we tore round a corner in Cricklewood.

Sitting alone in my eyrie at No. 10 one morning, I heard laborious feet coming up the stairs, and looking over the banister I beheld a stretcher being hoisted up by two men in uniform, the object on it my son. Bandages round his head and face hid all but the tip of his nose. Through these came a muffled voice: "Ahm aw 'ite, Mom!"

The story afterwards? He had been following two other cycles in the park—push-bikes—when a woman crossed the road between the second one and his own. Swerving to avoid her, he dashed into the kerb and knew nothing more until his upper lip was being stitched in hospital. His first question was:

"Shall I ever be able to play the trumpet again?"

That accident was a terrible shock to his system. He did play again after many months, but the trumpet was never again the absorbing interest of his spare time. He began to study seriously in another direction. He had always wanted to be a doctor, and Jim suggested a London matriculation to supplement the South

African one. Night classes at the Chelsea Polytechnic followed, and he matriculated at the end of the year.

Bunty and I joined a Ramblers' Club that year. You paid a five-shilling annual subscription and periodical postcards came giving notice of rambles through parts of London you never saw in the ordinary way.

We all met at a specified rendezvous and then the crowd set out under the guidance of a man who had made all arrangements for lunch, dinner or supper, depending on the time the ramble happened to be. Everyone paid his own way in trains, trams or buses, and we learnt a lot about places full of interest.

It was a capital plan but it had none of the sociability of an ordinary club, for members joined temporarily and then only met each other once, perhaps. They came from all parts of the world. Even at the meals they shared no one talked above a whisper, and only to his or her companion.

On one of these rambles we were taken to the Caledonian Market, a wonderful flotsam and jetsam sort of place where you could buy anything from a priceless first edition to a second-hand enamel soap dish. I bought lovely pieces for the leather-work I was doing at the time.

At Petticoat Lane we were swept into a swirling mass of "Arrys" and their "Arriets" in all the glory of ostrich feather-betrimmed hats and buttons—the "Button King" a sight to behold.

My last expedition with Bunty began with dinner in a small Italian restaurant in Holborn—where about fifty of us were squeezed into a basement normally holding twenty-five, sitting at narrow trestle tables round the sides of the room (to leave space for the waiters)—and ended with supper eaten with chopsticks at a Chinese restaurant in the East End.

It was in the middle of my spaghetti at that Italian place when I was suddenly galvanized by a word in Zulu, dropped by a man chatting opposite me. Instantly I asked him, "Have you come from Natal?" "Yes", said he, and nearly jumped out of his seat when I broke into Zulu myself! Bunty was as mystified as the couples who looked on. It turned out that the man and his wife had come from Durban and knew Harold and Phil; the wife, an old Capetonian, said, "Aren't you Mrs. Ellie Marx? I used to hear you play in Cape Town!" In this small world of ours, it was no surprise to hear that they were now staying next door to me at Queen's Gardens.

I met André Mangeot, the French violinist, one night. He had his own string quartet, and May Mukle took me to one of their rehearsals. They foregathered at his studio, a onetime coach house in an old-fashioned mews at the back of a West

End mansion. He lived there quite comfortably in other reconstructed rooms.

Ernest Newman, the eminent music critic, was there, having a busman's holiday. Eugene Goossens, the conductor-composer, was also present. They roped him in to take the viola part in a new work they were trying out. He complained that he had not played for a very long time, and asked for a pair of nail scissors to trim his nails. (I reminded him of the incident some years ago when he dropped into Cape Town on his way from Australia to England.)

Mangeot was busy at that time starting the Music Club movement round the provinces. The idea of bringing music to audiences instead of the other way round was catching on everywhere.

I went to a meeting afterwards at which prominent musicians advocated the scheme and was immensely interested, making copious notes for future reference. The club evenings I attended made me long to start them in South Africa.

Marquise, my dear old friend of Nooitgedacht and Rosebank days, now a widow, had been living for some years with a friend in London. They were both very excited about a house they had heard of at St. Servan in Brittany, which could be taken over as a pension for English visitors. Marquise enthused so much about the scheme that I offered to go over for a holiday in the summer to report on it, taking Tuk for a first glimpse of France and a chance of improving her French.

When we landed at St. Malo, we were met by the agent who was letting the house. She was—of all improbable people—a Polish countess married to an Englishman. We were her paying guests for a fortnight. She had been an opera singer and was still a beautiful woman, two things (apart from being a countess) which make for the unpredictable. She was always quite amiable to me, but I surmised a lot from the chastened look her husband wore, as well as from the tension that existed between herself and her daughter (also married to an Englishman) who was on a visit from London.

I engaged the daughter to give Tuk French lessons every day, and spent most of my time sketching the many paintable bits round the quaint old town. The market place was the busiest spot. The peasant women congregated there—with their crisply-laundered caps like butterflies on their heads—gossiping like magpies as they clattered to and fro in their wooden sabots.

St. Malo, the sea port, was a much more important place, with a casino—where we all went one night to try our luck—and an opera house, where we heard Massenet's *Manon*.

We took another excursion to Dinard, where the shops were more up-to-date and frocks and finery exorbitantly expensive. Most interesting of all was the trip to Mont St. Michel, that wonderful old abbey where hundreds of years ago monks spent their lives cutting into solid rock and building up an edifice soaring into the everlasting beauty of Gothic architecture.

Little houses and shops clustered round its base, displaying curios of all kinds; bits of Quimper pottery, pictures of the abbey, and all the odds and ends dear to tourists' hearts. At high tide the sea surrounded the little town, so that it took on an unearthly, mirage-like radiance.

We gave a good report to Marquise when we got back, and the plan materialized. Biddy, hearing the news in Cape Town, and scenting adventure and sunlit lawns with red-and-yellow sunshades, could not have been quicker in joining the other two. After Tuk's matriculation at St. Paul's she spent six months with them before coming back to us at the Cape.

Unfortunately the scheme ended badly, and Marquise and Biddy returned to Cape Town sadder and wiser women.

Highlights of a different kind included Pavlova, light as thistledown, floating across the stage at Covent Garden as the 'Swan'; Kreisler, charged with characteristic electricity, and Heifetz leaving one breathless by the perfection of his technique.

The last treat was when I was taken to Wimbledon to see the French tennis stars—Suzanne Lenglen, as light on her toes as Pavlova, and Borotra, agile as a monkey but far more graceful. I saw him in the tournaments at Rondebosch when he came with a team to South Africa the following year—1926—the same little black beret on his head.

Time was rushing on, and after I had seen Tuk and Biddy off to France I sped back to No. 10 at Queen's Gardens to hurry on with my packing. I never had a more exhausting job than that. Bunty had allowed me to store all my big luggage—wardrobe trunk, cabin trunk and other things—in her basement, and the gruelling journeys up and down those hundreds of steps from my flat on the fourth floor carrying down things that had to be packed (and taking back those I had brought down by mistake and would want again before I sailed) have left a memory of an unending nightmare.

Charles came to see me off at Waterloo station. Fortunately, we had an hour and a half to spare before my train left, for with a sudden spasm came the realization that I had left my violin at Queen's Gardens. Charles rushed back—he was a good sprinter—and brought it to me in time.

That was not the end of the nightmare. As soon as the *Arundel* steamed out of Southampton I went to my cabin to

forestall an attack of seasickness by opening up my wardrobe trunk. A frenzied search for my keys in a bag and pockets . . . no sign of them. Reconstructing the last fevered hours in No. 10, I realized that they must have been left in Bunty's basement, where I had picked up the last of my belongings in semi-darkness with the help of one candle.

The ship's carpenter was called in, and for the whole of that voyage my wardrobe trunk stood open with every drawer exposed.

Ellie was living in a private hotel in the suburbs when I got back to Cape Town, and we stayed there for two and a half years.

Our house in Union Street—let for another year—was eventually bought by the owners of the nursing-home, and we decided to wait for something smaller for our next home.

Ellie was teaching again at the College of Music, now taken under the wing of the Cape Town University, and housed in its newly acquired premises at Strubenholm in Rosebank.

I kicked my heels at having nothing to do. Even the pleasure of being taught by Ellie to play bridge did no more than fill up my evenings, or the early parts of them, before he was whisked off to join other 'pukka' players and I was left with the 'also rans'.

But I persevered, hoping for the time when I should graduate. It happened at last, and many were the hours we spent at the game in after years, when I had proudly become Ellie's favourite partner.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

MY Charles had been back from England for some months. His dream of a medical career—fostered by what he had seen and learnt at St. Thomas's Hospital—had to be given up. We had not the means to send him to University. So he dropped back into pharmacy and the carrying on of those endless "4000 hours under a qualified chemist" before he could sit for even the Part One examination.

The grit inherited from his grandparents stood him in good stead. He dispensed prescriptions, made up pills and sold face creams in a chemist's shop until the day when he could no longer stand the slowness of the life. He missed the night classes he had attended in London. He came to tell me that he wished to go back to these. He had found no other way of working his passage except as a fireman on one of the mail boats . . .

Of course I vetoed the mere idea: it would injure his health.

"Mother, you are thwarting me!" I denied that. I said I would find ways and means for him to go if he wished, but it must not be as a fireman.

I went to the Union Castle office and saw the head, Mr. Pargiter. In him I found another of the many Good Samaritans in my life. The interview ended with his giving Charles a passage in the *Arundel* as a seaman at one shilling for the voyage. His duties might include painting on the deck—did I object to that? Certainly not . . .

Ermyn and I saw him off. We tipped his steward, I gave him my blessing plus £20 and he had a cabin to himself, took part in all the sports—he was elected chairman of the committee—

was never called upon to do a hand's turn of work, and landed (as seaman, but minus the 'shilling-for-the-voyage') with no dock dues to pay.

He tramped the streets of London for five days before he found work, preferring to paddle his own canoe before looking up his old friends. How he came to win his Pharmacy degree (M.P.S.) and the scholarship after that which gave him three years at University College in London, and a B.Sc. degree which has led to a successful industrial career, should come into his own biography.

Meanwhile, Tuk had also come home. Though she had left St. Paul's with flying colours she longed for another year where she had spent the happiest time of her life. Education was the height of her ambition, the only thing worth working for, and if we could have afforded it she would have had that extra year.

She took up journalism and after a spell blossomed, as V. M. FitzRoy, into writing four books of personal experiences and a fifth, *Dark Bright Land*, of South African historical biography.

Perhaps when the time comes for writing her autobiography she will have something to say about her development in the last three or four years as a watercolour painter . . .

I was at a loose end—Ellie then leading the S.A.B.C. studio orchestra—when I was offered the leadership of the orchestra at the Opera House, the same old place I had played in during the Holloway tour, all those years before. Leonard Rayne was still the lessee, and dramatic companies sponsored by African Consolidated Theatres were constantly having seasons there, an orchestra always in demand for the entr'actes.

I look back to those days with immense satisfaction. In addition to earning a very good salary, I saw any number of interesting plays and shows. I watched Sybil Thorndike night after night through *St. Joan* and other plays; Phyllis Neilson-Terry—lovely as Nell Gwynn—and Athene Seyler. I laughed till I cried every night through George Robey's season; I fell in love with Dame May Whitty for her incomparable acting when she played second fiddle to Zena Dare—who, beautiful as she was, could not hold a candle to her—and was furious when my basket of flowers went to her in the wings because she was only a 'supporting' artist.

I even relished the variety shows, Christmas pantomimes and revues with all their fun and sparkle and utter nonsense . . .

Helen Fanning was often the 'cellist at those shows, and on the bus going home we would giggle over the snobs among our acquaintances who had looked quickly away from the orchestra pit as they swept into their stage boxes.

Entertainment of quite a different kind turned up when Jewish companies came along with their operas. These consisted of numerous songs and choruses interlarded with a vast amount of swift dialogue—in Yiddish—and Helen and I had our work cut out to watch the conductor-pianist (who travelled with the company) for our cues. At a rehearsal once, Helen found her part for a chorus missing from her desk. (All were in manuscript on separate sheets.)

"Never mind", said the harassed pianist, "*play*—it's in F minor!" The actors invariably quarrelled violently during rehearsals, the prima donna often running off the stage in floods of tears and returning only after the entire company had gathered round to pacify her.

On the opening night of the first of these shows I could not understand why so much noise was being permitted as soon as the curtain went up. A stream of talk almost drowned what was going on on the stage. I left my seat to report it to the stage manager and, making my way out of the pit, I saw a pair of feet on a box. My eyes followed these up to their owner and then I found he was the prompter, standing with a wooden canopy over his head, well above the footlights, but hidden from the audience, gabbling every word in advance to every actor on the stage.

No wonder, I thought, you can put on a fresh opera every night!

Once I had to play solos in the wings for the hero, a supposed-to-be violinist. He was very tall and he hovered over me. I would stand like a runner waiting for the tape to fall till he, or someone else, hissed "PLAY!", and then dash into the Hebrew Melody and go on until someone shushed me out of it. I used to feel like a cat with water dripping on its back till I escaped to my legitimate seat in the orchestra.

We had to play during a dialogue one night. It might have turned tragedy into farce, because we were warming the music up quite cheerfully when the stage manager put his head round the door, his teeth showing in a positive grin of fury as he growled, "Mel-o-DRA-ma!"

Those Opera House days came to an end at last. The Talkies arrived to oust the theatrical companies.

Eventually the place that had held so many happy memories for theatre-loving Cape Town was demolished, brick by brick. Where once it stood busy people now hurry to and fro, buying stamps, posting letters, parcels, sending telegrams, paying accounts . . . the daily round of a G.P.O.

One day in 1926 Ellie said: "Why don't you take a concert party round to start music clubs?" He, too, had been impressed

by the scheme. I leapt at the suggestion. I was burning to test André Mangeot's plan of federated music clubs, and had already written to the *Cape Times* putting forward the idea.

Eventually I set out with Pattie Price (singing artless English songs again); Adelaide Newman (now in the top rank of pianists in South Africa, but only a talented young student then), and André Theunissen, a charming and very promising pupil of Ellie's.

André's father mapped out the tour and gave me invaluable tips in copperplate handwriting in a little notebook which I took everywhere. Ellie, who had toured South Africa many times from end to end, poured out information and advice, and finally pressed a cheque for ten pounds on me "in case you find yourselves stranded anywhere"—a caustic reminder of what South African concert touring can mean. (I brought it triumphantly home afterwards and have treasured it ever since.)

To save printing costs we had one programme for each town on the tour. In addition to their solos the three girls ended with a screamingly funny musical skit on Wagner. My share of the undertaking was its management, a talk on music clubs before the interval, and all the accompaniments.

We had a very jolly time, and found so much enthusiasm that clubs sprang up like mushrooms in every place we visited—Swellendam, Heidelberg, Riversdale, Mossel Bay, George, Knysna and Oudtshoorn. Then to Worcester, De Aar, Beaufort West, Kimberley, Bloemfontein and even little Laingsburg, on the way home.

I asked for members to enrol and for One Live Wire who would act as secretary and come round to the artists' room after the concert to see me about it. Sure enough, those rooms were abuzz with 'live wires' in every town, clamouring for music to be brought to their doors; instantaneous response showed how starved all those places were then.

We began in a tiny place, tiny hall, tiny audience and a five pound note towards our expenses. That was at Swellendam, where I had a repetition of my nightmare that last day in London.

I travelled with a yale-locked wardrobe trunk, and as I finished dressing for the concert I banged it shut with my evening shoes inside, and the key as well. The hotel proprietor—his name was Stafford—came to my rescue, but it meant taking the hinges off the trunk and the rough screws afterwards never looked so well.

At the Riversdale hotel I saw an extraordinary thing—in the sitting-room every picture was in perfect alignment. I found that the pictures, the frames, the cords suspending them and

even a letter tucked behind a frame (with a fly on it) were painted in absolute detail on the very wall.

I was told that this amazing exhibition had been accepted by the proprietor from a down-and-out artist unable to pay his bill.

Knysna in those days—1926—was even more primitive than Swellendam in regard to concerts. I could not find anyone to take tickets and money at the door, so—leaving Pattie and Adelaide to hold the fort at the piano—I held the door against would-be gate-crashers and sat at the receipt of custom till it was time for my talk.

It was almost as bad at Cradock (where I went later with May Mukle.) Arriving at the hall in advance of the others, I saw a gathering audience waiting patiently at an empty box-office. I was trying to cope with selling tickets and counting change—I was not good at the job—when the mayor turned up with his wife and a party of friends in full evening dress. He was another of the many 'bricks' I met on those tours. He took over and sold tickets until the doors were closed.

There were great times on those first little tours!

When we got back to Cape Town I was so encouraged by our success that I set about getting the music club scheme started as soon as possible. My two previous ventures of the same kind determined me to get a good committee behind me before I did anything else.

'Daddy' Bell—he was never spoken of as Professor—'Pick' and a number of other influential people became interested, and we had a meeting with a lot of encouraging talk. The upshot was that I was elected Organizing Secretary (salary nebulous) of The Federated Music Clubs of South Africa, with Mr. F. B. Morris (Secretary of the Cape Hospital Board) as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer. More meetings were held, and (the 'influentials' having given us their blessing) the work was relegated to Mr. Morris and me. He—kind man—was invaluable for his orderly keeping of minutes and all the tiresome details of business management, but he had his hands full with his own work, so bit by bit I had to carry on as well as I could by myself.

I felt rather like the apprentice in the Dukas piece who tried his hand at magic while his master, the magician, was away—and got swamped with floods of water.

Gisèle Rice at last came to my rescue. I had met her first at Beaufort West, where she was a member of our music club there. She and her husband were farming in the district. Now they had come to live in Cape Town and she was blessedly free and anxious to help in the good cause of music. She was one of

the most efficient young women it has ever been my luck to meet.

She was, in addition, an engaging creature, slim and dainty, with pretty French ways which rough life on a farm had done little to wear away. I was attracted to her at first sight. I felt there must be a romantic background to that gay facade. As our friendship grew she told me her story.

She was the only daughter of the Comte and Comtesse de Neuilly, whose deaths left her, at seventeen, the last descendant of an ancient family of French nobility, for her only brother had died young, and there were no male relatives. French custom prohibits a woman—even a Duke's daughter—from inheriting a title, so she was simply Mademoiselle de Neuilly until she married.

"To prevent a name from becoming extinct, however", Gisèle said, "a daughter has the right to hand over the name and title to her male descendants. I have given my name to my two sons, who are de Neuilly Rice (when they remember to use it, although Geoffrey is anxious to carry on). I have advised them not to adopt the 'Comte' part. Such a thing would be a little incongruous in this country, and would want the accompanying money and way of living".

After working hard at "doing my Baccalaureat at the Sorbonne", fate sent Gisèle on secretarial war work in London. There, in a hospital in 1919, she met a young South African, Vincent Rice, of the North Somerset Yeomanry, who had been wounded on the Somme. A lightning courtship ended in their wedding a few weeks later and their voyage to the Cape six months afterwards.

"How did you come by your love of music?" I asked her.

"My grandmother was a musician—she studied with Clara Schumann—and I always had music in my home."

We did all the federation's work by ourselves, wading through correspondence—some from all parts of the world as our organisation became known—poring over railway timetables and working out schedules for the tours. It was hard going sometimes to make the jigsaw puzzles come right; so many of the clubs wanted the same day of the week (Friday was the favourite); some trains did not run on Sundays, others in the country started at impossible hours. Countless things had to be considered and thrashed out—like crossword puzzles, but not so entertaining.

The clubs could afford only small fees then, and the ten per cent commission which Gisèle and I shared generally amounted to one pound each per concert. My fee for managing, playing the accompaniments and giving the talks on tour was precisely

one pound. We smiled when reports reached us that we were making 'pots of money'.

May Mukle was the first English artist to tour the clubs. She was, and is, one of those comfortable people who take things as they come—always cheerful and jolly, an ideal travelling companion. May's two supporting artists—a soprano and tenor —were local products, and I, as usual, was the manager and accompanist.

We gave concerts and talks in fresh towns and started new clubs; Somerset East and Bedford in the Eastern Province; Cradock again, where May and I nearly disgraced ourselves by having a fit of giggles while she was playing an encore. It was a Berceuse, and as we neared the end—shushing the baby to sleep—a terrific wailing shriek rose and fell through the hall, lasting till we got off the platform and fell into each other's arms. What could it mean? In the interval they told us— "The nine o'clock curfew siren for the Natives to leave the streets".

In Pretoria May sent a letter of introduction to General Smuts at Irene. It was from the Robertson-Scotts at Idbury (where Tuk and I spent that Easter holiday.) An invitation came in due course to have tea at Irene. We jumped at it; it would be the highlight of our tour.

'Oupa' and 'Ouma' were more than kind to us, so friendly and simple. He was dressed in his favourite khaki shirt and shorts, she—as always—in plain black. We listened to 'Oupa's' illuminating remarks on many topics, drinking in every word. Finally, coming down to earth and our level, and focussing May with those searching blue eyes, he said:

"You play the violin, don't you?"

May, internationally known as one of the first fine women 'cellists of her day, murmured modestly, "No, I play the 'cello."

"And what", said 'Ouma', "is the difference between a violin and a 'cello?"

It reduced May and me (who had spent our lives at our instruments) to a feeling of utter insignificance. What *ants* we must appear to these great scholars!

On another tour Ellie was the star, with Mildred Korelstein (who shortly afterwards became Mrs. Charles Bloch) and Leonard Burchell (a fine tenor) as supporting artists.

We had a narrow squeak to catch our train once, after a concert at Somerset East. We were going on to Port Elizabeth, and a kind friend volunteered to motor us to the junction at Cookhouse, about twenty miles away. It was a fearsome experience. The driver was one of those venturesome spirits who

go forward to win at all costs, and we had very little time. In a fine new car on smooth roads we could have done the journey comfortably, but in his old Ford swooping round corners over ruts and stones Mildred and I, sitting at the back, felt that our last hour had come. I just escaped having my front teeth knocked out; Mildred, suddenly shooting up to the roof of the car, got a great bump across the bridge of her nose. It was red and swollen when we boarded the train—which we mercifully caught—but she had two lovely black eyes in the morning, and we could hardly persuade her to sing at the concert that night. She made me go on to tell the audience she had not been fighting.

It was gratifying to find on each of those successive tours an active ladies' committee in every town running round to see to our comfort. They dusted the piano, put flowers in the hall, and arranged refreshments during the intervals. It was so pleasant and restful after the initial experiences, when we had had to see to everything ourselves. There were places on the first tour that had not had a concert in ten years or more, where one chair and a table would be available for the 'artists' room,' plus newspapers spread on the steps to the platform.

As time went on we were even met at the stations, and made to feel like Royalty by the warmth of the welcome.

On a later tour with Ellie we had Cecilia Wessels as the star, taking the clubs by storm with the rich beauty of her voice. She well deserves her reputation of being South Africa's most celebrated singer.

More clubs were inaugurated on that tour, but what I remember most clearly was the game of rummy Cecilia, Ellie and I played, sitting on fruit boxes at Rosmead junction, waiting hour after hour in the middle of the night for the train to the Cape.

On one of those seven tours—1926-28—I had a big, burly English tenor. What an imposing figure he was in his plus fours, golf cap and fur-lined overcoat! A small Coloured boy, catching sight of him in the doorway of a hotel, looked up the length and breadth of him and breathed, "Are *you* the concert?"

He was a fractious person and gave me no end of trouble. His fee did not permit of engaging more than one assisting artist, so I chose André Theunissen again as violinist.

Graaff-Reinet had come into the fold by that time. I had dear friends there—the Wileys—who provided hospitality on each of our visits. We arrived on the day of the concert and a large party had been invited to meet us for a late tea. My tenor, who had a good appetite, did himself proud over scones, anchovy toast and cakes of all descriptions, then at six o'clock

he went back to his hotel for the early supper singers must have if they want to do themselves justice in the evening.

Unfortunately he was given hard-boiled eggs, and when I got to the artists' room I found him thumping his chest in evident discomfort. However, he went through the programme.

Our next date was Cradock the following night, and we had to pack and change after the concert to catch our train. It was to leave at four in the morning, but as it was already in the station our host drove us there at midnight so that we could settle into our compartments.

I shall draw a discreet veil over what happened to our tenor in the interval before we left for the train, though it made a great impression on the lookers-on. He was a sick and sorry man through the weary hours next day, and I tended him carefully as we travelled in an open truck in clouds of dust on a goods train to Cradock. I fed him on boiled water—nothing to eat—until the evening, and made him swallow two raw eggs for supper.

He excelled himself at the concert that night.

It was on this tour that I had a sudden jolt as I was dressing for a concert. I had Mother's modest store of jewellery in a little canvas bag at the bottom of a small suitcase I always carried. Though I usually wear little jewellery I thought it was safer there than at the private hotel where we lived in Cape Town.

At Knysna I chose a frock with which I always wore a certain brooch. When I went to the suitcase, the canvas bag was missing. What could have happened? I had made a point of carrying the case myself, and never lost sight of it.

A flash of memory reminded me that I had worn the brooch at Cradock and that in the hurry of going to the concert, I had hidden the bag at the top of the wardrobe in my hotel bedroom.

A desperate telegram went next morning to the club secretary at Cradock, Geoffrey Blyth, an old College of Music pupil of mine:

"Please recover jewellery top of wardrobe number forty-eight". His reply reached me at the next town: "You are lucky".

Towards the end of those three years, I had an uncomfortable time with a German violinist and his 'cellist wife who had come from Europe to explore the possibility of making a living in South Africa. He was a cantankerous man and both made peevish remarks at every turn. I was the scapegoat for everything that went wrong; small audiences, bad weather and so on, and I was heartily glad when we parted.

There was only one bright spot on that tour, when the

Governor-General, the Earl of Athlone, and Princess Alice attended our concert in Pretoria. My 'talk' must have interested them, for a pleasant thing happened a year later at Government House in Cape Town when Ellie was playing at a small affair to entertain a Royal guest. As I sat down to accompany him the Governor-General moved across the great room to my side and said, "Did you ever get any response to that talk on music clubs you gave in Pretoria?"

His remembering it amazed and gratified me; more than ever so a few months after, when the Comptroller of the Household telephoned to say that His Excellency would be pleased to give his patronage to my scheme if I cared to apply for it.

The time arrived at last when Gisèle and I had to admit that the work of managing the tours was proving too much for us. A federation of that kind must, to work smoothly, have one object in view. As long as all the clubs accepted the same artists all went well; but when some wanted South Africans and others would only have artists from oversea, everything became hopelessly demoralized.

Apart from ever-increasing correspondence with the clubs themselves, letters came from agents and artists all over the world, and these had to be attended to. Neither of us was in a position to carry on indefinitely at a fulltime job—as it now was—without adequate remuneration, and there was no source from which this could come.

We threw in the sponge sadly and reluctantly, for we knew that without organizers the concerts would come to an end. Most of them did. Of the twenty-eight clubs originally started, only those at Stellenbosch, Worcester, Grahamstown, Umtata and Queenstown survived.

However, the Music Club movement is now certainly taking hold in the Union.

I was delighted recently to meet again Dr. F. C. L. Bosman, to whom I sold my Wenning picture all those years ago. Living now in Pretoria, he is Chairman of the South African Music Council which controls the new chain of Federated Music Clubs, inaugurated some years ago. It was inspired by the work of that music-loving businessman, Mr. B. Smulian of Port Elizabeth, in sending concert parties to different towns in the Eastern Province.

Now linked together, the Clubs are served by the Music Council's representatives: Mr. Smulian for the Eastern Province and Mrs. Elise Cremers-Gabriel—another indefatigable worker—for the Western Cape.

Conditions are easier since the days when Gisèle and I tore our hair over the jigsaw puzzles of railway timetables and the

difficulties of choosing artists to suit all the clubs. Motor transport is more available, and the steady influx of international artists into South Africa seems to have solved the other problem.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

AFTER the collapse of the original Federated Music Clubs, a fresh interest came into our lives.

Tuk, well established as a journalist, became engaged to be married to FitzRoy du Toit. After a prolonged period of bottom-drawer activities and a hectic rush towards the end, they were married from the house we then occupied at Claremont.

It was a jolly little wedding. Elsie Hall and Ellie played at the church; Jenny Sonnenberg—the South African contralto who afterwards married and went to live in London—sang at the reception, and as a final flourish, Pick and his bassoon joined Elsie at the piano with a cheery gang playing that once popular medley of old favourite tunes, 'Melodious Memories'.

The happy pair went off in our newly acquired Baby Austin, the first highly prized car in our subsequent succession of six, and Ellie and I were left to sweep up the confetti and kick our heels in trains and buses till they came back from their honeymoon.

We motored now in comfort on tours of our own. No more feverish rushes to catch trains after breakfast; endless waits on station platforms at country junctions; having to spend the night at a place because no trains were available . . .

These tours were more like pleasure trips for the joy it was to plan our day—picknicking in one lovely spot after another—without being tied to a time-table.

Gladys Roper (wife of Edward, who climbed afterwards to the top of his legal profession as K.C. and Judge) was our singer on several of those tours, charming everyone with her

lovely voice and pretty face. She and I distinguished ourselves in one little town, before that unknown to us all. At our first concert, Ellie came back to give an encore after the solo which opened the programme. As I sat down to accompany him my chair collapsed under me, its legs as spread-eagled as mine were. How to rise gracefully with high heels on a polished floor? I didn't. I just remained as I was and looked at the audience. . . "Thank you for your welcome!" I said, and that broke the ice for me as well as the audience. The burst of laughter went on till Ellie, fiddle and bow in one hand, pulled me to my feet.

Gladys's contretemps came early next morning. She came to our room with bated breath to tell us she had found a number of red insects in her bed. The look of horror on her face left us in no doubt. Ellie reported the matter to the landlord who undertook to have the room fumigated forthwith. We left immediately after breakfast, glad to get away. At the next town, the very same thing happened. Ellie and I went to investigate. The small red specks were plainly visible but—they were lifeless. Ellie traced them to their origin. Gladys had a new pair of red bedroom slippers; the fluffy pom-poms adorning them were shedding tiny spots . . . (We never dared to go back to that town.)

Meanwhile, Charles, heading for a career in bio-chemistry, and working in Crookes's Laboratories in London, was begging us to visit him, so Ellie and I decided to join professors and students of the University in a 1933-34 Christmas trip on the *Warwick Castle*.

We arrived at Southampton on Christmas Day, and Jim was at Waterloo station with Charles to meet us. We were escorted to Charles's flat in Sloane Street—an imposing address. The 'flat' turned out to be an abode over a smart chemist's shop, the use of which he had acquired in exchange for services when the shop was closed. That is, he had undertaken to answer urgent calls after hours and to make up prescriptions in the dead of night when required by privileged Harley Street doctors. It seemed a convenient proposition for both sides, salary saving on the one and rent saving on the other.

But Charles had most of the snags. The 'flat' was one of the most godforsaken dwellings I ever encountered. You made your way to it through a dim passage skirting the shop on the ground floor, and crawled up a winding old-fashioned stair to a dressmaker's establishment. Shunning this you crept further up till you arrived at a sitting-room leading off another fitted with a gas stove, dresser and sink—the kitchen. These belonged to Charles.

Continuing up the stair, you came to a private lair of the

dressmaker, and now, thoroughly discouraged, you climbed to the top of the building where Charles had three fog-begrimed, dreary bedrooms. There was no bathroom; you had to be thankful for the sink with running water in the kitchen and a handbasin in your own room. I tumbled to the reason for Charles's habit—airily mentioned in one of his letters—of having a shower every day at work.

Ellie and I managed to see and do quite a lot during that visit. One play we nearly missed, however, was *Escape Me Never*, the rage just then, with Elisabeth Bergner, the German actress, taking London by storm. We found at the theatre that I had left the tickets at home. Ellie wanted to bow his head to the bad luck, but I rebelled. I trusted to a Londoner's pity for a poor mutt of a South African, and went to the girl in the box-office. Sure enough, she was sympathetic, but she was cautious enough to make us wait until no one else came to claim our seats—fortunately, I remembered their numbers—before having us shown into the dress circle.

Time was too short for all we wanted to do; visits to Jim and Nellie at Anerley and others elsewhere. A 'must' was one to May Mukle in the M.M. (Mainly Musicians) Club she had founded two years before in a basement in Argyle Street. She told me the story over a cup of tea in the quaint dining-room which was also a sitting-room.

One of her tours had been cancelled and she had to think of something else to do. (May never waits for things to happen, and there was a span of three months ahead.)

Clothes?—But May has no flair for them other than the knack of dressing her gipsy personality to best advantage.

Beauty Culture?—Alas, May has never used a lipstick in her life, and would not know how to begin to pluck an eyebrow.

Wait! (a brain-wave)—FOOD!—In two strides she was at her telephone, where she remained for the day, ringing up her friends. (Legion.)

"I am going to have lunches in my studio every day," she said, "I shall cook them myself and the food will be simple and wholesome and you can have coffee and a cigarette thrown in—for two shillings; but you will have to go at three o'clock."

May is an experienced cook—she has not picked up recipes all over the world for nothing—and everyone said yes, rapturously.

"What did you do about engagements?"

"Oh, I got someone in to attend to the lunches when I had to play."

That went on for nearly a year. Her studio sometimes held as

many as seventeen people at a time, and when they were through with the business of eating they took to playing the piano and instruments they brought with them.

And so the M.M. Club came into being; a central place where musicians and their ilk could feed at a reasonable price and eat after concerts. A committee was formed; money freely subscribed; a constitution drawn up—how familiar it all sounded!—and the annual subscription fixed at the nominal sum of five shillings.

When the first thousand members had joined—eight hundred personally known to May—it was decided to double the amount.

The club was thrown open on October 12, 1933. It was a good date, for Beecham was conducting the first Philharmonic concert of the season with Szigeti playing a violin concerto, and they both came to drink to the club's success. Only five hundred of the members were able to come that night, but they made merry till midnight. May herself retired to bed at 4 a.m., for three-and-a-half hours' rest before broadcasting to Australia.

"What did you play?"

"Oh, a few *br-r-right* pieces!"

We called on Jan Juta, the artist son of Sir Henry and Lady Juta of Cape Town, at whose house we had met many years previously.

He was living in one of those flats in what was originally a mews behind a Queen's Gate mansion. It combined comfort and convenience with artistic taste.

He was a good talker and we chatted animatedly for an hour about old associations in Cape Town when his talent had seemed to point to a musical career. But he had given that up for art study in London, Rome and Paris, plus architecture in New York, and had been acclaimed for his designs in metal cut into glass and for his mural decorations. He was busy just then on a series of panels commissioned for South Africa House.

Ellie and I were in the last week of our twenty days when we met an old friend in the Strand—that happy hunting ground for South Africans. He was the managing director of H.M.V., Mr. Sheard, who during our previous visit had taken us over the old works and studios at Hayes in Middlesex, when Ellie made a record on a violin lent him by Spencer Dyke, a professor at the R.A.M.

He offered to let us go over the new premises at St. John's Wood, and it surprised us to find that from the street the place looked exactly as it must have done for many years. Crossing the threshold, we felt a change of atmosphere. Two men darted forward from a sentry box, politely asking our business, and had

our credentials not been forthcoming we should not have seen more of the building.

After a guide had shown us some of the technical processes—no doubt vastly improved nowadays—we came to the most interesting room of all, where the operator—the man who makes or mars a record—was busy. The wax disc was ready, sapphire needle suspended, and the little in-sucking pipe was ready next to it to draw in the fairy ribbon made as the needle went on its round. Perfection of movement by the motor was controlled by a weight hanging by a wire from the ceiling—the old clock principle. I did not see this as I stood underneath, for I was listening to someone singing in the adjoining studio, and had I not been pushed aside the pendulum would have landed on my head with a bump.

"Why a sapphire needle?" I asked.

Because it is less brittle than a diamond, its point the thousandth part of an inch. Cutting and polishing those needles was one man's full-time job. In their natural state, the stones were dull, uninteresting things—I much preferred the uncut diamonds I had seen at Kimberley.

There were four microphones at that time in the great studio where orchestral items were recorded; the corrugated walls—surfaces running in peculiar angles—and the ceiling, canvas crossed with wooden panels and mouldings, were all designed for perfecting sound transmission.

We were beginning to think we had absorbed enough for one afternoon when Mr. Sheard asked if we would like to hear Gracie Fields recording. We stole in like mice. She was standing before a microphone, the Mayfair Orchestra—Ray Noble conducting—supporting her. They were discussing an accompaniment. A guitar thrummed a few chords . . . Noble suggested something at the piano . . . Gracie, unconcerned, left it to them. Presently, a stiffening to attention before the red light flashed on, and away went the guitar with Gracie a close second. Too close; she flung up her arms and whistled.

That whistle broke in another four times before Gracie, looking like business for the first time, signed for the red light to go on again. (I was beginning to hum the song to myself, about rainbows making "a Sunday frock for me-e-e!")

This time her performance was electrical. We were hearing the Gracie Fields who was the darling of the public, the best paid artist in England.

She came to Cape Town two years later, and I had the pleasure of interviewing her in her dressing-room at the old Opera House. She was at the mirror, making herself up for the matinée. No woman ever went about it in quite so detached and

impersonal a manner. Her method demonstrated a complete lack of vanity.

All her movements were graceful and impulsive, and—as on the stage—she talked very disjointedly in telling me how it was that she became, at fifteen, a comedienne. Before that, if you please, she had been singing 'straight' songs. One night she criticized a fellow artist who did impersonations, and he challenged her to do better. She took him at his word and he said, "That is what *you* should do, it's marvellous!"

But she was timid, and her first laugh in public reduced her to tears . . .

I reminded her of the photograph she sent me in London (when I wrote to her after that day at H.M.V.) and told her how my Coloured maid said, "How lovely Madam looks in that photograph!" (And when I said it was not mine), "But it's got Madam's name on it!"

Also exciting on that trip was our visit to Birmingham to fetch our new car—ordered in Cape Town—from the Austin factory. We were shown over the huge place, seven miles out of Birmingham, where hundreds of cars were being turned out every week, and where we gasped on reaching the biggest shed, to see it filled with row upon row of shining new Austins.

We crept out timidly in our own treasure and, overcoming nervousness, revelled in a delightful drive to London via Stratford-on-Avon—visiting the beautiful new theatre—and Banbury, where we lunched and bought cakes and looked at the Cross of childhood's memory. We learnt that the original had been destroyed in the religious riots of 1602. At the base, figures in plaster of Queen Victoria, King Edward VII and King George V seemed oddly out of place in that spot of antiquity.

Before leaving Birmingham, we called on Leslie Heward and his wife in their charming little flat and had a long talk over old days in Cape Town. We just missed hearing him conduct the B.B.C. Orchestra in London on the night we sailed for the Cape.

A meeting with Eric Bray—who had been in the B.B.C. Orchestra since he left the Cape Town Orchestra—brought about the pleasure of attending one of Sir Thomas Beecham's rehearsals at the Queen's Hall. We sat in the Grand Circle, just over his head. The great man was courtesy and graciousness personified. His mood—Eric Bray told us later—was changed the next morning. He rated the orchestra soundly; they did nothing right; he proposed sacking the lot and getting an entirely new set of players . . .

Two incidents on the voyage home in the *Carnarvon Castle*

stand out in my memory. Prince George, soon afterwards Duke of Kent, was a passenger, and was seen off by his brother Edward, the then Prince of Wales. We were in the tourist class with the professors and students of the U.C.T. A young teacher who was a born mountaineer terrified us all by disappearing out of portholes, and climbing up the mast. One night he sampled the mast in the first class section, and was hailed by the night watchman to "Come out of that!" He replied quietly, "I am Prince George", climbed to the top and, coming down, marched coolly out of sight. The watchman was taken in; it was early in the voyage and the Prince had not moved about.

But in the tropics His Royal Highness once went for a midnight stroll to the far end of the ship, pyjama coat slung over his arm. Returning after half an hour, a voice behind him cried, "Here! you people from the third class can't come over here!" Royalty bowed politely and tried the other side of the deck. The man, now very angry, followed him. "Didn't you hear? Get out of here or there will be trouble!"

"I am Prince George!" was the mild reply.

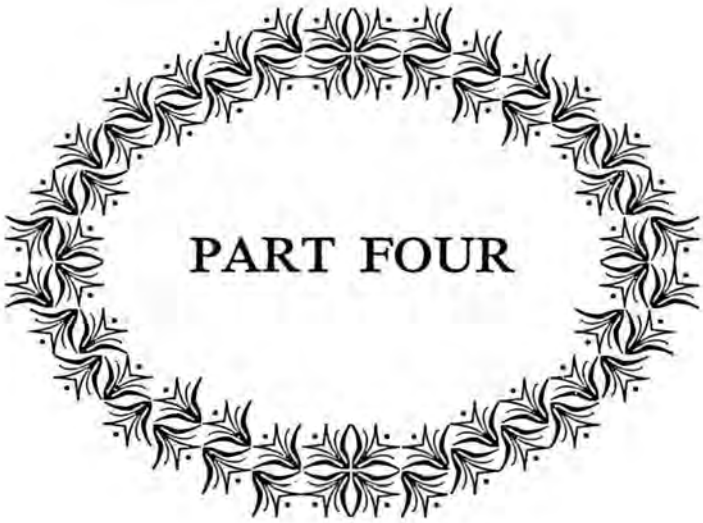
"I've heard that yarn before; come on now, GET OUT!"

The Prince, relating the joke with immense gusto, said he escaped by going below.

The other incident was the story an old sailor told me.

"I was on the *Titanic* when she went down", he said. He had been one of the six quartermasters on the ill-fated vessel, the world's most powerful and most beautiful at that time. The Captain, E. J. Smith, had just retired after 45 years of distinguished service, and as a mark of signal esteem, had been entrusted with the honour of taking the *Titanic* on her maiden voyage. The Chief Officer, too, was going for the last time in that capacity, having just received his Master's certificate. He would have been captain of his own ship on the next trip.

The story of the tragedy is too well known to repeat, but it was deeply moving to hear it from the lips of a survivor, who was saved by being put in charge of one of the twenty life-boats holding 58 people. He gave me the exact figures: 710 saved. 1,642 lost.



PART FOUR

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

A FRIEND in Durban —in 1933, I think—foretold what the future interest in my life would be. He was Alan Reid, a lawyer, and also one of the most versatile people I ever met. He was an excellent pianist and played the violin almost as well. Other hobbies were astrology and numerology. He was extraordinarily successful in predicting changes in peoples' lives. He told me I was about to take up something I had never done before, and that I had another good ten years of work ahead of me . . .

On the voyage home in 1934, with Ellie playing bridge incessantly in the smoking-room, I turned to writing articles. These were published in Cape Town newspapers. The first, about the *Titanic*, I sent to the *Cape Times*, and it appeared just after the anniversary of the tragedy, on April 14.

An interview with Harold Samuel, the pianist, started a succession of others with visiting celebrities, among them Galli-Curci, the famous coloratura soprano. How well I remember taking her a huge bunch of Iceland poppies and curtseying to her, by way of showing that I, too, was a musician, anxious to do her honour, and how instantly she dropped formality in talking to the Press!

Those interviews with international artists went on year after year, varied by others with musicians taking up posts in South Africa, and book reviews and occasional articles. The absorbing work and the privilege of meeting famous people culminated in the last—and in many ways the most interesting —period of my life.

This was music criticism, which began with a request from the late J. G. ('Jimmy') McQuade of the *Cape Times* to write a report on Benno Moseiwitsch's first recital in Cape Town in 1935.

Poor Benno! At a reception held in his honour by Cecilia Wessels, he was the victim of two of those remarks some women blurt out through sheer nervousness. One bright creature reminded him of a concert at which she had heard him play in Paris . . . "You know . . . the time you forgot in that Chopin piece!"

Another chimed in, "Oh, Mr. *Moskovitch*, you are the *only* pianist who has ever given me a thrill!

Jimmy McQuade was my first chief. Since then, as regular *Cape Times* music critic, I have been 'bossed' by at least a dozen —among them Anthony Hamilton, Dereck Drabble and Louis Wiid—before the most versatile and efficient of them all came into power in 1940—Ivor Jones, present editor of the entertainments page.

The fullest period in my 25 years as a critic was between 1938 and 1955, when, in addition to ordinary classical concert routine, every variety of musical entertainment came as grist to my mill—school concerts and musical comedies; College of Music concerts; variety entertainments; musical films; operatic productions at the Little Theatre and elsewhere; oratorios and organ recitals; lunch hour concerts; musical comedies by the Gilbert and Sullivan Society; Eoan Group shows—and latterly their operas—and last but not least, 'pukka' Italian opera seasons, sponsored by African Consolidated Theatres and brought about by Alex Cherniavsky, the impresario, younger brother of the pioneering trio in the early 1900s, Leo, Jan and Mischel.

I look back on my work in those seasons at the Alhambra Theatre of 1951, '53 and '55 as the most strenuous and nerve-wracking of all. With sometimes six first nights, changes of cast and matinees in a week, it was always a rush—my car sometimes late in picking me up at the stage door—to get back in time to write at the *Cape Times*.

One night, after *Carmen*, David Castle (a very important member of the editorial staff) found me scribbling furiously at 12 o'clock.

"What are you up to, Mrs. Marx?" he said.

It was the last straw. I left him to deal with my unfinished report, and fled . . .

Among celebrities I interviewed was Francis Brett-Young, together with his wife, Jessica. I had met them first at a friend's house years before in Johannesburg when Jessica (who had had a professional career in London) sang a group of Mahler songs

to her husband's accompaniment. He was an accomplished pianist, and had he not—at a crucial point in his career—taken Sir Henry Wood's advice and given up the idea of adopting music as a profession, "readers of fiction"—as Sir Henry wrote in his *Life of Music*—"might have lost many hours of very interesting reading".

Harold Samuel's fame as a pianist rested on his reputation as the world's foremost authority on Bach. While I was in London in 1925 he gave six consecutive recitals at the Aeolian Hall on alternate afternoons and evenings. Though each was well attended, the last had the biggest audience of all.

During his last visit to Cape Town in 1936 he was engaged to play Bach's D minor concerto at a symphony concert in the City Hall. He was staying with us at the time, and just before going to rehearsal he went to the piano—presumably to refresh his memory. Nothing of the sort. He only wanted to exercise his fingers, and he did it by running twice through Chopin's 'Butterfly' study.

As he sat down to the City Hall piano he turned to the conductor—"How does it begin?"

'Pick' hummed three notes, and off Harold went, note perfect to the end of the concerto.

Early in 1936, during one of the spells when Ellie and I were without a settled home, we accepted an offer from a musical friend, Mrs. J. D. Cartwright, to take over her house for seven months while she went for a trip to England. 'Klein Westerford', in Newlands, was one of those large old-fashioned bungalows—long since demolished—set in beautiful grounds and a garden where roses and other flowers bloomed.

It was in May that Joseph Plaut, the celebrated German singer-entertainer, visited Cape Town for the first time. He had come to South Africa the year before as singer and part-producer with the Carl Rosa Opera Company.

Toni Saphra had often spoken about this famous brother of hers, so we were among the first to welcome him. We gave a big party in our new, spacious home. It was a happy affair, for it coincided with a Welcome Back to Charles, who had returned from London the day before to start his industrial career in Cape Town.

Our guests were all entranced by Joseph's impersonations, recitations and other items, some of which I accompanied at the piano. A few weeks later he put on an inimitable one-man comedy act at the City Hall; a life-like presentation of a village concert, complete with amateur orchestra, singers threading their way through the players as they nodded greetings to their audience, and finishing up with an actual performance by a

'mixed choir' of a Handel chorus from an oratorio.

Joseph's fame soon spread round Cape Town, and I accompanied him for a 'command' evening at Government House.

Lord Clarendon was as captivated by Joseph's art as were others in that select audience of Cabinet Ministers and V.I.Ps. All the same, he had a bit of a shock, sitting in the front row when Joseph, about to sing the 'Star of Eve', suddenly jumped off the little platform and seized a chair to use as his lyre!

But that did not deter him from being his staunch friend thereafter.

War broke out after Joseph's return to England with the Carl Rosa Company and he was interned on the Isle of Wight until, through Lord Clarendon's intervention, he was released and given permission to remain in London as a teacher of singing and voice production. But he found no field there for his art, based as it was entirely on the German language, and after struggling for some years, he made his way back to his home country in 1951.

At 81, he carries on more successfully than ever in radio, TV and his unique one-man entertainments.

Artur Rubinstein was touring the Union in 1939 when his concert at the Alhambra Theatre, Cape Town, clashed with a song recital at the City Hall by the American soprano, Rose Bampton.

The occasion is memorable to me because it was the only time I was able to write reports of two concerts in one evening. Having attended Rubinstein's rehearsal in the morning I dashed round to hear the second half of his programme after listening to the first half of Rose Bampton's recital at the City Hall.

I did not sign my criticisms in those days, so I got away with it.

Rubinstein was most entertaining when I interviewed him. He told me people sometimes asked him if he was related to the "great" Rubinstein . . . "it is so discouraging!"

One of his stories was about an autograph hunter—that pest in the lives of celebrities—who knocked at his bedroom door at six o'clock one morning as he was trying to get a little sleep after a tedious train journey during a strenuous tour in the States. Not content with being put off to 'another time', the man came back not once but twice within the hour. Rubinstein, thoroughly infuriated at last, shouted "GO AWAY!" and slammed the door in his face. Returning to bed, an idea struck him as he saw the man's card on the floor. He picked it up and put it in his pocket.

At 3 a.m., after his recital and an uproarious supper party,

a friend drove him to the autograph hunter's address, where he hammered on the door till an irate figure in a night shirt appeared at a top floor window.

"Now", said Rubinstein, "I am ready to give you my autograph!"

It cannot often have happened that a man has the good fortune to build a monument to himself. But that was what the Polish violinist, Bronislav Huberman did when he founded the Palestine Orchestra—said to be one of the finest in the world. He told me the story during his concert tour of South Africa in May 1940.

When, four years before, famous Jewish musicians were ejected from Germany, Toscanini was so outraged that he sent a cable of protest to Hitler. No reply was forthcoming so Toscanini retaliated by cancelling an engagement to conduct a series of concerts in Bayreuth that season. Huberman, burning with a sense of injustice over the persecution of his race and fellow musicians, went post haste to thank his old friend for his gesture of sympathy and to lay before him the project of starting an orchestra for refugees in Palestine.

"It took Toscanini *two minutes* to make up his mind to help me!" said Huberman proudly. (It would have taken a heart of stone to ignore the passionate warmth of his own enthusiasm.)

Finally it was arranged that the great maestro would not only conduct the first of the new orchestra's concerts, but a whole season of them—twelve in all. It was a princely donation which led to another season of eight concerts the following year. (Toscanini had said "I MUST come again!")

So remarkable was the enthusiasm that spread through Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem, that a subscribers' list of 8,000 concert-goers was drawn up, among them workmen (at cheaper rates), for whom special concerts were given, with the same programmes as those for the richer people.

One of Huberman's stories was about his first meeting with his friend, Artur Rubinstein, when he was seven years old. Little Huberman had already played at several concerts in his birthplace, Warsaw, and his fame made Rubinstein's parents beg for an audition from the prodigy for their little son, aged five. Small Bronislav graciously consented; heard him play; tested his musical knowledge, and finally patted him on the back with a few solemn words of encouragement.

Rubinstein's love for his instrument never wavered. I can see him now, as he spread his fingers to express his preference for polyphony, as compared with the single notes on other instruments. Huberman, on the contrary, regretted having had to turn to the violin because his parents were too poor to buy a piano.

"What!" I exclaimed. "Do you really mean that if it were possible, you would change now?"

"Yes," he said, "if only to play the Brahms B flat!"

An entertainment unique in style was given by Noël Coward when he came to Cape Town on his world tour for ENSA in 1944. I went to his show on three successive nights and was enchanted by his genius as an entertainer. At an interview he gave to press representatives I asked how far his technique went in musical composition. "About as far as from here to there!" (One yard.)

"Then how is your music written?"

"I dictate it to my secretary, sometimes over the phone when I'm in a hurry. I give a note, say A flat, then I sing the melody" —(he hummed a bar)—"and say what sort of harmonies I want. I generally stick to the same kind of modulations and progressions".

It all sounded very simple and straightforward as he rattled it off but—to a musician's ear—unnecessarily complicated.

"I had a bad experience once," he went on. "I was conducting a first night performance and I hadn't rehearsed the overture—no time—so my secretary sat just under me with a large sheet of paper reading out the number of bars in each section to guide me as we went along; eight bars, two beats; ten bars, three, and so on." (The colossal nerve of it!)

"As I held out my arms to begin, I heard a drum roll. *What's that?*" I hissed. "The King!"—and away we sailed into the National Anthem!"

"How are you able to conduct?"

"Well, it's my own music—I'd be floored with anyone else's . . .

"After all," (an upward sweep of the arms), "I am an actor!"

I told him I had seen him act in his play, *The Vortex*, many years before.

"Oh, that was my first big success. It exhausted me, it had such a long run and I had to weep for twenty minutes every night."

A Philistine in the corner said: "How did you manage that? Onions?"

"No, real tears. You forget, I am an actor!"

The late Sir Thomas Beecham had urbanity as his keynote for the concerts he conducted in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town in 1948. He had obviously decided that his pungent wit—so sure in its aim—should not antagonize, so it was well-sheathed during his stay, though it peeped out now and then in its inimitable manner. ("What is that wild-eyed young man over there doing with the cymbals?")

The municipal orchestras were augmented in each centre by those of the S.A.B.C., and though the amalgamations were not ideal, Sir Thomas managed to coax wonderful results from them.

His striking personality was enhanced not only by piercing dark eyes like wells of light under white brows and hair—the pointed imperial a finishing touch—but by the absolute authority marking every inch of his well-groomed figure.

Before his interview with a party of press representatives, we wondered how he would deal with our questions. It was soon decided. He took instant command by asking us to sit round him and by addressing each of us in turn. It was his usual method he said, and it certainly curtailed what might otherwise have been a long-winded affair.

Albert Coates, another great figure in the musical world, came with his wife, Vera de Villiers—the singer of South African birth—to live in Cape Town at the end of December 1946. He had, three months earlier, taken on the conductorship of the Johannesburg Orchestra, but relinquished it because the Transvaal altitude affected his heart. He often appeared as guest conductor with our orchestra, his tall heavily-built figure moving with slow, measured steps to the rostrum, and carrying always the indefinable air clinging to those who have won renown.

He and his wife, eager to produce opera, were soon holding auditions for young singers, and enthusiastically training the most promising. Eventually enough talent was assembled; weekly practices were held in the Y.M.C.A. building, and before long joyous strains of *Hansel and Gretel* were floating down Long Street.

The opera, produced in the City Hall, was the highlight of the year. It set the seal on an experience which I, for one, shall never forget. Mrs. Coates, in addition to sacrificing her looks as the Witch, was the producer. Johanna Uys and Shirley Wilmot were the principals, and Harry Rabinowitz was the Father. Later Elizabeth Clough (a one-time piano pupil of mine) played Hansel—her curls successfully camouflaged under a net. She profited so much by her first operatic experience that she blossomed into a really accomplished soprano in London.

Coates put on several revivals before launching his last two operas. The first—Wagner's *Die Walkure*—was too vast an undertaking for the limited facilities at the City Hall, and his own opera, *Die Kleed van Tafelberg*, commissioned by the Government for the Van Riebeeck Festival, suffered in the same way. Hopes of its being produced at Covent Garden had to be abandoned: The great-hearted composer had worked too long under a severe strain, and he passed away in December of the following year (1953).

Dr. Erik Chisholm was next, after Eric Grant, to be appointed principal of the South African College of Music. He lunched with us at Victoria House in Rondebosch soon after his arrival in 1946, Ellie and I being always happy to welcome new musicians to Cape Town.

There was nothing professorial about the little man who came that day, clad in khaki shirt and shorts that gave him a deceptively youthful look; but there was nothing youthful about him otherwise. His eyes, bespectacled, were like—as I remarked to Ellie afterwards—the headlights of a car, so arresting was the intensity behind his glasses. His nose, uptilted, gave him the pugnacious look of a Scots terrier, ready to fight to the death any enemy crossing his path. The illimitable driving power was even then to be sensed as he talked about his activities in the East.

Rejected for military service, he joined ENSA in 1940, conducting the Carl Rosa Opera Company in tours throughout Britain, and then others with the Anglo-Polish Ballet Company in Italy. Then he was sent to organize symphony concerts for the troops in Calcutta and Bombay. He flew to Cape Town from Singapore, where he had been conducting an orchestra composed of refugees from all parts of the East. Leader was Szymon Goldberg, the international violinist.

It was this association with Goldberg—and later with Lili Kraus, the celebrated Austrian pianist—that led to Chisholm's violin concerto being played by Goldberg at the Van Riebeeck Festival, and the appointment in 1949 of Lili Kraus to the College of Music in Cape Town.

Presently, our conversation turned to local music and Cape Town's search for a new permanent conductor. Scenting a bone, Chisholm exclaimed, "*I* could apply!" In his gentle way Ellie said, "But you have accepted the University appointment?"

"I could do *both!*" was the characteristic reply.

Lili Kraus created a stir when she arrived to take up the post of senior piano lecturer and teacher.

Shall I ever forget the vivid impression she made at our first meeting?

Utterly unconventional, two black plaits of hair swung, gipsy-fashion, in thick ropes on either side of her face, right down to her waist. They enhanced the sparkle of her dark brown eyes, the lithe spring in her feet as she crossed the street to greet me. In a friendly way she had come to fetch me for the promised interview, and it actually began in the taxi taking us to her house.

Her reminiscences of touring in Java just before the war touched on the people she saw there. As she talked she whipped

out a half sheet of notepaper from her bag and then and there made an exquisite little drawing of a Balinese dancer. (I have treasured it ever since.)

She and her husband, Dr. Otto Mandl, and their two children were seized by the Japanese as they were leaving for Australia and New Zealand, and they were held in concentration camps for three years.

"It taught us some valuable lessons. We began to realize what hunger means; it was forced on us to weaken our resistance."

She went on quickly: "But many kindnesses were shown by simple peasant folk, who were always ready to share surreptitious cups of rice or a handful of other food. Then, too, a piano was lent to me after the first year. I heard only at the end of the war that this concession was due to the efforts of a high official, Baron Kondo, who had heard me play in Tokyo in 1936. I gave many concerts to my prison mates after that."

Many, too, were the concerts Lili Kraus gave, or played in during her stay in South Africa. Lauded everywhere for her artistry, severe criticism was nevertheless aimed at her unconventional ways. Her ardent, buoyant temperament and complete absence of self-consciousness as she skipped gaily off the concert platform often caused her to be misjudged by those unable to discriminate between affectation and sheer *joie de vivre.*

Szymon Goldberg, who flew from New York in January 1956, had similar stories of his prison experiences.

Accompanied by his wife on a trip to Australia, he was touring with Lili Kraus in Java when the house he was staying in was seized by the Japanese. Fortunately, his violin was in a cupboard when he and his wife were packed off to a concentration camp, and it was rescued later when a friend, breaking into the house one dark night, threw it into a garden. ("It was safer there than in the hands of the Japs!")

From there it was ultimately smuggled from house to house until, at long last, Goldberg recovered it.

Curiosity mingled with ultimate enthusiasm when Pierino Gamba made his first appearance at the symphony concert at the City Hall on March 23, 1956. He was still the unassuming boy, unspoilt by fame and flattery, who had startled the musical world by the precocity of his talent ten years before. It was his simplicity of approach, utter lack of showmanship and the absence of 'tails' in his boyish attire that made instant appeal as he came on to the platform. The impression changed to wonder as the evening wore on, and one authoritative interpretation followed another of the varied works on the programme.

In the last of those first three concerts he was his own soloist in Beethoven's C minor piano concerto, never relaxing control of the perfectly adjusted orchestral accompaniment to his own faultlessly played solo. He repeated the feat on his second visit two years later with Grieg's piano concerto, and made history here by conducting *without score* Tchaikovsky's B flat piano concerto for Adolph Hallis's talented South African pupil, Philip Levy.

I am all for versatility in talent. It makes for more happiness and interest in the end, I think, than the outstanding single talent which keeps its victim a life-long slave to a specialist's career. But I doubt the wisdom of clinging to *two* supreme gifts. One or other is bound to suffer in the race to the top. Kreisler might have been equally famous as a pianist, but he chose instead to become the greatest violinist of his day.

Up-and-coming conductors and pianists are two a penny in this fantastic age . . . Which vocation will Pierino ultimately follow?

When Pierre Fournier by-passed Cape Town in 1954 by returning to Europe after a sensational success in Johannesburg, local music lovers realized that unless something was done, other great artists would in future do the same.

So a few moving spirits put their heads together and a plan was made whereby concerts by international celebrities could be assured by establishing a club on a membership basis, independent of unpredictable public support.

It was to be run as a non-profit organization, each member paying a subscription of £2. 2s. for a season of not less than four concerts. As the membership increased, 'bonus' concerts would be thrown in, but no single admissions would be allowed.

General response was so encouraging that in an incredibly short time the ball was set rolling, and it has been rolling to such good purpose ever since that, with a membership of 800, bonus recitals have been not the exception but the rule. (There were six concerts in the seasons 1959-1960-1961.)

The Cape Town Concert Club draws its artists from three sources: the Musica Viva and Musical Societies of Johannesburg, and Philip Tongue, the Secretary of the Royal Schools and Ibbs and Tillett's Representative in South Africa; and it is run under the able—and honorary—management of those musical enthusiasts and public-spirited businessmen, Hans Kramer and Boris Canin.

Grievances, squabbles and frustrations among musicians occur all over the world. I remember particularly a concert in Cape Town in the early days of the orchestra, when a viola player

who had a long-standing grievance against Theo Wendt suddenly went berserk during the first movement of Brahms's fourth symphony.

He started by knocking down his music-stand and the one next to it. Then, striding through the players from his place at the end of the platform, he reached the rostrum, grabbed the score and threw it over Theo Wendt's head. Pandemonium set in as Ellie Marx and Johnny Lamb, the flautist, grappled with the man and hustled him off the platform. Controlling his agitation and nervously adjusting his tie, poor Theo addressed the audience:

"Is there a doctor present?"

Several came forward and attended the patient in the band-room; then we skipped the first movement and went on with the second.

Meanwhile, a man in the audience nearly had a fit, and a woman in the balcony fainted. As for the hero of the evening, he was taken to the local asylum where, under treatment, he eventually recovered.

A visiting musician from England said to Mr. Bell afterwards that he had at last witnessed a public demonstration against Brahms!

This is a bad enough example of what unbridled frustration can do. What was infinitely more despicable—and a blot forever on Cape Town—was the vendetta that finally drove out Enrique Jorda, one of the most brilliant conductors the orchestra had ever played under.

At 36 he had already conducted the Madrid Orchestra for eight years, in addition to recording numerous works, and for the first two years of his six-year reign in Cape Town (1947-53), his concerts attracted full houses, sometimes with hundreds turned away.

Trouble began with that thorn in the flesh of lazy or incompetent players in an orchestra—he was a perfectionist. He tired the competent ones by forcing them to repeat endlessly passages balked by the others who, in their turn, grew irked and rebellious. A serious drawback, too, was Jorda's inability to express himself; he was at a loss in English, and much of what he tried to say missed fire.

Some outsiders, hobnobbing with the malcontents, left no stone unturned to become active and virulent parties to the persecution that, bit by bit, ensued. Poisonous hints infected outside musicians—who should have known better—and the story went round that Jorda, helped by his players, was learning to read his scores!

Finally the point was reached when, goaded to distraction,

and to the everlasting regret of his friends, Jorda sent in his resignation. At the concert following the news of this blow he had an overwhelming reception. His popularity with the general public was never in doubt. The whole audience stood up and the applause was deafening. It was balm to the sensitive man, and when at length he could speak it was only to say a fervent "Thank you!"

He was elected by a two-thirds majority at the end of that year, 1953, to be conductor of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, where he had previously appeared as guest conductor, and where he has remained, beloved by his players, fêted by the town, and conducting concerts star-studded with the world's greatest soloists.

In vacations from San Francisco, Jorda tours for months on end, making records, appearing as guest conductor with other great orchestras, and generally gathering laurels everywhere en route . . .

A cynic said to me recently: "What a good thing it was for Jorda that all that happened. Otherwise he might have remained as permanent conductor of the Cape Town Orchestra!"

Edward Dunn, who after many years resigned from his post as conductor of the Durban Orchestra, was next after Jorda and Geoffrey Miller to take over in Cape Town. He stayed for three years. Then the system of engaging international guest conductors came into force, the gaps between these being filled by others from Durban and Johannesburg. Altogether, the orchestra played under sixteen of those oversea celebrities, three of whom came twice (Hugo Rignold, George Weldon and George Hurst). The experience gained for the players a quick response to a fresh beat that has won much praise.

Something not generally known about newspaper work is that headlines on articles are not written by the authors. It is a highly specialized job, involving a lot of thought and ingenuity, for the man doing the layout of a page has to choose words as suitable as possible, letter by letter, to fit available space.

Any journalist will agree that this problem of space on a big paper is an ever-recurring frustration when one wants to expand. Errors or misprints that creep in to alter a pet phrase can also be irritating.

Take the notice I wrote in praise of the talented Cape Town pianist, Elizabeth Kemp (on one of her first appearances), which was qualified by my saying she was too young for Beethoven's G major concerto, as it needed maturity. She was probably as aghast as I was next morning to find that it needed *maternity!*

I was once given permission during an attack of laryngitis to listen-in and telephone my report from home. Poor George Gunn at the other end made heavy weather of it as I gaspingly tried to articulate ". . . the Brahms variations, spun like gold from-the-simple-straw-of-Haydn's-theme . . ." I went over it again and again, but he kept shouting, "It doesn't make *sense*, Mrs. Marx!"

He sought advice from a sub-editor and what they finally concocted came out next morning: "Brahms variations strung like gold beads on a string".

At the other end of the scale, it is always gratifying to bring off a stunt. I was particularly proud of a very successful one years ago concerning another listen-in-and-phone-report—this time because I was nursing a broken arm. Municipal concerts were broadcast in those days, and Leslie Arnold, the new Borough organist, was giving his first recital at the City Hall on a Sunday night. Sitting comfortably near the wireless at the appointed time, I was amazed to hear string music. Surely not at an organ recital? I snatched the paper . . . was horrified to find that the concert, for once, was not to be broadcast. I telephoned the business manager—Dudley Cassell in those days,—"haven't you got a gadget on your table for listening in to the hall?"

Mercifully, he was quick on the uptake. For the next forty minutes, with the receiver glued to my ear, I heard the recital perfectly. Then I persuaded my good Samaritan to fetch Leslie Arnold to the phone. I told my story and asked him how he had got on with his first three pieces.

Ingenuity came into play again on another occasion.

Since I broke my leg some years ago, the *Cape Times* allows me to write my reports at home, and they are collected by a messenger. I throw out my envelopes to him from the window of my room on the third floor of my hotel. (I weighted them first with pennies.)

My heart gave a jump one night and the messenger gave a shout, when the envelope landed on a windowsill halfway down. It was close on midnight—dead-line for the paper.

There happened to be an old Zulu knobkerrie in my room. I tied three yards of string round it and dangled it down, down, down, till—after half-a-dozen attempts—it dislodged the precious thing.

I heard long afterwards that a policeman, watching curiously, scouted poor little James's explanation that "a lady up there had written something he was fetching to the *Cape Times*".

He marched him straight to the editorial chair.

Southeasters used to play Old Harry with my envelopes

until the problem of weighting them sufficiently was solved. They flew sky-high, like miniature kites. One fluttered down the street with James in pursuit; another was whisked out of sight and I had twenty minutes to re-write the report, and a third got hopelessly stuck in a gutter on the roof and had to be held over for next day.

All sorts of helpful suggestions were made to cope with the trouble, one, by Ivor—who depends on getting my stuff in time—that carrier pigeons might be employed. In the end he hit on the best one of all, and then he sent me relays of cast-off "leads" from the printing department, and two or three at a time were infallible.

I had an uncomfortable week once, over the broken sash-cord of my window, which had to be kept raised—because it was too heavy and tricky for me to lift up and down each time I threw out reports.

Numerous requests to have it mended were unheeded. D-day came when rain poured down one night. I bearded the manager in his den.

"Either you have this cord put right or . . ." (I forget my threat). "I *refuse* to put my head under a shower at midnight!"

That did the trick. Not only was the job attended to the next day, but he took my report down to the messenger himself that rainy night.

Newspaper work is full of ups and downs. Among the 'downs' are letters of abuse a music critic receives after an unflattering report of a concert performance. One, filling a page of foolscap, began, "You are nothing but a malicious gossip!", and went on to say that "owing to your limited knowledge of music", etc., etc. . . . ending up with threats of punishment by a 'Higher Power'. I wanted to have it published, but the *Cape Times* would not hear of it.

A different kind of shock which knocked me flat resulted from an interview the News Editor (the late Mr. Cowan) commissioned me to write. It was with my old friend, Ada Forrest who, as widow of the famous game explorer Cherry Kearton, visited Cape Town in 1947.

She told me wonderful stories of their life together and the films they had made of wild animals, and I wrote up what I thought was the most interesting interview I had ever had. When a day or so passed, I went to see what Mr. Cowan had to say. He pulled it out of a pigeon-hole, slapped it furiously on his desk and shouted: "It's RUBBISH! *The man's been dead seven years!!*"

Two days later I went to see him again. I said: "Mr. Cowan, I want to thank you for the biggest laugh of my life. To think

that I went to a *News Editor* with that story . . . !" He was kind. He just said, "I'm afraid I was rather harsh . . ."

There were trying times going to and from the *Cape Times* during the wartime blackouts, shuffling across streets from kerb to kerb. Once I actually mistook the street and found—as I thought—the door of the *Cape Times* closed: eventually the familiar pillars of a shop convinced me that I was in the wrong street.

We were living in Rondebosch then, and Ellie was working at the S.A.B.C. studio. It was odd walking to and from the station to our house at the top of Belmont Road, especially when I had to take the chance of meeting an undesirable under the bridge.

Going home late one night, I heard a call: "Would you like me to walk with you?" I liked the sound of the man's voice, and thanked him. He told me he was home on leave from the Middle East. (So he was a soldier!) We parted at my gate, and he turned to the left.

A year afterwards, at the same spot near the bridge late one night, the same thing happened; a man behind me offered to walk with me. The blackouts were gone and I saw he was in khaki. He told me he had come home to be married. At my gate he turned to the left; I said, "Has this happened before?" It had . . .

I never saw him again, but maybe he and his wife—an old married couple—have been living in Cape Town ever since.

A similar story, with a twist to it, was told me by a very respectable maid I had at the time. A man following her up the road said, "Good evening!"

"And what did you say, Rachel?"

Drawing herself up with righteous indignation, she replied, "I said, '*Are you looking for trouble*'?"

During the war, when all hands were at the pump to help the Navy, a room in the old Cape Town Post Office in Adderley Street—where a department store now stands—was lent to the S.A.W.A.S. (South African Women's Auxiliary Service). An old friend of mine, Elsie Skaife (wife of the eminent scientist, Dr. S. H. Skaife) was the leading spirit, and under her aegis a bevy of us assembled there so many times a week to learn the gentle art of spinning.

It looked so simple at first, but what a tussle it was to master the treadle and wheel at the same time! Again and again the woollen thread snapped as the movements of the two failed to coincide. How I envied Gretchen's effortless technique, until the day arrived when I, too, could produce the wherewithal for a pair of socks!

Living in Rondebosch then and with concerts at a discount, Ellie and I often entertained merchant sailors. I had my own spinning wheel, and made them try their hands at it. What fun we had as their clumsy hands and feet jibbed at the infuriating task!

CHAPTER NINETEEN

DURING the London blitz of 1942, Jim's passing, was one in the chain of tragedies surrounding the story of the Fynn Papers.

You may remember reading about the Fynn Papers; the newspapers in South Africa and in London gave the story a good deal of space at the time. It was quite a romance of its kind.

The saga began in the 1820s, when Henry Francis Fynn, coming to Natal as a Christ Church schoolboy of sixteen, found his way to Zululand, where he spent twelve years among the tribes.

He became friendly with the notorious king, Tchaka, and he was looked up to by all the chiefs. He kept a diary, carrying it on his travels in a wallet made from an elephant's ear. His ink was made from the juice of plants and flowers. His ambition was to have the diary published in complete narrative form, and he was not mistaken in thinking that it would make an absorbing and wonderful story.

But he died in 1861 without realizing his heart's desire, leaving the papers to his son.

In 1905, when Jim was a Magistrate in Durban, Henry Francis Fynn the Second brought the papers to him, suggesting that he, as an authority on Zulu history and folk lore, should take over the task of embodying his father's diary in a book.

It was work after Jim's own heart, and his imagination was fired with the colour and romance and real 'meat' in the whole thing. He was not all imaginativeness, though. In his methodical way he drew up a document, with the agreement clearly

written out in his small, neat, beautiful writing—I saw it nearly forty years later—putting the matter on a legal basis. He and Mr. Fynn thought the work would take, possibly, a year or fifteen months, and Jim's fee was to be £150. Little did either suspect that one would give his life to it and the other die many years before it was even half done.

Jim, ever meticulous over the smallest detail, soon realized that the editing of the diary would be a formidable task. Not only was much of the faded ms. barely legible, necessitating the constant use of a magnifying glass—(I remember well how inflamed his poor eyes were when Mother dragged him away to his meals)—but there were great gaps that he felt should be filled with Zulu lore, legend and record.

He had to delve deep in his research, and life interrupted it not once but many times. Again and again he returned to it during his periodical visits to London, spending days on end at the British Museum, and always coming back to his talks with the old Zulus in Natal.

The time came at last when he could retire and settle down to work at home in London. He and Nellie and their two little boys lunched with us in Hof Street on the day they sailed from Cape Town. (I ordered cream with the sweet, remembering how fond Jim was of it.) The two boys were dressed in scarlet jerseys, so that Nellie would see them at a glance on deck.

That was in 1921, a bad time for househunting in London, but they found a dreary house in Anerley and it became their permanent home. Home to Jim, of course, was anywhere as long as it held his books. They lined the walls of his room at the back of the house, and every time he visited Charing Cross Road, more came home with him. It was the only cosy room in that gaunt old-fashioned building, for Nellie kept an anthracite stove always burning or Jim, oblivious to material comfort, would have frozen at his work.

Lectures at the Colonial Institute and elsewhere interrupted him now and then, and there was that Wembley Exhibition interlude. In addition, he was working on a philosophical book of his own and Native matriculation class books; but the Fynn Diary had its special niche.

When war broke out in 1939 he realized he would have to forego the satisfaction of seeing the Diary published. He packed the precious mss. and maps, with the mass of notes he had accumulated through the years, into a strong wooden box which he placed for safety in the cellar. Anerley, near the Croydon Aerodrome, was in the direct path of the nine blitzes that all but destroyed their home. The two little boys in scarlet jerseys were men now, fighting for their country.

Walter, the younger, was killed in Italy in 1943.

Jim, over 70, was too old to fight, but he reared like a war horse to the battle cry, and as an Air Raid Warden, fought incendiary bombs.

It was too much for him. He caught bronchitis in the winter of 1942 and had no strength to withstand that enemy . . .

His last wish was that Nellie would carry on with the Fynn Papers, and at the end of the war she took the treasured box to Colonel Deneys Reitz, High Commissioner at South Africa House. He was delighted with what he declared was a treasure house of historical information, and—an author himself—was eager to take a hand in getting the Diary published. His death soon afterwards was the fourth in the chain of tragedies surrounding the Fynn Papers, and once more they were returned to their box and placed in a safe, this time at South Africa House.

By some error, the London Press conceived the idea that the Diary and Papers had been bequeathed by Jim to the Van Riebeeck Society in Cape Town. They actually belonged to the Fynn family in Natal—now headed by Henry Francis Fynn the Third—to whom they were (according to the original agreement) to be returned on publication. It was a misunderstanding causing much delay, and Nellie could not cope with it until help came unexpectedly.

The (then) Governor-General of the Union, Mr. G. B. van Zyl, was told by the Chairman of the Van Riebeeck Society of the box lying at South Africa House, and offered to take it to the Cape when he flew home after a visit to London in November 1945. Another delay occurred afterwards while the box was lodged at the Public Library in Cape Town.

Meanwhile, Philip in Durban had taken up the torch. He wrote to Nellie, offering to continue the editing of the book and to find a publisher. No one could have been better fitted for the task. Almost as fine a Zulu scholar as Jim himself, he was also burning with an enthusiasm which stopped at nothing to get the work completed. He approached all the influential people he knew would be interested, and even prepared to throw up his own work to get on with the job. When the box finally arrived he came post haste from Durban to retrieve it.

It so happened that the annual general meeting of the Van Riebeeck Society was to take place that very week. He arrived in Cape Town armed with Nellie's letter appointing him her representative, and his own correspondence and notes on the subject, and he was confident of proving his right to carry the Papers to Durban.

He stayed with us, of course, at our house in Rondebosch.

He was the same old Phil—buoyant, debonair, cracking jokes at every turn, straining every nerve on Jim's behalf, and full of sympathy for Nellie.

He sat at an open window, late one afternoon, writing his address to the Society, and the script for a broadcast on Zulu proverbs which he gave from the S.A.B.C. studio that night. As he was not feeling fit the next day we sent for the doctor, who prescribed a day or two in bed for a "slight attack" of pleurisy. Five days later, his heart suddenly failed . . .

I attended the meeting, alone, two days afterwards. The resolution was passed that I, as the last of my family to represent Nellie, should be given permission to have the Papers.

More inevitable delay . . . Three months crawled by while preliminary details were fulfilled. At last, having signed a receipt at the Library, Ellie and I fetched the box. We took it home, I sewed canvas round it, and we put it in the boot of our car, for we were leaving for Durban the next morning, anxious to get rid of the responsibility as soon as possible.

The box stayed in the boot through the 1,150 miles of the Garden route, the Transkei and Natal, locked into garages every night on the way. When we arrived in Durban we drove straight to Justin's office in Gardiner Street where it was locked in a safe. (Justin, Harold's youngest son, has followed his father's vocation.)

Three days later a party of us assembled there. I was to hand the box formally to Mr. Fynn, grandson of the original Henry Francis, and a little ceremony was made of it. The newspapers got hold of the story and Huntly, Phil's eldest son, who was a producer and announcer on the Broadcasting staff in Durban, arranged for a broadcast of the proceedings.

Photographers took pictures as we all drew round the table and I opened the box with a key from an envelope labelled "His Excellency the Governor-General's plane." Then I was asked to tell the story of the papers, and with Huntly holding the receiver of the tape-recorder before me I told it as simply as I could.

Muriel Thompson (Miranda Stuart, the writer), was there, representing Charlie as his second daughter; together with Justin, Harold's son, and Phil's son, Huntly. I had asked Miss Killie Campbell, as one of the foremost authorities on Natal history, to come too; she and Ellie were the only members of the group who were not either a Fynn or a Stuart.

But the final editing and casting into shape of the monumental work could no longer be undertaken by a Stuart. None of those left had the necessary knowledge. I went to Miss—now Dr.—Campbell for advice, and she thought that Mr. D.

Malcolm, a fine Zulu scholar, intimately connected with Native affairs in Natal (and once for five years in the same office with Jim when he was Secretary for Native Affairs in Maritzburg) might help me. He was sympathetic, and a load was lifted from my mind when he consented to come to the rescue. ("I should be honoured," he said.)

I shall not go into details over what followed, except to acknowledge the tremendous debt of gratitude I owe him, and my beloved Killie for her invaluable help in co-operating with him.

She put a room in her house at his disposal with her treasured library, and she and her secretary, Mrs. Bell, spent long stretches of time gathering and typing material from Jim's notes—written minutely in scores of exercise books—to assist him.

Meanwhile I was inwardly praying that the chain of tragedies had been broken by the death of the last Henry Fynn.

The book was triumphantly published by Shuter and Shooter in Maritzburg four years after that meeting in Justin's office in 1946.

I am the proud possessor of one of the 75 copies of the original collectors' edition. On the first page is an inscription:

THE DIARY OF HENRY FRANCIS FYNN

Compiled from original sources and Edited by

JAMES STUART
(formerly Under Secretary for Native Affairs, Natal)

and

D. McK. MALCOLM,
Lecturer in Zulu, University of Natal.

CHAPTER TWENTY

NOW and then Ellie indulged in little jokes with his pupils, although he always took his work very seriously. Two with similar names found him invariably mistaking one for the other until the day both turned up together. Much amused at his request to clear up the mystery, one of them said, "My name is Hurwitz, and she is Miss Horwitz".

"Oh", quipped Ellie, "You are a Her and . . ."

His blood froze, there was nothing for it but to plunge into the trap he had set for himself . . .

"She is a HOR!"

The Cape Town Rotary Club was founded in 1925 under the presidency of the late Sir Jock Carruthers Beattie, then Principal of the Cape Town University, a good mixer, loved and respected by all, and under his guidance Ellie—who became the Club's Sergeant-at-Arms a few months after joining it a year later—made a good job of fining members for the Benefit Fund at the weekly luncheon meetings.

The task suited him down to the ground, and his method was so tactful and humorous that his popularity kept him at it for sixteen-and-a-half years—1926 to 1942.

In a short history of the Club compiled by its one-time president, H. O. Hofmeyr, in 1953, Tony (G.A.) Leyds contributed an appreciation of Ellie as a man. Among other things he said:

"We Rotarians knew and loved him for his gracious, kindly never-failing humour as our most distinguished Sergeant-at-

Arms . . . he never bored us, he avoided trite cliches or repetition. He never gave offence; he never told a risque story; he was always delicate in words. There was no sting, no barb or nastiness in the remarks he made when imposing his fines. The amount of the fine was never stereotyped. 'It is James's birthday tomorrow', he would say. 'How old are you tomorrow? 58? Well, shall we fine you half a penny for every year? That is 2s. 5d. Would you add a penny for good measure?' And then that suave, kindly and always sincere 'Thank you!' . . . He earned the love and respect of all who knew him as our dearest Rotarian."

Among other facets of his general make-up, Ellie was extraordinarily psychic. Instances of this occurred frequently, one, in particular, on the night before we sailed on our last trip to England.

We had to be on board overnight, but late enough to let Ellie play after a banquet at the Masonic Lodge in Roeland Street. (He had been a mason for many years.) I was accompanying him as usual. We had sent our luggage in advance to the ship, only keeping back the small bag of jewellery I always travelled with.

Ten minutes after we dismissed our taxi, and as we were getting ready to play, I gasped:

"I've left my bag in the taxi!"

Ellie said nothing. He handed me his violin, put on his coat and hat and went out . . .

He could never account afterwards for the instinct that made him walk straight down to Church Square. He saw a taxi; asked the driver if it were the one that had taken him to Roeland Street? It was. He looked inside . . . picked up the bag and drove back to the Lodge in time to play his first solo.

Another instance was when he and the other members of the Cape Town Orchestra were serving in East Africa in 1916.

In some outlandish place he met Réné Caprara, who was in another regiment. 'Cap' happened to mention that he had not got a spoon. Ellie said, "I'll find you one", and promptly went out into the veld.

'Cap', returning first to Cape Town, brought that spoon to me, but I do not think he ever credited Ellie's story of how or where he found it.

Such things as keys, brooches, knitting needles and other oddments, given up by me as lost, were always recovered when Ellie was around. It was different when I asked him to fetch me some trifle from the next room. Then he would look completely helpless, and it would end up by my having to go myself.

One day I asked him, "Why, when you are so clever at

finding things, were you so dense over fetching that thimble?"

He smiled.

"Because I like to make things difficult!"

Ellie never played again after Enrique Jorda left. Though he attended concerts with me regularly up to the last three days of his life, he had no further interest in the making of music. He had battled bravely for many years against chronic ill health, but Jorda's going was the last straw. He put his violin aside and never touched it again.

The universal love and esteem he had inspired were shown by the hundreds of letters and telegrams that poured in after his passing on February 13, 1955. In one, the suggestion was made that Ellie's name be perpetuated in some memorial to him. It was from dear Ben Jaffe, and but for him I might never have had the last absorbing interest of my life, which has come by working for the violin scholarship eventually founded in Ellie's name.

Ben Jaffe and I both felt Ellie's fondest wish would have been to help promising young violinists, so we discussed ways and means for getting a committee together to establish a scholarship. We were delighted when the late Sir Herbert Stanley consented to act as chairman. Apart from his distinguished career as Governor of Ceylon and later of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, he was a fine, public-spirited man and a musical enthusiast. Tony Leyds, Ellie's old Rotarian friend, was next on our committee, and then we had the good fortune to secure the services of Margaret (Mrs. G. K.) Lindsay as honorary secretary.

The four of us met for our first discussion in Advocate A. H. Brocksma's chambers in Wale Street on April 14, 1955. The other members of the original committee—Dr. Claude Brown, Dr. Michael Whiteman, Elsie Hall and Charles Johnman (from Stellenbosch) were unable to attend that day.

Sir Herbert started the ball rolling by giving Ben Jaffe, our honorary treasurer, a cheque for £25. He asked me what target we were making for and I said I hoped for £5,000. He thought this was too optimistic and suggested the more modest sum of £2,000. He went on to say that our first step should be the sending out of a leaflet—which he would draft—putting forward the scheme.

To our great sorrow, and of all who knew him, we never saw him again. He went from that first meeting straight to hospital for a major operation and his death occurred soon afterwards.

How pleased he would have been to know that our Fund reached the £2,000 mark within less than three years, and that in 1961 it has crept up to well over £3,500!

Things forged ahead rapidly. After the leaflets were sent out donations poured in—many unsolicited—and musicians rallied round to give concerts and musical evenings to swell the Fund. My dear friend, Nita Spilhaus (Mrs. Simon) donated one of her valuable pictures. There was no end to the generous gifts that flooded in so spontaneously. . .

When Philip Newman, the Belgian violinist, was in Cape Town with Pierino Gamba in March 1956, he came to see me several times and I told him about the scholarship. He, too, had been a pupil of Ysaye's and he had a magnificent violin of his own; so that it was sheer goodness of heart that made him buy Ellie's (formerly belonging to Archdeacon Fogg), and the money was one of the first contributions.

Plans were made to give a concert in aid of the Fund in February 1957, with the Municipal Orchestra, by way of linking up that date with its founding on February 18, 1914, when Ellie was its first leader. A Women's Concert Committee was elected and a dozen of us met one morning at Mrs. W. J. Thorne's lovely home near Kirstenbosch to arrange our plan of campaign.

We all worked hard for the next few weeks and the concert, on February 18, was so successful that we planned to make it an annual affair. Hugo Rignold was the English guest conductor, and Elsie Hall and Cecilia Wessels were the soloists, adding lustre to what was really a gala occasion.

Two more of those annual orchestral concerts were given, directed successively by the English guest conductors Charles Groves and Charles Mackerras. Jennifer Vyvyan, the brilliant English soprano, was the star at the first, and Lionel Tertis, the distinguished English viola player—an old fellow student of mine at the Royal Academy—shared the programme at the second with members of the Cape Town University Opera Company, who sang excerpts from Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*.

Nothing could have pleased us better the following year than the generous offer by Manuel Villet, the outstanding young South African pianist (recently back from London on a visit) to give a recital for our Fund. Its sensational success at the City Hall (February 16, 1960) owed as much to his personal popularity as to his phenomenal virtuosity.

Two months later, a long-promised offer to help our cause culminated in a most successful duo-piano recital by Lady Maud (Jean Hamilton), wife of the High Commissioner(now Ambassador) to the Union, Sir John Maud, and Elsie Hall, which was given in the ideal environment of High Commission House in Wynberg.

We were all very happy when the Fund reached the £2,000

mark and we could give the first grant. But we were faced with difficulties. As we wanted our candidate to be trained oversea —where facilities are greater for all-round musical development—it was necessary to find someone who already had the wherewithal for maintenance there, because the modest £100 interest on our capital could provide only jam for bread-and-butter. Then, too, there was the tiresome question of having to arrange auditions for applicants.

As luck would have it, we heard that a talented young Johannesburg violinist, who had been sent by public subscription for study abroad, was on his way home to earn money for a further course. He was seventeen-year-old Vincent Frittelli, South African-born of Italian parentage.

I wrote immediately for more particulars, and eventually arrangements were made for us to hear the boy in Cape Town. When he played the Bruch G minor concerto with the Municipal Orchestra at a Sunday concert on September 14, 1958, there was not the slightest doubt about his being the answer to our prayer. He came off with flying colours, and George Weldon, the English guest conductor, was delighted with him. He handed our cheque to the boy—the first of three annual grants—with another anonymous donation of £100, and there was great jubilation all round. Vincent played again in Cape Town before he went back to the Julliard School of Music in New York, and very soon afterwards he won a full four-year scholarship in Philadelphia at the Curtis Institute of Music.

By way of getting it straight from the horse's mouth, Tuk asked me recently, "What *is* the target?"

I waved my arms: "The SKY is the limit!"

EPILOGUE

I end these pages with a salute to the countless interests and friendships that have come into my life by way of music.

Music is quickest of all the arts to promote sympathy with kindred souls. Apart from the joy I have had in sharing it, either as an executant or listener, my profession has opened the door to world-wide swiftly-ignited fellowship, and as a music critic, I have had the joy and privilege of meeting and fraternizing with great artists who have visited South Africa.

And my heart goes out to those whose lasting friendships have enriched my life.

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