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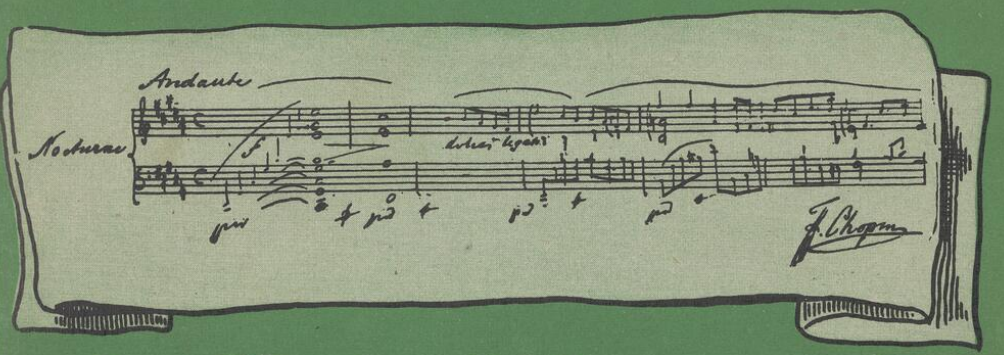
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Chopin





by Antoni Gronowicz



Chopin





Fryderyk Chopin at the age of twenty-five. From a portrait painted by Ary Scheffer in 1835.

Chopin

by

ANTONI GRONOWICZ

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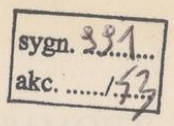
Books by the Same Author

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Contents

One	Zelazowa Wola	1
Two	With Tutor Zywny	14
Three	A Memorable Vacation	22
Four	At the Conservatory	29
Five	Berlin	37
Six	Vienna and Fame	48
Seven	Love	58
Eight	Farewell, My Motherland	63
Nine	The Road to Paris	70
Ten	Fryderyk and Tytus	76
Eleven	The City of Art	85
Twelve	Maria	93
Thirteen	Chopin Meets George Sand	97
Fourteen	Conversation with Mickiewicz	102
Fifteen	Winter in Majorca	109
Sixteen	An Evening at Madam Marliani's	114
Seventeen	Nohant	120
Eighteen	Sol	129
Nineteen	The End of a Friendship	134
Twenty	Last Paris Concert	139
Twenty-One	London	144
Twenty-Two	A Scottish Girl	156
Twenty-Three	In Edinburgh	162
Twenty-Four	Return	170
Twenty-Five	Sister Ludwika	175
Twenty-Six	Funeral March	185
The Compositions of Fryderyk Chopin		191
Bibliography		195
Index		197

Full Page Illustrations

Fryderyk Chopin, from a portrait by Ary Scheffer, 1835 *Frontispiece*

Fryderyk Chopin's birthplace, from an old engraving 5

"My son is a pianist and composer." 17

Training peasant boys in the field 33

The servants came from their pantries 43

Fryderyk Chopin from a sketch made at the time of his visit to Vienna 53

George Sand, Franz Liszt, and Fryderyk Chopin 99

George Sand's home at Nohant 125

Jane Stirling from a portrait by Deveria 158

One

Zelazowa Wola

One February day, I suddenly found Warszawa oppressive and my work at a desk irksome. I wanted to see the country white with snow. I wanted to look up into the clear blue winter sky and not find it veiled by smoke, and to turn my eyes to a distant horizon, dark with forest trees. The desire was so compelling that, with no thought of the assignments I had to complete, I closed my desk, and went in search of an American journalist who was then in Warszawa. Would he drive to Sochaczew with me? He would. Good. Then we would go at once, while the sun was bright and the air was cold and clear.

The sleigh we chose at the stable livery had a deep box and a warm padding of straw and blankets. The robes were thick bearskins, and our horses a team of chestnuts with strong necks and broad haunches. Their manes and their tails were long and, as they blew in the breeze, they seemed to lend speed to the horses' swift, sure feet. The miles slipped away like tinkling melodies. The city of grimy buildings, street cars, busses, and hurrying pedestrians disappeared. Soon even the "straggling" streets of the suburbs were gone, and our world became the rhythmic, steady, soft beat of horses' hoofs, the broad expanse of snow-covered meadow-land, fringed by a dark horizon of ever-

green trees, and a thin, wavering veil of gently falling snowflakes. As I watched those wisps of snow, I was reminded of manna falling from heaven. They were manna to me, and my companion murmured drowsy agreement.

Then came the wind. It had been light at first and soft as a summer zephyr, but now it began to roar. The snowflakes ceased to fall with steady precision, and became like mischievous imps dancing and cavorting and nipping our faces. The sleigh lost its rhythm, and bumped over ruts and into ruts and out of ruts. The sleigh bells ceased to give out gentle, soothing tinkles and their melody became punctuated with many sharp wails interspersed by short, breathless silences. The horses had been going at a steady pace; now they pranced, next they trotted, and every so often they stood still in their tracks. Our moustached driver, who had been as quiet as the countryside, laughed big uproarious laughter, and shouted that this was his life, for he loved wind and beating snow.

"Come the gray dusk," he roared with deep satisfaction, "and we may hear wolves howling. Oh, yes, to be sure, whole packs of wolves."

My companion sat up suddenly, and looked at me, doubt and fear mingling on his face. I shook my head and whispered, "It's his joke. He likes to frighten city people."

The wind subsided a little and we, fully aroused from our drowsiness, began to talk.

"This is one day that I am really homesick for my family," my companion said. "I'd like to be in my home town in America to-day!"

"To-day?" I questioned. "It is not Thanksgiving." Neither was it Christmas nor New Year. Was it a national day or a family

anniversary? I did not ask, but Mr. Sinclair soon told me. It was a national day of great significance, I soon learned, but not before I had had a vivid description of the dessert that would "top" most American dinners on this day. It would be cherry pie with ice cream. The pies in all likelihood would have "axe" designs on their top crusts and the ice cream might even be in the form of an axe. I was mystified.

"Do Americans in this way pay tribute to the most essential tool of their pioneer ancestors?" I asked.

Mr. Sinclair's laughter rose above the wind and the sleigh bells. "No," he said. "In this way and in many others, we do honor to the father of our country. To-day is February the twenty-second, and it is the birthday of George Washington."

Now I understood. This was a great national day in America. No wonder my friend had a longing for his country and his family. I leaned over and whispered to the driver. He nodded his head. At the next crossroads, we left the main road.

"We are going to Zelazowa Wola," I said, and my voice sounded as if I were making an important announcement.

"But you said we were going to Sochaczew," Sinclair protested, "to Sochaczew, through the very cradle of Poland, you said."

"True! Very true, but Zelazowa Wola is the cradle of Poland, too," I answered, "and on this day when you are in the mood to honor a great man, I think that we might both pay tribute to one of my country's most renowned men. Like your George Washington, he was born on February the twenty-second."

"Indeed!" Sinclair murmured. It was plain from the tone of his voice that he was not greatly interested.

"I suppose your famous man was born at Zelazowa Wola," he said, and I could almost hear him saying to himself, "These countries in Europe are so old they can't help having a great many illustrious men."

"Two guesses as to his name," I said.

"I haven't the vaguest notion," he answered. "How could I? The chances are I've never heard of him."

"His name is known in every country of the world. He is mentioned at least twice every day of the year in every country where music is broadcast," I told him.

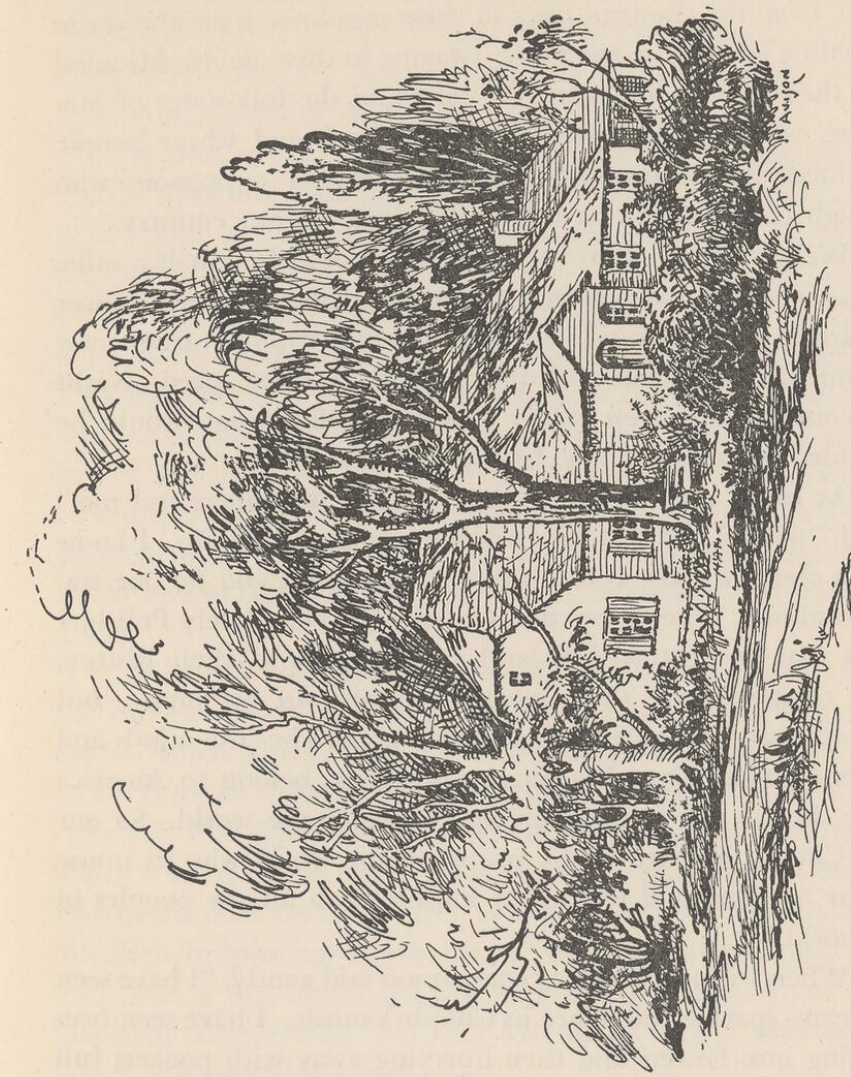
"Chopin!" Sinclair exclaimed and in the same breath added, "I'm glad we're going to his birthplace."

"Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin," I said, rounding out the names proudly. "He was born at Zelazowa Wola on February twenty-second, 1810."

As our sleigh bumped over the rutty, rough road, I began the narrative of Fryderyk Chopin's name. It is a story that I have loved ever since my father told it to me for the first time many years ago. Since then, I have read it in many books and have even heard learned historians discredit it. Nevertheless, it is a good story, and I, for one, am convinced of its truth. As a matter of fact, I think I have done enough research to be able to swear to its authenticity. On this day, I prefaced the story with a remark made frequently by critics: "It is appropriate that Chopin, whose music seems to have been drawn from the very heart of Poland, should have been born here, in the cradle of the country."

"But he had a French name," my companion said. "He could not have been as completely Polish as you suggest."

"But he was," I answered, "for his creative genius grew



Fryderyk Chopin's birthplace, from an old engraving which appeared in Szopen *edited by Mateusz Glinski (Warszawa, 1932).*

here. It got its strength and inspiration from the rumble of the Wisla, from the chestnut trees in these meadows, from the cattle munching grass, from the wheat swaying in these fields. Mingled with these sounds, he heard the tales and the folk-songs of Mazowsze, which is the oldest part of Poland, and whose people remained almost untouched by the foreign oppressors who through the centuries have been overlords in our country."

We were both silent for the distance of at least half a mile. A sense of solemnity seemed to have come over us, but not over our driver. He hummed a mazurka and interrupted it frequently to admonish his horses and to urge them to more speed. Night was coming with even colder winds, and the moon would be shrouded in mists of snow, he warned them.

At last I broke our silence. "Do not misunderstand me," I said, "when I talk of Chopin being completely Polish. I know that a creative artist is of no one environment and no one tradition alone. When I say that Chopin was completely Polish, I mean that he portrayed Poland and her people—their history, their temperament, their means of living—in his music, but Chopin's music belongs to the world. It enriches the minds and hearts of men. Your Washington does not belong to America alone, but to the freedom-loving people of the world. So our own Chopin belongs to the people of the world who in music see far horizons and feel closer kinship with all the peoples of the world."

When I was finished my companion said gently, "I have seen sunbeams sparkle and dance in Chopin's music. I have seen bees slipping into flowers and then hurrying away with pockets full of nectar. I have had my nostrils filled with the flower fragrances of the fields as I have listened to his music. Yes, you are right;

a great artist like a great statesman does not belong to one country or one period of time. He belongs to all mankind. And yet Chopin is as much a part of Poland as Washington is a part of the United States of America."

As these words were spoken, our horses pranced into the village square of Zelazowa Wola. Our driver brought them to a halt and we, after disentangling ourselves from our robes, stepped out. Together we set out to walk along the lanes of the old town. Although our driver warned us that we could not delay too long if we were to reach Sochaczew before nightfall, we knew that we would stay long enough to find the house that had been Chopin's home, and as we set out to walk to it I resumed the story of Chopin's French name, for French it most certainly appears to be. Yet it is really Polish, and this I explained to my friend who, after he had said the Polish word *Szopa* several times, agreed that it and Chopin sound very much alike.

The Chopin family had its beginning in the city of Kalisz in the province now known as Poznan, and the family name was *Szopa,* which is the Polish for shed. Some historians have gone so far as to say that the family was probably nameless for a long time and that finally it was given the name of the building in which it lived on the estate of some wealthy aristocrat. This may be true. Names are mysterious, as anyone who has tried to search out their origins can vouch for. It is an established fact, however, that a Mr. Szopa was an attendant at the court of King Stanislaw Leszczynski, and this Mr. Szopa was a great-grandfather of Fryderyk Chopin.

These few facts do not explain the French name, but what follows should do so. King Stanislaw Leszczynski was first elected

to the kingship of Poland in 1704, and on the first occasion of the royal entourage going to France, Mr. Szopa was in attendance. There is no record that he returned to Poland with his royal master, but there is a record that, after King Stanislaw Leszczynski abdicated in 1736, Mr. Szopa had a wine-shop in the French city of Nancy. His French customers found the name Szopa so unusual and difficult to say that they called him Chopin, which in sound is not very different from the original Szopa. The name Chopin was acceptable to Great-Grandfather Szopa, so he took it as his own. His sons and grandsons, some of whom married French women, had no quarrel with a French name, and by the time the grandsons of the now wealthy wine merchant began to do "grand tours" in Europe they travelled under the name of Chopin. The year these tours started, by the way, is recorded in the Chopin family history. It was 1766, and in that same year the family's royal patron, King Stanislaw, died, thirty years after his abdication.

Another date of more importance is set down in the Chopin family history. It is 1787, and in this year one of the old wine merchant's grandsons went on a visit to Poland, the land of the family's origin. He was Mikolaj Chopin, and no sooner had he arrived in Poland than he decided to remain. He evidently liked the native land of the Szopas; perhaps he found that people paid more attention to him here than they did in his home city of Nancy, and were more inclined to listen to his tales of travel and adventure. Whatever the charm, young Mikolaj wasted no time in trying to secure a position that would support him. But what could he be? Wine merchant? Estate manager? Court attendant? Poland seemed to have all she needed of these, but he was quick to see that he had one ability that was greatly in

demand. He could teach French and, after numerous failures, he succeeded in getting a position as tutor to the son of Countess Skarbek of Zelazowa Wola. His next step in establishing himself as one fully "restored" to the country of his origin was to marry, and this he did in the year 1806. He married Justyna Krzyzanowski, the daughter of a poor nobleman. In the year 1810, their second child was born, a boy so frail and weak that his mother frequently despaired of his life. By the time he was two months old, he was strong enough to be taken to the brick church in the town of Brochow to be christened, and the name bestowed on him was Fryderyk Franciszek.

Now we had come to it—the birthplace of Fryderyk Chopin—and we stood for a long time in the gathering twilight looking at it. An ancient chestnut tree, its limbs bowed with snow, stood guardian over the small whitewashed house. Low shrubs and a few spruce trees made an outer rampart of protection but, despite the stately strength of the chestnut tree and the warning gloom of the spruces and the shrubbery, the house looked lonely and desolate. No ribbon of smoke was unfurled from its chimney. No footsteps or sleigh marks broke the white snow of the path that led to the closed door. Not one window gleamed with light. Everything was closed—gate, doors, windows—and we, although we would have liked to enter the house, did not have the courage to disturb it. And really, there was no need, for even as we stood there, our ears became filled with the recollection of music we both knew well, and our eyes saw the vision of what that music portrayed. Cattle grazing indolently by the side of a stream called Utrata. A barefoot boy talking to a throng of children in tattered clothes and telling them of the riches of

the Skarbek palace. Rugs, he told them, that had the softness of thick grass and the brilliance of meadows clothed in flowers. Pictures that told tales of great love, mighty victories, and magnificent adventures. We knew the narrator to be a barefoot boy called Fryderyk Chopin, just as we knew he was the leader when a group of village ragamuffins burst into a torrent of song and music drawn from pipes and flutes.

All this we saw and heard as we stood gazing at the little white house. And something more, for the moment, became reality to us. We saw a tall, thin boy leave the crowd of singing village boys, and slip away into the little house. He closed the door softly, and with feverish haste went to a tiny bedroom, where he could set down in music the full rhythm of sights he had seen and sounds he had heard in the village and in the pasture field by the side of the stream. That boy, too, we knew to be Fryderyk Chopin, whose music was always drawn from the hearts and souls of the people he loved. He knew their joys and their sorrows for they were his joys and his sorrows and, like the humble people of the land of his birth, he loved the fields and flowers and living creatures.

At last we turned away, and as we did so, I recalled something that Robert Schumann said of Chopin. "Why has Chopin attained such fame? Why does his music take possession of a listener and draw him more than any composer of our time?" Schumann asked, and then answered his own questions. "The reason is obvious. It is because he loves people. They are life and music to him."

Schumann added more to this and, although I did not recall it while I was standing before Chopin's birthplace on that winter's day nearly seven years ago, I remember it now. "Chopin's

music is Poland," Schumann wrote, "and although Poland is veiled in black mourning, it draws its listeners to that country. If the powerful czar knew what a dangerous weapon the simple mazurkas of Chopin are to him, he would immediately forbid them to be played. Chopin's compositions are cannon secretly placed among flowers . . ."

Now we were crossing the village square again. We had left the little house undisturbed and were returning to our sleigh and our impatient driver, but even though we could hear him clapping his hands and stamping his feet to keep them warm, we paused to exchange bits of biographical information we could recall about the boy, Chopin. Because I lived in Poland, and had early been taught to love Chopin's music, I, naturally, knew more about him than my American friend.

"Chopin's genius has often been compared to that of Mozart," I said now. "Like him, he began composing when he was seven years old."

"I have heard him mentioned with Beethoven, Mozart's most illustrious pupil," my friend said, "and I think it is true that all three of them were most amazing children. Imagine leading an orchestra at twelve!"

But I had no wish to enter into a discussion about the individual qualities of Mozart, Beethoven, and Chopin. I wanted to stay with Chopin, as was only fitting when we were here in the little town whose history and people had been the source of much of his work. The pain and sadness and despair that is in Chopin's early compositions are from the hearts of the poor people of Zelazowa Wola. The sweet, delicate gaiety is from the grain swaying in the fields of Zelazowa Wola and from

the larks that soared above them. The strength and rebellion and turbulent anger are from the village ragamuffins, growing firm in their resolve to demand greater privileges from their overlords.

Now we were back in our sleigh again. Our driver mounted his seat and began a monologue of encouragement to his horses. Soon the village was behind us. The twilight deepened into blue night, and I began to dream. Gentle dreams, not those of sleep and complete unreality, but dreams that take one drifting back to distant days. And so as our horses sped through the night to our destination of Sochaczew and a dinner to do honor to George Washington and Fryderyk Chopin, I journeyed into the past of the young musician of Zelazowa Wola. I saw him taking his first piano lessons from his sister Ludwika, who was three years his senior. I heard the excitement that echoed through the house when seven-year-old Fryderyk was summoned to play the piano in the vast drawing-room of Count Skarbek, and I chuckled to myself as my dream lent my ears sufficient acuteness to hear the joy that accompanied the announcement that little Fryderyk was to be taken to Warszawa to play in the salon of one of Poland's leading aristocrats.

The horses kept up a steady pace. The driver sang a song that was soft enough to be a lullaby. No sense of reality bound me to the twentieth century. I was free to enter the Chopin household and watch young Fryderyk, bent diligently over his exercise book. "Yes, the boy is certainly handsome," I murmured. "His dark hair is a tangle of curls and his dark eyes glow with the fire of genius. His forehead is high and his nose is long and thin and delicate. He is as beautiful as a painting by Van Dyke."

But not all my dream was of the genius and beauty of young Fryderyk. I left the house and went out into the fields, accompanied by the laughter and boisterous shouts of the four Chopin children. The family was to have a picnic near the stream, and Fryderyk and his three sisters were running a race to the feast their parents had spread beneath a spruce tree. The fragrance of roses and peonies and residas filled my nostrils, and I could even feel the tickle of dust in my throat, for the children's running feet had kicked it into little clouds that dispersed slowly in the light breeze.

Now what is this I hear? Mrs. Chopin is speaking, and what she says makes the children look at one another anxiously.

"To-morrow your tutor will come," she says, "and so to-night you must go to bed early to be ready to receive him."

"What is his name?" Fryderyk asks.

"Wojciech Zywny!" Mr. Chopin says.

"I thought he was called Adalbert," Mrs. Chopin says.

"Wojciech! Adalbert!" the children shout and laugh. "Wojciech! Adalbert! Well, whatever your name, we shall be prepared for you."

"Mr. Zywny is a Czech gentleman who has a reputation for severity," Mrs. Chopin warns.

And my dream blended into the imagined laughter of the four Chopin children.



Two

With the Tutor Zywny

Fryderyk Chopin was seven years old when he began regular study with the tutor, Zywny. The year was 1817 and much of Europe was still rejoicing in the final defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte. Some of the optimism that pervaded the continent must have been reflected in Mr. Zywny's countenance, for he had a friendly manner and a rare gift for winning the confidence and friendship of his young pupils. Another gift won him the devotion of young Fryderyk; it was his ability to play the violin.

Together the two, master and pupil, roved the countryside in the vicinity of the Chopin home. As they walked or sat in a meadow eating the sandwiches Ludwika had wrapped for them, they talked of music. Mr. Zywny knew many of the legends of music as well as the theory, and these he narrated dramatically.

INSTYTUT FRYDERYKA CHOPINA-NARODOWY BIBLIOTEKA
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His pupil, in turn, told them in fine style to his sisters when he returned home at night. One statement concerning music was frequently on the master's lips, and he usually spoke it slowly and impressively: "Always remember, Fryderyk, music comes from the songs of simple people."

Fryderyk was quick to understand this. Because his brilliant mind was atune to many of the wonders of the world around him, he understood it both with his mind and his heart. The knowledge was revealed in his first two compositions, Polonaise in G minor and Polonaise in B major, which he wrote at this time, probably under the direction of his devoted friend.

Mikolaj Chopin by this time had ceased to be a tutor in the Skarbek household, and had become a private teacher of French. Sometimes his pupils came to his home for their lessons, but more frequently, because they were the children of aristocrats, he went to theirs, and everywhere he went he boasted about his son, Fryderyk.

"My son is a pianist and a composer," he would say with pride, and would show the two polonaises written in the boy's handwriting.

Probably as a result of his father's constant talk of his gifts, Fryderyk, at the age of eight, was invited to give a concert at the home of the wealthy Gyrowec family in Warszawa. He had already played in the drawing-room of the Skarbek palace, but this event was far more exciting. He was to go to Warszawa, the capital of his country, and his audience would include not only wealthy aristocrats who might be inclined to be generous to a schoolmaster's little boy, but critics who had high reputations in the music circles of Europe.

Almost as soon as the invitation was received and accepted,

his mother began work on the costume he was to wear. Her son practised with no more diligence than she cut and fitted and sewed, and he was as critical of her work as Mr. Zywny was of his. Even at eight, Fryderyk Chopin had a passion for elegant clothes. He was a very proud boy on the February day in the year 1818, when he set out for the Gyrowec mansion in Warszawa, for his black satin suit fitted perfectly and a hand-made lace collar set off its dark richness. Fryderyk's young heart knew nothing but joy that day and his thoughts were still on his fine clothes when he returned home.

"Did you do well, Fryderyk?" his mother asked him. Poor woman, she had suffered great anxiety while he had been away.

"Everyone looked at my lace collar," Fryderyk answered with infinite satisfaction. No comment on his playing. No mention of applause. Just great delight in his collar. How his sisters must have struggled to hide their broad smiles!

However, the concert was a success, whether the child knew it or not. The old poet, Niemcewicz, was there and he, like the other critics, proclaimed him a genius. Soon the little house had many couriers riding to its door, bearing invitations to Fryderyk's parents for him to play at concerts or to give complete concerts himself. The first one after his Gyrowec success was from Count Skarbek, and it was followed by invitations from Prince Radziwill, Count Potocki, and Prince Lubecki. One notable invitation caused much consternation in the Chopin family.

Fryderyk had an admiring friend in the son of Princess Lowicka. When the princess saw the fame the boy was achieving, she decided that he should be brought to the attention of Prince Constantine who, as the representative of the czar of Russia, lived in the Palace Belvedere in Warszawa. Not long



"My son is a pianist and composer," he would say.

after the princess had made this decision, she secured the invitation. Young Fryderyk was delighted, but his father was not. Mikolaj Chopin did not consider it an honor to have his gifted son summoned to the presence of a member of the czar's family. After all, had he, Mikolaj, not fought for Poland's freedom?

"I will not have it. The invitation means nothing to us," he stormed.

"But, Father, it does," Fryderyk protested. "Let me play before His Royal Highness, and then he will know that we Poles have culture of our own. I'll play Polish music, my own compositions, and when he hears me, he will surely fret and fume. Polish songs will ring in his ears for days."

"Fret and fume," Mr. Chopin said thoughtfully. The thought was a good one and he gave his consent.

The Czech tutor was not won to Fryderyk's way of thinking quite so easily. Right up to the time for the boy's departure for the palace, his face wore a dark scowl of disapproval. He had no liking for the czarist domination of Poland and, in permitting his famous pupil to play before Prince Constantine, it would, he said, look as if he were pleased that the prince was in residence in Belvedere palace. But finally, Fryderyk succeeded in lifting the gloom from his face. He did it by dedicating three of his new compositions to his master. They were polonaises of such original melody and were built so harmoniously that the teacher cried for joy when he learned that they were to do honor to him.

"The greatest Polish composer has offered me his compositions," he exclaimed. "Now I shall live eternally in the minds of millions of people. The world will know that I was Fryderyk's

first teacher, for all the world will listen, enraptured, to the music of Chopin."

The composer of these three polonaises was eleven years old at this time.

From the first day that he became a member of the Chopin household, Mr. Zywny kept a diary that was devoted almost entirely to a record of Fryderyk's growth as a musician and as an individual of rare intellect and delicate emotion. Almost every lesson and every journey into the country brought new revelations of the boy's fine perception of sound and feeling. One note tells that Fryderyk could not listen to music for very long at a time without bursting into tears, and the old master pointed out that in this respect he was like Mozart who cried when he heard the sound of horns. Another one tells of Fryderyk's propensity for weaving stories swiftly and telling them tirelessly hour after hour. On one occasion his story-telling went on for so long that his school fellows who made up his audience went sound asleep. Fryderyk stared at them in dismay for a few seconds; then he dashed to the piano and assailed their ears with such a torrent of music that they wakened quickly.

It was at this time when his gift for story-telling was being developed that he and his sister Emilia wrote a comedy that revealed considerable appreciation of dramatic effects. The children produced their play for a group of friends, and Fryderyk's part as a leading character was commented on so favorably that Mr. Zywny recorded the fact in his diary. Many years later, the French authors, Honoré de Balzac and George Sand, were to write of Chopin's power for dramatic presentation in almost the same terms as his tutor had done and, like him, they blamed the

precarious condition of his health for his inability to develop this particular gift.

From early childhood, the threat of tuberculosis hung over Fryderyk Chopin, as it did over all the members of his family. An attack of the dread disease was usually preceded by long periods of lethargy and melancholy. Very early in their association, Mr. Zywny came to realize the significance of Fryderyk's face taking on a look of abject misery. The instant he saw it, he would tell the boy to close his books and leave the piano.

"We are going out into the fields," he would say. "Flowers and birds and forest trees are going to be your teacher now."

So, together, the two would wander along the pathways of the meadows and forests. They would rest often in the warm summer's sun and sometimes, wrapped in a thick cloak, Fryderyk would sleep, his head pillowed on his tutor's shoulder. Gradually, the melancholy would leave the boy. The solemn expression would vanish and he would laugh again. He would sing and answer the birds with their own calls. But, alas, no matter how strong and buoyant he might feel in the morning, the consuming fever would take possession of him again in the afternoon. It was a bitter struggle that Fryderyk Chopin had to fight with the disease that menaced him and his whole family. As he grew older, he did not yield so willingly to Mr. Zywny's pleadings that he leave his piano and desk and go out into the fields to secure rest. Instead, because he felt that death was close at hand and that he had a great deal to write in music, he stayed at the piano. One friend said that by the very speed of his compositions he tried to deafen his ears to death's approaching footsteps. It is little wonder that on these occasions, when illness all but overcame his stern resolution, his music was sad and filled

with longing for warm sunshine and quiet and peace. Let the clutches of illness lose their grip for a time, however, and his songs became happy again. Peasants worked and laughed and sang in the fields. Village boys and girls gathered on Saturday nights at the village inn to dance and sing. These were the themes of Fryderyk Chopin's joyous compositions, written when his spirit was strong enough to surmount the agonizing pain of a devastating disease.



Three

A Memorable Vacation

Mikolaj Chopin progressed steadily in his profession of teaching. From being a tutor, first with one pupil, then with many in classes, he became a teacher of French language and literature at the Lyceum of Warszawa. Later, he had a similar appointment on the staff of the School of Artillery and Military Engineering. The whole family, not Fryderyk alone, grew in community esteem. Some writers have suggested that the father's opportunities came to him as a result of his distinguished son, but there is little evidence to support this opinion. All the members of the family had initiative and ambition. Ill-health seemed

to give them great zeal for achievement. The three sisters, Ludwika, Izabela, and Emilia, had remarkable gifts that might have brought renown had they not been willing to let their dearly loved brother have many of the privileges of special training.

Fryderyk was a student at the Lyceum while his father taught there, and the diary that the boy kept and the letters he wrote to friends reveal his diligence and his almost insatiable love for pranks. As collaborators in his boyish and quite harmless escapades, he had Tytus Wojciechowski, Wilhelm Kolberg, and the brothers Wodzinski and Fontana, all fellow students. References to their mischievous sorties are frequent in Chopin's diary, but they are never descriptive—just that they had planned and done something and were variously punished or reprimanded.

What the diary does record in detail is his persistent application to the piano. He practised with much greater regularity than he ate, and he wrote music carefully and steadily. But there were days of relaxation. On birthdays and name days, for instance, the Chopin family always had celebrations. Fryderyk gathered flowers in the fields for his sisters, and twined them into graceful bouquets, or he selected cookies in the favorite village bakeshop, and delivered them cermoniously to the person being honored. On the name days of his parents, young Fryderyk usually excelled himself; he composed music which he dedicated to one parent or the other, and he wrote poems that were full of simple affection and gave promise of an ability to write verse with more than the simple rhythm of the text-book. The translation of a name-day salutation to his mother illustrates the quality of his filial devotion:

"On your name day, Mama, I greet you,
And wish heaven might show you
What is for you in my heart.
May you have health and happiness
And a long and prosperous life."

For his father, too, he showed love and respect when he greeted him with this pretty original verse:

"A joyous name day has come to the world,
Yours, my Papa, and truly to me
It brings joy.
May you live happily,
Never know grief and sorrow.
May God give you a pleasant fate—
These are the things I wish for you."

This affection which he showed for his family and which extended to his friends and his admiring tutor, Zywny, was in sharp contrast to his physical health. Day by day, the tall boy, now almost sixteen, became more delicate looking. He was so thin and frail, and applied himself to his school work and to the piano with such feverish diligence that his parents decided to send him away for a holiday. His sister, Emilia, was to accompany him. They were to go to Reinerz, a town in the mountainous part of western Poland and in the district called Slask.

This was Fryderyk's first long journey and, although he may have had some misgivings about leaving his parents, he was happy at the prospect of seeing another part of Poland. Like

two adventurers, the brother and sister set off. The fact that they were going to Reinerz because they were both threatened with serious illness appeared to put no shadow on them. Fryderyk promised to write to all his friends, and in keeping this promise he began his career as a letter writer. Few people have left a more complete record of their lives than Fryderyk Chopin did in his letters. Through all the years of his life, he wrote strong, beautiful letters to his friends. They revealed delight in simple things, confidence in his friends, and amazing buoyancy of spirit. Naturally, there were times when sickness seemed to wrap him in a heavy cloak of discouragement, but he was usually able to hide this from the people to whom he wrote.

From Reinerz, he wrote a letter to his friend, Wilhelm Kolberg, that gives an excellent account of how he responded to his new environment:

'Dear Wilus,

'After passing through Blonie, Sochaczew, Lowicz, Kutno, Klodowa, Kola, Turka, Kalisz, Ostrow, Miedzyborz, Olesnica, Wroclaw, Frankenstein, Warta, and Glac, we reached Reinerz where we are staying. I have been drinking whey and the local waters and they say I am looking better. I am said to be getting fat, and am as lazy as ever, to which fact you can ascribe the long lethargy of my pen. Believe me, though, when you learn of my mode of life here, you will agree that it is difficult to find a moment for sitting at home.

'In the morning, by six o'clock at the latest, all the patients are at the wells where there is an atrocious band of wind players —a dozen freaks of various types gathered together. The head one, a gaunt bassoonist with a snuffy, spectacled nose, frightens all the ladies who are afraid of horses, by playing to the swiftly

perambulating *Kur-Gaste*. Then there's a sort of parade or masquerade, not every one is masked—only a few besides those 'who get hanged for company.' This promenade along the beautiful avenues that connect the establishment with the town usually lasts until eight, or according to the number of glasses a person has to drink in the morning. Then everyone goes home for breakfast. After breakfast people usually go for a walk. I walk until twelve; then eat dinner, because after dinner one has to go to Brunn. After dinner there's usually a bigger parade than in the morning, because everyone is dressed up, all in different clothes from those of the morning. Again there's vile music, and so it goes until evening. As I have to drink only two glasses of Lau-Brunn after dinner I get home to supper fairly early. After supper I go to bed.

'So when can I write letters?

'It's true that I walk on the hills that encircle Reinerz; often I am so delighted with the view of these valleys that I hate to come down, which I sometimes do on all fours. Not yet have I been on the excursion that everyone takes, for it is forbidden me. Near Reinerz there is a mountain with rocks known as Heu-Scheuer and from it there is a wonderful view; but the air at the very top is not good for everybody, and unluckily I am one of the patients to whom it is not allowed. But no more about this. I have been on the mountain called Einsiedelei where there is a hermitage. We go to the top of one of the highest hills near here, and climb about a hundred and fifty steps, cut out of the stone almost vertically, to the hermitage, from which there is a magnificent view of all Reinerz. We expect to go up a certain Hohemenza, a hill said to be in beautiful surroundings; I hope it will come off.

'But it's useless to bore you with these descriptions, from which you can't get much idea anyway, for not everything lends itself to description.

'As for the ways of the place, I am so used to them that nothing worries me. At first it seemed strange to me that in Slask the women work more than the men; but as I don't do anything myself, it's easy for me to find this acceptable.

'There have been many Poles in Reinerz, but now the company is thinning; nearly all are acquaintances of mine. A good deal of social gaiety goes on among families; even the most important Germans join in the drawing-room amusements. In the house where we lodge, there is a lady from Wroclaw; her children, lively and intelligent youngsters, talk a little French. They want to speak Polish, so one of them, a friend of mine, greeted me with "*Zien dobry*" (good day). I answered, "*Dobry Dzien*" (good day). As I like the boy, I taught him to say, "*Dobry Wieczor*" (Good evening). By the next day he was so muddled that instead of saying "*Dobry dzien,*" he said "*Zien Wieczor*" (day evening). I don't know how he got this, and had quite a job explaining that it is not "*Zien Wieczor*" but "*Dobry Wieczor.*"

'I've taken up too much of your time; perhaps you'd prefer to be doing something else. But I'm about to finish, for I'm going to the Brunn for two glasses of water and a gingerbread, whereby I remain,

The same as always
Fr. Chopin.'

After the Chopin brother and sister returned from the Slask health resort, Fryderyk went to Strzyzewo to visit his godmother, Mrs. Wiesolowski, who was the sister of Count Skarbek. Here

at his godmother's home, he met Prince Antoni Radziwill, whose wife was related to the king of Prussia. What was more important than the prince's royal connection, from Fryderyk's point of view, was his appreciation of music. He heard the boy play, and in great enthusiasm carried him off as one does a prize to his palace in the Poznan district of Poland, where Fryderyk met many renowned German and Italian musicians. While he was in these delightful surroundings and in this congenial company, he wrote a number of polonaises; one of them, he called "Adieu," and dedicated it to his friend, Wilhelm Kolberg, the Wilus of the letters.

The delicate melodies of these polonaises had an ethereal quality mingled with their dancing gaiety, and they had something more which Prince Radziwill and some of his guests were quick to perceive; they had maturity and originality. This sixteen-year-old composer was not bound to the old and established rules of composition. His gift was something individual; it was new and, for all its delicacy, extremely powerful. The critics were amazed and a little dubious but, even so, they realized that a new and precious life was being poured out into the constant stream of music.

Four

At the Conservatory

The year 1827 brought Fryderyk Chopin his seventeenth birthday and graduation from the Lyceum. His general studies were over and now he could give all his time and thought to music. Of course he had played the piano every day from his babyhood, but, at last, a wish dear to his heart was to be gratified —he could now play and compose without fear of interruption. There was no need for his teacher, Zywny, his parents, or his older sister, Ludwika, to urge him for, as one of his admiring friends said, it was more natural for him to go to the piano than to the breakfast table.

The Conservatory of Music in Warszawa was held in high esteem throughout Europe. It had not yet suffered the indignity the Russian czar was to put upon it: that of becoming a storage house for military supplies. One of the prominent professors was Josef Elsner, whose reputation was as great as that of the conservatory. One writer has said that Elsner was the heart of the institution, while its soul was the composer, Kurpinski. The pupils loved Elsner; they stood in awe of the illustrious Kurpinski.

When Fryderyk Chopin, at sixteen, one year before he left the Lyceum, began his study of the theory of music at the con-

servatory, he found Professor Elsner patient and forbearing, and Fryderyk had reason to be thankful for this forbearance, as he has recorded in his correspondence with his friends. There are many references to the jokes he and his fellow students played on the kind-hearted master, but one, in particular, has been described many times. It had such a happy ending and so well portrays Fryderyk's growing genius that it is worth mentioning here.

"Music comes from the songs of the people"—these words of the old master, Zywny, had become a conviction with Fryderyk. They were like a sign-post to him, guiding him to the goal of his ambition. Or, perhaps, it would be more appropriate to say that these often-repeated words of Mr. Zywny's made the basic theme of Fryderyk's philosophy of music. Just as frequently as Mr. Zywny said them to him, Fryderyk said them to his friends and teachers at the conservatory—"music comes from the songs of the people," and as his confidence in his own powers as a composer grew, he did not hesitate to add, "my creative music is connected with the songs of the people."

One of his conservatory pranks had its origin in his wish to prove this statement. In carrying it out, he had the active coöperation of his friend, Julek Fontana. The two went to a village near Warszawa and, as they went, they talked seriously, pausing frequently to discuss and debate their plans. Long before they reached the village square, the scheme had taken on greater proportions than those of a prank. It had become an important experiment.

Once in the village, they began looking about for boys—country boys sent on messages to the shops, street urchins loitering indolently on the village green, alert ragamuffins looking

for pennies. Any boy whom they saw was a "prospect" to the two youths from Warszawa.

Julek Fontana did the talking. "Can you play tunes?" was the question he asked each one. If a boy replied that he could, the next query was, "What instrument?"

"Dulcimer," one answered.

"Flute," another shouted.

"Violin," still another proclaimed.

"Fife," one and another and another cried out.

And other instruments were mentioned, ancient folk instruments, the names of which have been forgotten. Fryderyk and Julek smiled their satisfaction, and Julek took a bag of zlotys from his pocket. How they had hoarded those precious bits of silver! For months and weeks. But now they were ready to spend them.

"Bring your instruments here to the green," Julek commanded. "We will pay you, see!" He held up a zloty, and shook his money bag to show that he had many more.

Zlotys! The boys were off at top speed to do his bidding. When they returned as eagerly as they had departed, Fryderyk Chopin addressed them. He spoke to them in a group, but he succeeded later in speaking quietly to each boy by himself. What kind of tunes did he play? Who had taught him to make music? When did he play his dulcimer, violin, or flute? These were the questions he asked and, bit by bit, he won the boys' confidence. They did not quite know what he wanted them to do, but they were, nevertheless, willing to do it.

"We are going to practise mazurkas, krakowiaks, and kujawiaks," Chopin told them. "We shall go to the meadow yonder, and practise until you are tired. Agreed?" The boys agreed.

Perhaps they saw Julek Fontana taking his bag of zlotys from his pocket again.

"When you can play well enough, we will take you to Warszawa to play in a large hall before an audience that loves music," Fontana said as he distributed the silver.

"These people will not be fooled by false notes," Fryderyk warned. "You must play truly and splendidly."

The boys' eyes glowed. This was an adventure they liked. They set to work with a will. Soon the broad, green meadow was flooded with rich and lovely music. Sometimes Julek relieved Fryderyk in directing the orchestra, but usually Fryderyk stood there, guiding and leading the boys to fuller tones and more rhythmic blending of the melodies. They rehearsed and rehearsed. Soon the boys became so engrossed in the music that they forgot to demand more zlotys.

The final day arrived. The boys were as breathless with eagerness as were their two young leaders. They helped Julek find a wagon and horses and, when the peasant hesitated about renting them, it was one of the boys who pointed out the profit he would make.

"We are going only a few miles," the boy said, "and with your fee, you will be able to buy yourself a sheep. No need to tell your master."

The peasant consented but, as they drove away, he shouted after them to be sure to be back before evening. With a shrug of his shoulders, he turned back to his work. What if his nobleman-master found out? Then there would be no meat for his table and no warm, sheep-lined coat for his son, who shivered in the winter's cold because his linen coat had no padding of sheep's hide. Ah, welladay! no matter what his master might



do and no matter how his wife might scold, he had acted for the best. Still, he might have asked them why they wanted the horse and wagon. The peasant sighed anxiously.

The boys were quiet as the old wagon bore them along the dusty road. They had their instruments gripped under their arms. They were going to Warszawa, exciting enough in itself, but where were they going in the vast old city? And why, exactly? To play in a hall before an audience, yes, but—. They looked at their two young leaders, and began to nudge one another. Was it all a joke, perhaps? Some strange, ridiculous prank? Fryderyk and Julek were talking to one another in whispers. It was Fryderyk who, at last, spoke to the boys.

"We shall appear together at a concert. Together we shall play the mazurkas, kujawiaks, and krakowiaks just as we have practised. Remember—in exactly the same order."

"We'll not forget! Never fear, we will remember," the boys promised.

They were drawing close to the city now. They could see church spires gleaming in the sun. They passed the guarded entrances to several ancient palaces. They saw fat noblemen being driven along the road in carriages that had shining gold decorations and liveried servants sitting on the carriage boxes. The boys were awed by the strangeness of all they saw—people, carriages, palaces, churches. Was it possible that they had come so far in so short a time?

In the meantime the term-closing concert had started at the conservatory. The stately auditorium was crowded. Some students played the piano; others played violins and harpsichords. The audience applauded and cast approving glances at Professor Elsner, but the poor professor was too worried to notice

them. He was sick with anxiety. Perspiration stood out in great beads on his forehead. Sometimes he sat in his chair but, more frequently, he moved about stealthily—looking here, looking there, watching doors open and close, listening, whispering to someone to look in the basement or in a practice room down a corridor. He *must* be somewhere, that mischievous Fryderyk. He could not have vanished into thin air. His father and mother and three sisters were seated in the audience; they looked undisturbed. Undisturbed, were they? Well, he knew that he, Josef Elsner, was more than disturbed. He was torn between anxiety and anger. Even the old piano standing so sedately on the platform looked as if it shared his perplexity, for it, like the master, was waiting for the best pupil of the year to perform.

"Now what is this I hear?" the professor fumed to himself. It was the steady patter—patter—patter of bare feet marching on to the concert platform of the conservatory, and every pair of feet carried a country boy dressed in poor clothes, and every boy carried a musical instrument. And there, behind the boys, was Fryderyk Chopin. The master covered his astonished face with his hands. "What will this crazy boy do next?" he murmured wrathfully, and did not dare to look at the stage again until the laughter that had greeted the boys subsided.

Now the great auditorium was still. As the soft melodies of Chopin's mazurkas flowed through it, the boys picked up the song, and began to play. The audience lost its curiosity, and listened intently. The music rose and fell. It filled the hall. It mounted to the high towers. It entered the minds and hearts of the listeners and they trembled with delight. A rosy glow suffused Professor Elsner's face. This was something wonderful. Wonderful.

Suddenly the village boys stopped playing. They put their instruments back under their arms, and stood like soldiers at attention. Now Fryderyk Chopin played, and the music that came from his fingers was of birds singing, winds blowing, people working in the fields, water trickling and flowing steadily in streams. The sun shone in this music; the skies were blue and peaceful; the world was golden with warmth. Young Chopin was playing the songs of the people, songs that people trained to listen to music had never before heard. New and thrilling music had been born in the meadow. Fryderyk Chopin had taken leave of the old regulations of composition and was playing as he felt and had heard. He was playing the songs of the people. He was pouring out the music that was in his heart and soul.

As the people listened, they lost a sense of the reality about them. They were held enthralled by the music, and some stared at Fryderyk as they would have done at a magician. And he, apparently unaware of the new doors of enjoyment he had opened, played on and on. His head was held high and his shoulders erect. His long slim fingers danced over the keys. His eyes flamed with ardor, and some in the audience said afterward that his dark head and delicately shaped face appeared to be framed in a halo.

Then his hands seemed to grow tired, but they did not falter; it was as if his fingers were caressing the keyboard. Little by little, the quick, sharp, staccato sounds faded. Gradually the melody died away, and the great hall became silent.

The silence remained unbroken until a strong, clear voice exclaimed, "genius." The man who spoke was Professor Josef Elsner.

Five

Berlin

Emilia Chopin, Fryderyk's young sister, died shortly after they returned from the mountain health resort. This was a hard blow to all the family, for its members were closely knit by bonds of affection, based not on relationship so much as on talent, for all the Chopins loved music. Ludwika, the oldest child, was Fryderyk's mentor and guide; Emilia had been his companion. The sorrow over her death, which had been caused by tuberculosis, had such a serious effect on Fryderyk's health that his parents decided to send him away again, this time to Berlin.

The painter, Miroszewski, made a portrait of the seventeen-year-old boy at this time, and it reveals that his parents' fears were justifiable. The disease was slowly putting its mark on him. His cheeks were sunken and ghastly white and his eyes had a feverish brightness. The portrait shows that at this time he had a large and conspicuous Adam's apple and that his ears were large and thick; the latter characteristic was then considered an evidence of developing consumption.

The boy's appearance, coupled with Emilia's death, made Mr. Chopin eager to place Fryderyk under the care of a good and experienced doctor. He found a willing assistant in Dr.

Jarocki, a friend of the family, who was then preparing to go to Berlin to attend a convention of naturalists. Would Dr. Jarocki allow Fryderyk to accompany him, the anxious parents wondered, and if he would, would he ask the renowned German naturalist, Humboldt, to recommend a physician who could be consulted about Fryderyk's health? It took Mr. and Mrs. Chopin a long time to muster courage enough for their two requests. When, at last, they did, they were delighted to find that Dr. Jarocki agreed on both scores. He even promised that, under his direction, Fryderyk should have the opportunity to do as much sightseeing as he was strong enough to do.

It was a happy Fryderyk who bade good-bye to his parents on the morning of September the ninth, 1828, and his parents were no less elated. They had filled his purse with zlotys and more money had been given to Dr. Jarocki. Mr. Chopin was earning a substantial salary now, so Fryderyk could have everything he needed; in fact, he could have a few luxuries.

The sun was shining fitfully and the air was hazy with a light autumn mist when the mail carriage rumbled over the cobbled streets of Warszawa. In five days, if rain did not overtake them, the two travellers, Dr. Jarocki and Fryderyk Chopin, would be in Berlin. The first part of the journey fascinated Fryderyk. He liked the dark, mysterious forests into which the narrow, twisting road frequently plunged. He liked the rain-soaked, stubbled fields and the blithe singing of the cowherds tending their cattle in the pastures. Something else, too, filled him with delight, and he never missed a chance to hear it. It was the rich, full rhythm of the speech of Western Poland. These strong, hardy people had kept to their native language in open defiance of the Germans who ruled them. They spoke Polish

with a purity of sound and phrase that was little short of a revelation to Fryderyk Chopin.

As they approached Berlin, Fryderyk, wearied by the long journey which had lengthened into six days, ceased to contemplate the landscape, and gave up getting out of the carriage at every posting house to talk to the hostler or the inn-keeper. Instead, he began to think of politics and social reform, a natural turn of mind for a Pole approaching the capital of the foreign power that dominated his country.

"Poland should be free," he exclaimed suddenly to Dr. Jarocki, "and what is just as important, peasant, nobleman, and city worker should have equal privileges and responsibilities."

"Ah, yes, yes," Dr. Jarocki murmured, barely taking his eyes and thoughts from the steady, tedious downpour of rain. "Yes, yes, and so, Fryderyk, you have been reading what Tadeusz Kosciuszko said in Krakow in 1794." Dr. Jarocki was not anxious to engage the boy in a discussion, for he thought that, tired as he was, the excitement of proving a point would be too much for him. Consequently, he evinced little interest in Fryderyk's remark.

"Indeed, yes," Fryderyk answered feverishly, "and I believe what he said. I esteem him highly for that magnificent utterance at Krakow. What's more, it's my opinion that if he had been born twenty years earlier Poland might never have suffered this insulting partition."

Dr. Jarocki smiled. The boy's fervor was irresistible, at least to him, Jarocki, for he held the same belief. Nevertheless, he replied quietly and with no suggestion of interest.

"When your father was in his middle twenties," he said,

"he was in the Kosciuszko insurrection. He fought in 1794 and so did many others, but Poland could not free herself."

"I know! I know!" Fryderyk answered. "He has often told me of it, but not enough men engaged in that revolt. And think —they had no weapons but scythes and pitchforks and axes. I tell you, Dr. Jarocki, our country was sold by our noblemen. They were bought by an emperor in Vienna, a group of Prussian militants, and a mad czar in Russia."

Fryderyk stopped suddenly, and glanced at Dr. Jarocki, but the doctor appeared to be giving most of his attention to the bedraggled landscape. This irritated Fryderyk, who moved closer to him, and shouted at the top of his voice, "If Poland were free to-day, you, Sir Doctor, would not have to travel to Berlin to attend a convention of naturalists. It would be held in Warszawa."

"Enough, Fryderyk!" Dr. Jarocki said sternly. "We are even now within the boundaries of Berlin."

There was nothing for the boy to do but obey. He sat back, flushed and annoyed with himself. A Pole, no matter how intense his nationalism, had no right to express it so fervently, especially over the borders in Prussia. He cast a few anxious glances at Jarocki, but he appeared to have forgotten his companion's spirited oration on freedom. The truth was that even if Dr. Jarocki had not held the same opinion as Fryderyk, he would not have reprimanded him anyway, for he respected his youthful loyalty and his great gift for music. He almost stood in awe of this impestuous, delicate, talented boy who had been placed in his care.

On Sunday at three o'clock, the dusty carriage rattled to a stop before a quiet hotel in Berlin. The travel-weary passengers

got out laboriously, and limped into its bright warmth, fragrant with the smell of cooking food. Fryderyk Chopin had completed his first journey between Warszawa and Berlin. He would rest now, and eat a good meal. Dr. Jarocki would do the same but, first, before the doctor would permit himself too much luxury, he called in a fellow member of his profession for a consultation on Fryderyk's health. Had the dread disease got a firm grip on him or was he strong enough to stand strenuous sightseeing and concert-going? The doctor whose advice he secured was not very encouraging. "Fryderyk must rest, and he must eat plenty of nourishing food," he said firmly and, as for going about, well, he was doubtful. A little, perhaps.

Fryderyk, apparently, was not doubtful at all, for the next thing Dr. Jarocki knew, the boy had tickets for the theater and for concerts. He had even procured a card of admission to the Prussian Parliament, then in session.

His first letter to his parents, after a brief note informing them of his safe arrival, was written on September the twentieth and, because it reveals his well-developed critical faculties as well as his humor and acute observation, it is given in part:

'I am well, and since Tuesday, as if for my special pleasure, there has been something new in the theater each day. And still better, I have already heard one Oratorio in the *Singakademie;* Cortez Cimarosa's "Il Matrimonio Segreto"; and I have also heard Onslow's "Colporteur." But Handel's Oratorio, "Cacilienfest," is nearer to my ideal of music.

'There are no celebrated female singers here just now, except Fraul Tibaldi (alto) and the seventeen-year-old Von Schatzel girl, whom I heard first at the *Singakademie* and then in the theater in the "Colporteur." I liked her better in the ora-

torio; perhaps I was in a better mood for listening. But even so, there was a "but"; let's hope it will not be so when I go to Paris.

'I have not been to Lichtenstein's again, for he is so busy with the affairs of the session that Mr. Jarocki has scarcely had a word with him. Despite this, however, he took the trouble to get me a ticket to the sessions. I had a splendid seat, saw and heard everything, and even had a good look at the crown prince. I have seen Spontini, Zelter, and Mendelssohn, but did not speak to any one of them, for I felt too shy to introduce myself. Prince Radziwill is expected to-day. After lunch I shall go and inquire. I saw Princess Lignicki in the *Singakademie* and, observing some one in livery talking to her, asked my neighbor if it might be the king's representative. "It is his Excellency von Humboldt," he answered.

'The ministerial uniform had changed his appearance so much that, though the features of this great pedestrian (you know, that he has climbed the Cimborasso) are printed on my memory, I did not recognize him. Yesterday he was at the "Colporteur," or as they call it here, "Hausirer." In Polish, I suppose it would be "Kramarz" (Pedlar). He was in Prince Karl's royal box.

'The day before yesterday I visited the library. It is huge but has very few musical works. I saw there an autographed letter of Kosciuszko which Falkenstein, the biographer of our hero, had copied out, or so I judged by the shape of the letters. Finding that we were Poles and could read the document easily, he (the biographer) asked Mr. Jarocki to translate it into German, and he wrote it down from dictation into his pocket book. He (Falkenstein) is quite a young man, and holds the post of



The servants came from their pantries.

secretary of the Dresden library. I also met the editor of the *Berlin Musical Gazette,* and exchanged a few words with him.

'To-morrow, Freischutz! That is what I want. I shall be able to compare him with some of our singers. To-day I received a ticket for the Exercirhaus dinner.

'I have some more caricatures now. . . .'

This letter gives no suggestion that he was alarmed about his health. It is full of energy and youthful enthusiasm for the sights and opportunities offered him in a visit to a famous city. The same buoyancy of spirit and physical well-being must have been with him when he was returning to Warszawa. On a late afternoon, he stopped for the night at an inn in the village of Zullichau, and to his great delight found a piano in the sitting-room. He began to play, not the recollections of the great music he had heard in Berlin, but his own compositions based on Polish folk songs.

The barmaids left their mugs and tumblers. The servants came from their pantries. The master left his desk, and carriages were drawn to a standstill at the command of their surprised passengers. Some of the travellers even sent their drivers into the tavern to inquire about the music and the pianist. It was strange music, and strangely compelling. Soon Fryderyk had a large audience gathered about the piano, and when he became tired of playing, he rose and gave a speech about his music. In conclusion, he said boldly, "This village was once Polish, just as Berlin itself was founded by Poles." The suggestion was simple and surely many of the travellers must have appreciated it—it was most fitting for a young Pole to play the music of the Polish countryside and of Polish peasants, in a village whose

origin was Polish. Fortunately, no stormy Prussian was there to shout scorn at him.

In about a month after he and Dr. Jarocki had left Warszawa, Fryderyk was back home again. He enjoyed describing the cold, austere city of Berlin to his sisters and his friends. They had many good laughs over his accounts of Prussian formality and the Prussian love for gold braid and saluting.

The year that followed was a memorable one in Fryderyk's life, for he wrote many compositions. It seemed as if music was pouring from him in a constant, rich stream. Polonaise in B flat major; Rondo in C major, for two pianos; Sonata in C minor (Opus 4), dedicated to Professor Elsner; Variations on La ci darem la mano (Opus 2), dedicated to his school friend, Tytus Wojciechowski. This last work was published three years later by Haslinger of Vienna. A year later, Robert Schumann wrote an article about the "Variations" in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung:*

'Eusebius came in softly the other day. You know the ironic smile that comes over his pale face when he tries to mystify one. I was at the piano with Florestan . . .

'Eusebius placed a piece of music before us, and said, "Hats off to a genius, gentleman." We were not allowed to see the title.

'I turned over the pages mechanically; music without words, strangely enough, has something enchanting about it, a kind of mysterious joy. Moreover, I have a notion that each composer's music presents to our eyes a peculiar and distinctly characteristic face; Beethoven has a different look from Mozart on paper . . . Now I imagined that eyes quite unknown, the eyes

of flowers, of basilisks, for instance, were gazing at me with wonder and wisdom. In some places the face became quite distinct. I thought I saw Mozart's "La ci darem la mano" entwined with a hundred chords: Leporello seemed actually to wink at me, and Don Giovanni flitted before me in a white cloak."

' "Play it!" Florestan said. Eusebius consented and, ensconced in a window-seat, we listened. Eusebius played as if inspired, making a procession of innumerable figures, animated with the most vivid life, pass before us.

'Imagine our astonishment when we read Opus 2 beneath the title! Above exclamations of applause, we could hear what the audience would soon be saying: "At last we have something perfect . . . Chopin . . . Never heard that name . . . Who is he? . . . Well, no matter, a genius in any case." '

When Fryderyk Chopin heard these words of one of the most esteemed critics and musicians of his time, he was not carried away on a great wave of elation. Instead, they gave him courage to try to do more work. More and better work. He began at once on his Trio in G minor for piano, violin, and cello, which he finished in 1829 while he was resting at Prince Radziwill's estate near Poznan.

It was a congenial assemblage of guests that the prince had gathered in his palace on this occasion. There were several musicians, at least two renowned artists, and a number of scientists. During the day they hunted, rode horseback through the country, or sunned themselves in the spacious gardens. In the evenings they came together for entertainment, and it was on one of these occasions that Fryderyk Chopin played his newly completed "Trio."

He played a great deal for the guests during the vacation,

but he did more playing when they were not listening. Once the guests had gone to bed and he thought they must be asleep, he would close the door of his room and practise far into the night. As the hours rolled by, his music grew in quality and force. Often an early-rising guest would find himself greeted not by the dawn alone nor by the sweet song of the lark, but by the dawn, the lark, and the flowing music of Fryderyk Chopin.

"How is it that you, a mere boy, can play so well?" one person and another asked the delicate youth.

"Zywny and Elsner taught me," he would reply shyly.

If this answer did not seem sufficient to satisfy their surprise at his ability, he would add, "From those two masters, even a stupid donkey could learn to play."

Six

Vienna and Fame

Three years after his enrollment at the Conservatory of Music in Warszawa, Fryderyk Chopin completed his studies there. With his graduation, he announced an important decision to his parents and Professor Elsner. "I have decided to devote all my time to composing music," he said.

He was not going to teach. He had no wish to become a renowned concert pianist. He was full of music, as a mountain river is full of water and, as it is constantly refreshed by tempestuous mountain streams, so the countryside and its people constantly refreshed the music in him. He had to write it and give it to the world.

Professor Elsner was pleased with the boy's resolve and, if his parents had any regret that he had not chosen to be a music master, they refrained from saying anything.

There is no record that any member of his family kept a diary of his progress, but several of the professor's notes have been published. One reads, "Lessons in musical composition: F. F. Chopin, third year student—amazing capabilities; musical genius. July 20, 1829." The others are quite similar; the professor never ceased to wonder at the boy's gift.

So now his formal, directed education was over. He was his own master, at least as much as his burning ambition would permit him to be. There were many times when he seemed to be nothing more than the servant of his amazing talent. However, on a late July day of the year he left the conservatory, young Fryderyk Chopin had no sense of being subject to any force but his own eager, boyish desire for adventure. With three friends, Celinski, Hube, and Maciejowski, he set out on the road to Vienna. Vienna, the city of music and wine and gaiety! Fryderyk's heart beat fast, and his usually pale cheeks had a feverish glow. Even then, an idea was growing into a plan in his mind. He was going to the city of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert. It would be *his* city, too, his city of joyous music.

The road to Vienna was no less tedious than the one to Berlin, but this time the weather was warm and sunny. Fryderyk had merry companions and his health was better than when he and Dr. Jarocki had travelled to the Prussian capital. Just as the first journey had had compensations for him in allowing him to become acquainted with the western part of Poland, so this one gave him the privilege of visiting Poland's ancient capital of Krakow. The four boys marched up and down the stately corridors of Jagiello University, and talked in awed whispers of its renown and of the illustrious men who had passed through its gloomy portals. Another place that attracted them was the Wawel Castle which once had been the home of Poland's kings. The sight of the magnificence that had belonged to their country in the days of her freedom did not cast any shadow on the four boys, whose thoughts, naturally, were turned to the future. From Krakow, they went through the rich mining country of

Slask, into the dense forests of Moravia, and thence into Austria.

Vienna in the late twilight of the last day of July of the year 1829—to this rich old city came Fryderyk Chopin and, once within its friendly bounds, he knew that he had come into an environment in which he could be happy. It is easy to imagine him wandering up and down the narrow streets and walking slowly along the winding paths of the city gardens. He must have walked and sat for hours on the banks of the storied Danube, but his letters told little of his spiritual delight in Vienna. Instead, he recorded for his parents' benefit the names of the persons who received him and entertained him. He gave them an account, too, of the music he heard, and in this information they must have read assurance of Fryderyk's pleasure in his holiday.

The four boys had gone to Vienna well armed with letters of introduction. Fryderyk's file was probably the most impressive, for the leading musicians of Warszawa were anxious to present "the genius" of their city to people prominent in the music circles of Vienna. The first persons to take young Mr. Chopin on a tour of the city were the music publisher, Haslinger and his wife. At their home he met Count Gallenberg, the director of the Imperial and Royal Opera House of Vienna. Within the first few days of his arrival, he sent word home to his parents and sisters that he had seen Boïeldieu's comic opera, "La Dame Blanche" and Meyerbeer's opera, "Il Crociato in Egitto," and had attended a variety of concerts. His comments were amusing and critical, and his father, especially, must have smiled delightedly at a few of the haughty comparisons he made between the austere music then in vogue in Vienna and his own

simple, warm compositions. From the boy's babyhood, Mr. Chopin's confidence in his son's gift had not wavered.

Another person whom Fryderyk met through the good offices of the Haslingers, was the noted journalist, Blahetka, and through him he met Blahetka's beautiful daughter. It was while he was "seeing the sights" and hearing the music of Vienna under the guidance of Blahetka, Haslinger, or Gallenberg that he met an old acquaintance from Warszawa by the name of Wurfel. He was a pianist who had experience in the ways of music in Vienna, and it was not long before Fryderyk was turning to him constantly for advice, a fact which so pleased Wurfel that he gave his assistance generously.

When Fryderyk Chopin had decided to go to Vienna, he had had a plan in his mind for one particular thing he wanted to do; it was to give a concert in the renowned city of music, and early in August, Count Gallenberg presented him to a curious audience in the Royal Opera House. How Fryderyk's heart must have beat on that day! He was to appear not in an obscure concert hall but in the most important institution of its kind in Austria, and perhaps in all Europe. Surely Mikolaj Chopin in Warszawa must have found it difficult to give his mind to his teaching that day; perhaps he had many reveries that took his mind back through the years of nearly two decades to the time when he had first begun to believe that his baby son had a rare and precious talent for music composition. And sister Ludwika—it must have been an exciting day for her, too, and in sisterly fashion she must have thought with pride that she had helped to bring this opportunity to Fryderyk. After all, she had been his very first teacher.

Fryderyk's concert began with Beethoven's "Prometheus

Overture," and he followed it with his own "Variations" on the theme of "La ci darem la mano." Miss Veltheim sang after this, and then Fryderyk, completely and happily at his ease now, played his "Rondo à la Mazur" (Opus 5). When the enthusiastic audience called out for more, he began to improvise on the theme of the opera he had heard a few days before—"La Dame Blanche."

He had kept the music dearest to his heart for the last. It was based on a Polish folk song entitled "Chmiel," which was almost as important at a Polish wedding as the ceremony itself. It was gentle, then blithe with dancing ripples; then it rose to gay laughter, and ended with dignity that was full and almost stately. The words of the song were as euphonious as the melody was beautiful, and it is unfortunate that the rhythm of the words cannot be shown in the translation:

"Oh, hop, hop!
You fertile grass—
Without you there could never be a wedding.
Oh, hop! Oh, hop! Oh, you slow creature!
Let the Heavenly Father help you . . ."

This concert served to introduce the Polish composer to many more artists and aristocrats who patronized the arts. The chief musicians who came to congratulate him and discuss his theories of composition with him were Lachner, Seyfried, Kreutzer, and Mayseder. Among the aristocrats who left their seats and went to the platform to shake hands with the young composer after his concert was Count Dietrichstein. Another was Countess Lichnowski, who afterward invited him to tea many times



Fryderyk Chopin from a sketch made at the time of his visit to Vienna.

and with whose daughter he became friendly. Both the mother and daughter became his devoted admirers.

The days that the four friends had agreed to spend in Vienna were slipping by very swiftly. Fryderyk had found them not to be a vacation but, as he had hoped, an adventure in music. He had listened; he had participated in many discussions; he had talked at length and with good judgment about his own music; and he had presented his music to an appreciative audience. Certainly the reality was proving to be even greater than the eager anticipation. The time for departure was very close at hand when an invitation came for a second concert. Yes, he would give it and play his own compositions entirely. The audience, so the papers reported, was more distinguished than that attending the first concert, and the young musician was, if that were possible, even better in his presentation.

The next day Fryderyk and his friend, Maciejowski, set out for Prague where they were to be the guests of Mr. Hauke, curator of the museum in that city and an important person in the cultural life of the ancient city. Within three days, Fryderyk and his friend were on their way to Dresden, the capital of Saxony, and Fryderyk's mind was absorbed by the concerts he was planning to give there. He was prepared to give two but, in a short time after his arrival, he was invited to give another two. Four concerts in twice as many days and, unhesitatingly, he agreed. No thought for his health. No recollection, apparently, of the times when the disease of his family had threatened him with long illness. His mind was completely on his music. Every request to play was a privilege for him, and when he gave a concert he poured out song after song, with no thought

of conserving his strength. He knew that what he had to give was valuable, and he was willing to give it without stint. Despite his eagerness to play, the strenuous work it entailed wore him out. He became exhausted and, if the crown prince at whose court he had given the four concerts had not invited him to his country estate in Teplitz, Frederyk probably would have been forced to hide himself in a quiet hotel for days, perhaps even for weeks.

When the holiday at Teplitz was nearly over, Fryderyk said to his friend, Maciejowski, "I would like to go back to Warszawa. I want to see my people," and Maciejowski, who had been worried by the boy's pallor and languor, agreed at once.

It was not entirely because of weariness that he wanted to return home. The truth was that he was bursting with pride in his achievements and receptions, and wanted to tell his father and mother about them. He had a scrapbook of the critics' reports on his work, and he could imagine the delight his family would have in reading it. In the evening, when the day's work was finished, they would gather around the drawing-room table and one sister or the other would read the comments aloud. One, from an esteemed Viennese critic, Fryderyk had decided to read himself. Not that he would need to read it, for he knew it by heart and, as their carriage rattled over the road from Terplitz to Warszawa, he often said it to himself:

"To-day again Mr. Chopin gave universal satisfaction. This young man goes his own road and, in doing so, he succeeds in pleasing, even though his music differs widely from all other concert forms . . . The exquisite delicacy of his touch; the indescribable dexterity of his technique; the subtle finish of his tone gradations, reflecting a profoundly sensitive nature; the

clearness of his interpretation and of his compositions—all bear the mark of great genius."

By the twelfth of September the travellers, Chopin and Maciejowski, had reached the village of Wola, which was near Warszawa, when a wheel of their carriage broke. Even though Fryderyk's home was only a few miles away, they decided to wait until the vehicle was repaired. The reason may have been that Fryderyk was much too tired to walk any distance, but it is probable that he felt music in the rich, golden colors of autumn and in the soft, mellow, hazy autumn air, fragrant with the perfume of freshly cut grain and hay and newly picked fruit. Besides, he must have heard the rhythm of the boatmen's oars on the river and the steady songs of the bargemen, mingling with the lighter melodies of the songs of the field workers.

As they rested under the shade of a far-spreading oak tree, an old beggar, toothless and barefoot, came up to them. He carried a lyre under his arm and, as he approached them, the tap-tap-tap of his cane let them know that he was more than half blind. These almost sightless eyes, he turned toward Fryderyk and said, "My master, great fame is waiting for you in this world."

Fryderyk and his friend looked at each other in wonder. The old man could not know that the young man had already given promise of making this prophecy come true. Before either could question the beggar, he continued, "You will search for happiness, but will never find it. Even your fame will not bring you real joy. A time will come when everyone will leave you. You will be lonely. Even the girl you are thinking of now will forget you."

"Enough of this nonsense!" Fryderyk cried out sternly. His face was flushed with anger and alarm and, in an effort to take his mind off the vagabond's prophecy, Maciejowski began to laugh.

"The girl, I suppose, my dear Fryderyk, is Blahetka's daughter," he said, but Fryderyk did not answer. His countenance that had been almost radiant became dark and sad.

"She is beautiful and a composer, too," Maciejowski added, but still Fryderyk remained absorbed in gloom. The prophecy was like a weight on his shoulders. No real joy! He shuddered.

The old beggar took his lyre from under his arm, and began playing. Strange, melancholy music. Was he, this barefoot beggar, calling out to the autumn winds to blow their chill, wintry blasts across the stubble fields and to send the fallen leaves scurrying in little clusters in search of safety? In the sad strains of the old lyrist's song, Fryderyk forgot the prophecy, and did not hear his friend's jesting. He was lost in thought of the wind, and filled with wonder at its power. It was an enchanting instrument of music, a beckoning, whimsical, playful instrument, that promised so much, and yet scurried away or hurried away or floated away before the promise could be realized. But he, Fryderyk Chopin, would catch that wind's melodies and weave them into a song that would live forever.



Seven

Love

Back in Warszawa once more, Fryderyk's thoughts turned to Vienna. He longed to return to the city of the Danube, for there, more than anywhere else he had been, the environment and his spirit seemed to blend into a perfect whole. Perhaps, too, the recollection of the praise that had been heaped upon him made him wish to enjoy it again. There, he had been received with enthusiasm as a composer of renown, as if his reputation were already made, while at home in Warszawa he was Mikolaj Chopin's son, the boy who had done well as a student at the conservatory.

A few days after his return to his family, he wrote to his friend, Tytus Wojciechowski, about his desire to go to Vienna again. The letter is dated October third, 1829:

". . . I am sure you will realize that I must go back to Vienna; but it is not because of Miss Blahetka, about whom, I think, I wrote you. She is young, pretty, and a pianist, but I, perhaps unfortunately, already have my own ideal whom I have served faithfully, though silently, for half a year. The adagio of my concerto belongs to her, and this morning thoughts of her inspired the little waltz I send to you." At the end of the letter he added, "No one knows about this but you."

The "ideal" whom he mentioned was later revealed to be Konstancja Gladkowski, a girl who had studied singing at the conservatory while he studied the theory of composition. But Konstancja was in Warszawa, not Vienna, so why should he wish to go back to Austria? Perhaps, on his return, Konstancja showed little interest in him; perhaps his sensitive heart even then detected the course that was being taken with him and his "ideal."

However, he did not return to Vienna at this time, probably because his parents, realizing that his health could not stand the strenuous life of many concerts and much entertainment, persuaded him to stay in Warszawa where they and his sisters could look after him. Later, there was another reason for his willingness to remain at home, for although Konstancja had, at first, seemed indifferent to her pale-faced admirer, she now began showing a marked interest in him. He went to her home and for her he first played his Concerto in F minor. In February, 1830, he finished this concerto, and on March seventeenth gave his first big concert in Warszawa. Proud young

Konstancja must have been pleased with the praise and the prophecies of fame that followed this concert.

At this concert, Fryderyk honored his teacher, Elsner, by playing as his first selection the overture from an opera which the professor had composed. He followed it with his own new concerto, and concluded the concert with a medley of Polish folk songs.

Now he was in a whirl of work and entertainment. Warszawa was by no means as extravagant in its praise as Vienna had been, but nevertheless he had innumerable invitations to play his compositions. In less than two weeks after his first big concert, he gave another. This time he played a krakowiak and fragments from his new concerto which in its slow movements paid tribute to his love for the blue-eyed Konstancja. This concert concluded with improvisations on the theme, "The ways of the Town."

But what of Konstancja during this time? Standing by waiting patiently for the hurried moments of attention the popular Fryderyk could give her? No, indeed. She was busy with her singing, for she was to be the leading lady of Paers' opera, "Agnes." This rivalry did not disturb Fryderyk, but when he found that she spent a great deal of her leisure with one or other of several admirers, he was deeply hurt. He tried to close his heart to her, and give all his love and thought to his music.

He succeeded in carrying out the latter part of this resolution for, by October eleventh of the same year, he was ready to give his third concert, this time in the Warszawa theater, and to present a new concerto—Concerto in E minor, which he played with an orchestra. After the concerto came a surprise for Fryderyk; Konstancja Gladkowski appeared, dressed in lovely

white lace and with a red rose in her dark hair. In that instant, the young man's resolution to forget her vanished. He stared in wonderment and delight. She had never been more beautiful, her smile never more friendly.

It was a joyous Fryderyk Chopin who returned to the platform, after Konstancja had sung, to complete his concert. His ears were filled with the applause his new concerto had received and his eyes saw only the smiling, beautiful face of Konstancja. As the rich, full, blithe melody of his "Fantasia of Polish Airs" tripped lightly from his long, graceful fingers, his heart was singing new words to a new melody, and the theme was, "She loves me, she must love me."

When the concert was over and the applauding audience had gone away, Konstancja was still there, smiling and friendly. Together the two drove toward Konstancja's home and, as they neared it, Fryderyk broke the silence that had been between them since they left the theater.

"Konstancja, would you have me for your husband?" he asked.

The girl did not answer. There was no smile on her lips and no friendliness in her eyes now. She looked startled and frightened, as if she were hearing a voice from a long way off. Fryderyk repeated his request, this time with more eagerness than when he had first spoken. Again there was silence, painful, heavy, ominous silence. The carriage lurched as the horses slipped on the wet pavement. Fryderyk caught Konstancja's hand, and waited. Suddenly the answer came sharply, muffled in sobs.

"No," she said and, as she spoke, she took her hand from his. She gave a command to the driver, and when the horses stopped,

hurried from the carriage. Another carriage drove up, but before it did, Fryderyk stared after her in amazement. Her long white dress was mud bespattered and the rose in her hair was wilted. She got into the carriage; it rumbled away, and Fryderyk, still shocked by the suddenness of her departure, told his driver to turn around and drive him to his home. Konstancja Gladkowski had gone out of his life.

Several of Chopin's biographers have succeeded in finding out the reason for Konstancja's hasty refusal. It was probably not that she did not love the gifted young composer. It was that her parents had painted a gloomy picture of life with a poor musician, especially one who was far from strong.

"You know that all the members of his family are sickly," her mother had warned. "Remember, while you were at the conservatory, his young sister, Emilia, died."

"And he will always be poor," her father had said sternly. "Ambitious young musicians, even if they are healthy, never have much money."

So Konstancja ran away from Fryderyk. Two years later, she married a wealthy merchant or landowner by the name of Josef Grabowski but, despite the wealth and position her marriage brought her, the years were far from kind to her. The sight in her big blue eyes dimmed gradually until she became blind. Blind and desolate, Konstancja's thoughts turned to the ardent young man who had left her, and so she sang softly and sadly the Italian song she had sung at his concert and at many other public performances—"Oh, quante lagrime per te versai." (How many tears have fallen because of you!)



Eight

Farewell, My Motherland

"I cannot understand why you are crying," Mr. Mikolaj Chopin said to his wife. "From the time he could reach the keys of the piano, you have wanted Fryderyk to win renown as a pianist. Now that he is going out into the world to achieve that success, you cry as if you had lost your dearest relative."

The Chopins, father, mother, and the two daughters, Ludwika and Izabela, were busy packing Fryderyk's trunks. Fryderyk himself was not with them, for he had gone out to say good-bye to several friends.

Ludwika nodded her head to show that she agreed with her father. "It isn't as if Fryderyk were an inexperienced traveller

and an unknown musician, Mother," she said. "He is known in Vienna and Dresden and by some critics in Berlin."

"And just think how lovely it will be when he comes back," Izabela sang out. "He'll have presents for us from Vienna and Paris and London, and you and Father will spend days reading press clippings about him." Izabela's young laughter rang through the house, and Mrs. Chopin tried to smile through her tears.

"A bright hope, Izabela," she said softly. Then turning to her husband, she whispered, "But I can't believe it. For some reason, I have a feeling that the boy will not come back to us. It has nothing to do with his uncertain health. It's not a foreboding of disaster but just a queer, unaccountable sense that, once he has gone, he will not return."

"Nonsense, my dear!" Mr. Chopin attempted to laugh his wife's fears away. "I am his father and I have no such awareness at all. I feel nothing but pride in the boy and happiness that his dreams and ours are beginning to come true while he is so very young!"

The family continued its work. Shoes and shirts and handkerchiefs were packed with loving care. Books and piles of music were laid out on the drawing-room table, for Fryderyk's final decision of which he would take and which leave behind. Izabela's face, as she worked and as she wrapped her own special present for her brother, became as sad as their mother's. But, no, it was ridiculous to think of Fryderyk going away and never coming back. Nevertheless, Izabela's eyes filled with tears and her full childish lips trembled.

As Fryderyk Chopin hurried from the home of one friend to another, or stopped to buy last-minute necessities for his

journey, a feeling similar to the one that shadowed his mother's peace of mind began to well up in him. Could it be that, in leaving Warszawa, he was turning a key in a lock and going away forever from the home and the city and the friends he loved? Nonsense. He was doing exactly what other composers and musicians had done—going out into the world to gain experience and reputation. Nothing more. He would return. But the feeling that he would not persisted in his mind. He could not shake it off, no matter how pleasant his farewells were.

And they were exceedingly pleasant, for Fryderyk Chopin had many friends who were anxious for his success. It was easy for people to love this slender, dark-eyed boy, for he was sincere and kind. Moreover, he had an intense love for people. Let him but hear a tale of sorrow or misery, and he was ready to give assistance, not money only, but generous sympathy and comfort. Unfortunately, this eager desire to help was sometimes exploited, and persons unworthy of his friendship took advantage of him. Often when this happened, Fryderyk would smile ruefully and make excuses for the disloyal friend. "He did it through ignorance," or "he did not understand," were his customary explanations, and he would continue to give the person his warm affection. When he did find that someone had acted with deliberate intention to injure him, his grief was almost unbearable.

On this late October day, the village of Wola was very busy. The excitement and bustle began in the morning at the tavern, with the setting up of a long table in the most spacious room in the house. Then the servants brought out the finest china and the newly polished silver. By early afternoon, the fragrance

of cooking food pervaded the whole street. Next came the rumble of carriages and the sharp clear beat of well-shod horses' hoofs. The carriages drew up before the tavern, and old men, young men, old women, and young women, dressed in their richest finery, stepped down and hurried into the tavern. These people were Fryderyk Chopin's friends, gathered to give him a farewell dinner and wish him Godspeed. The laughter and conversation were gay, but here and there a face looked anxious. Old Professor Zywny had not yet arrived, and Professor Elsner, with the conservatory choir—where could they be?

The fact was that they had arrived before most of the guests and even while Witwicki looked for them, they were practising in one of the tavern's small rooms. Professor Zywny was there, too, his cheeks rosy with excitement. The brothers Wodzinski found him and presented their young sister, Maria, to him. Maria Wodzinski was dressed in a long, flowing gown of rich pink satin and she carried a bouquet of flowers on her arm.

The whole party assembled in the hall to await the arrival of their guest. He came, at last, a brown traveller's cloak thrown over his shoulders, and a blithe greeting for everyone on his lips.

"How handsome he is to-day!" one person whispered to another.

"He looks happier and stronger than he did at his last concert," another said.

And a pleasant murmur of comments ran through the room.

"I'm sorry to see him go, but his return will be a triumph."

"When will he come back?" This question was asked often, and the usual answer was, "When Poland is free."

"When Poland is free"—people were saying it often in Warszawa at this time and frequently, when it was said, women's

eyes filled with tears and men's jaws became stern. Now, before the cold chill of resolution could quiet the gaiety of the people gathered to say farewell to Fryderyk Chopin, a chorus of strong young voices rose above the laughter and chatter. The chorus grew in fullness; it was a chorus of farewell, sung by the students of the conservatory. Under the direction of Professor Elsner, they sang their best wishes for success to the conservatory's most renowned student. The song was more than a farewell; it was a beautiful tribute to a dear friend who was an inspiration to all of them. As Fryderyk stood in the middle of the gathering, realizing gradually that all this splendor and magnificent song was for him, his face and eyes glowed with love and appreciation. Some, who saw him that night, said afterward that he looked like a king. There was great dignity in his bearing, but the tears that glistened in his eyes were not royal tears. They were the tears of a young man who was filled with sorrow because he had to leave his friends and his native land. But he had to go, for music, not he, was the master of his life.

When the last strong notes of the song had drifted beyond the walls and rafters of the hall, Janek Matuszynski came forward, a silver tumbler in his hand. This he gave to Fryderyk and, as he did so, he said, "Here is a handful of your country's soil, taken from the fields of Poland where your ancestors fought for the freedom and independence of our country. This earth, soaked with the blood of your ancestors, will never let you forget Poland. Be a good son and return when she calls for you. When you are far away and think of your native land, remember, too, the comrades you left behind."

Fryderyk was speechless. Tears coursed down his pale cheeks and he made no effort to wipe them away. He was still

as a statue. And so he stood, with tear-stained face and unseeing eyes until a beautiful girl put a bouquet of flowers into his hands. She was Maria Wodzinski, the young sister of his two friends, and with her coming the sadness left Fryderyk's countenance. He looked at her as if he wished to have his eyes filled forever with her beauty. In that moment when sorrow changed suddenly to happiness, a new song began to grow in his heart and mind. Some of the guests, watching him and observing the fresh young loveliness of Maria, murmured, "she has given him more than a bouquet of flowers, for she has given him inspiration."

And this was true, for in beauty and in the simple ways of people Fryderyk Chopin found inspiration and themes for music. Bright-eyed Maria Wodzinski was to live forever in Chopin's music.

On the first day of November, 1830, Fryderyk Chopin set out on his long journey. The road before him was to be a hard one, but in the cold frosty dawn, as the coach horses pranced over cobbled road that led out of Warszawa, he had no misgivings about the future. His friends waved farewells and the wind carried their shouted good wishes to him, even after the carriage had left the cobbles and started on its steady jog on the rutty, country road.

The wind seemed to bring him another message, too, a tantalizing one that was something like this, "So you are going to try life in a new and strange environment. New people. New music. What do you think, Fryderyk Chopin? Will your music be strong enough to rise above the strangeness and the forces that will oppose it?" And so with harsh November laughter, the wind blew on and on to a very tempest of mischief and

questions. "Will you like being alone, Fryderyk Chopin?" It seemed to hiss in at the carriage door. "Perhaps you will get frightened and turn back," it whispered once, but only once, for that suggestion made Fryderyk clench his fists firmly and mutter a resolution to himself. "I'll not turn back," he said and smiled defiance at the wind.

So together into the future they went—the impudent wind and the resolute Fryderyk Chopin and music was their constant companion. Music that was to flood the world with grace and warmth and strength.



Nine

The Road to Paris

Fryderyk's journey was steady, with pauses only for food, sleep, and changes to other coaches, until he came to the quiet little town of Kalisz in the south-western part of Poland. Here he called a halt for half a day to wait for his friend, Tytus Wojciechowski, who was to accompany him to Vienna, and there in remote little Kalisz the two had such a delicious dinner that Fryderyk wrote home about it. They had generous bowls of barszcz, which is a rich beet soup, and potatoes and lamb roasted on a rod. After dinner, they went on to Wroclaw where they stayed for four days of rest and theater-going.

By the tenth of November, they were in Dresden, the guests of the wealthy Dr. Kreyssing, who invited the members of "un

petit cercle des amateurs" to meet the young Chopin, who played for them. There is no record of how he played, and Fryderyk said little of the event in his letters home, other than to record that the women of the "cercle" occupied themselves with knitting stockings. Perhaps the click-click-click of knitting needles did not make a pleasant accompaniment for his music! However, he was in much too high spirits to be annoyed by knitting needles, for he had arrived in Dresden to find that operas of Rossini and Auber were being performed and that the cellists, Dotzauer and Kummer, were giving concerts. Naturally Fryderyk and Tytus went to the opera several times, and attended the concert.

The music of the cello always delighted Fryderyk Chopin. He called it the music of a crying soul, and said many times, as he did here in Dresden to Tytus, "What a pity that, from childhood, I have studied the piano! My parents forced me to play this music box. If the choice had been given to me later, I certainly would have chosen the cello."

From Dresden, through Prague, and thence to Vienna. It was a road that they both knew well and, as they approached the city of music, Fryderyk promised his friend that soon they would have lots of money in their pockets and people would receive them graciously. But, alas, not this time. Vienna, that usually smiled on talent and was even cordial to young ambition, gave them a cool reception. First, the Blahetka family, whom Fryderyk had expected to visit, had gone to Stuttgart. Next, he had a most unpleasant encounter with Haslinger, his publisher.

Haslinger had been one of Fryderyk's most enthusiastic sponsors when he had been in Vienna three years before. He had published his Variations on la ci darem la mano, and

had accepted from him for publication his Sonata in C minor and Variations in E major on a German air. Now Chopin needed his accrued royalty, and asked Haslinger for it. But Haslinger protested. He admitted that Variations on la ci darem la mano had sold well but, despite this, he would not pay him anything.

"But why?" Fryderyk asked with growing impatience. "You say it has sold. If it has, and I know that it has, for I have seen it often, then you have made money on it. Am I not entitled to some compensation, too?"

Haslinger agreed that the question was a good one but, even so, all he had to say in reply was, "You are right, doubtless, but you must remember that I paid you something on account when I accepted it."

Fryderyk drew himself to his full height, and looked scornfully at the haughty German publisher, who seemed to be enjoying the little scene. "Something," he cried, "but not full royalty and you know it."

Haslinger proffered no reply to this. Apparently he thought any explanation beneath his dignity.

"Two years ago, my noble sir, I gave you two other compositions for publication," Fryderyk said, trying to keep his growing anger under control, "but you have neither published them nor returned them to me. Are you waiting for me to give them to you for nothing?"

"Not exactly," Haslinger answered slowly, weighing his words carefully.

"What do you mean?" Fryderyk asked, quietly now, for he had succeeded in curbing his rage by saying to himself, "As my pockets are empty, I must convince this buffoon that he can't

fool me. I must make him pay. After all, I know my compositions are not bad."

"I do not deny that you are a young composer of great talent and promise," Haslinger said in a very pompous voice, "but you, on the other hand, cannot deny that you are unknown. Comparatively few people have ever heard of you. Therefore, you must publish and publish again, and yet again, before any fame will gather around your name. With fame, ah, then, and then only, will the money flow into your pockets."

Fryderyk had an answer ready and he spoke it with great austerity. "Sir, does this mean that I must give you my work for nothing? While you grow fatter and richer, I must tighten my belt and try not to starve to death in the streets of Vienna. After my death, I shall have fame and money. A lot of good it will do me then!" Fryderyk wiped the perspiration from his high forehead, and straightened his neatly tailored jacket.

All the time Chopin was talking, Haslinger was sitting at a table, writing. Now he handed the young man the paper on which he had been writing and, as he did so, he said very slowly and impressively, as if he wanted him to appreciate an offer of great generosity, "In three years I will begin to pay you, and now be good enough to sign your name to this document. When that is done, you will have authorized me to proceed with the publishing of your compositions."

"Never," Chopin shouted. He was trembling with rage and rushed to the door. "When you put money on the table, I will give you permission to publish my works," he paused to say. "If you do not do that, my dear benefactor, I will find a publisher in Berlin or Paris."

The door was almost closed, and Chopin was on the stairs,

when Haslinger shouted, "But wait, master, master, hear me, please."

Fryderyk Chopin walked back into the room, a rueful and grim smile on his lips. "You called me back, Mr. Haslinger," he said.

"Let us try to come to terms, master," Haslinger said humbly.

"Don't master me," Chopin commanded. "My terms are pay. Pay me, or you shall never have my music."

"But—but—" Haslinger began a protest, and Chopin raised his hand for silence.

"No," he said derisively. "Never for nothing! Pay, or you shall not publish." And Haslinger had no opportunity to demure further, for Chopin was gone. The street door slammed after him.

Once on the street, he stopped hurrying and walked slowly, his head bowed in thought. He looked back several times, in the hope that Haslinger was coming after him, but Haslinger had no thought of running after Fryderyk Chopin.

So Fryderyk walked on in deep chagrin and perplexity. He had counted on Haslinger to pay him and, now that he had not, what was he to do? He had felt confident that he could conduct a business transaction successfully. After all, he had had some experience in arranging the terms of his concerts in Warszawa. In Warszawa, ah, yes, but that was different, he realized now. Warszawa was home and he had been among friends. Out in the world of publishing, he had failed dismally and, what was even more disheartening, his pockets were empty. He would have to write home for money. He would have to give concerts—give lessons—give more concerts—write home for

more money. What a miserable future his imagination conjured up!

And in this one respect, his fears materialized into almost unbearable reality. Most publishers acted as if they had taken a pattern from Haslinger of Vienna. They were willing enough to agree to publish his compositions but, when the essential question of royalty or some form of financial compensation was asked, they lost their affability. They would not promise to pay or, if they did, the promises were seldom kept.

Fifteen years after this conversation between the publisher, Haslinger, and the composer, Chopin, the latter received proofs of his Sonata in C minor for corrections. But Chopin did not correct the proofs. He kept them and, not until after his death, was Haslinger able to publish the composition.



Ten

Fryderyk and Tytus

Poland had lost her freedom near the end of the eighteenth century and her three strong neighbors, Austria, Prussia, and Russia, had divided her territory among them. Warszawa, the capital, came under the heel of the Russian czar. Therefore, when Fryderyk Chopin, citizen of Warszawa, set out on his journey in 1830, he travelled with a Russian passport, for he was a subject of Russia, a fact that did not please him at any time, but that angered him intensely each time he applied for a passport renewal and whenever he was introduced as a "Russian composer of great talent."

While Fryderyk and Tytus were in Vienna, they had to present their credentials to the Russian consul in Austria, and to him they made application for passport documents that

would allow them to go to Munich, Stuttgart, Paris, and London. When the papers arrived, finally, they read, "Passant par Paris à Londres," and in the future Fryderyk was to laugh at that statement many times. "Passing through Paris to London," indeed! He left Paris for London, it is true, but he returned to the city of the Seine in a few days, and made it his home. Passports have amazing power, but they can seldom direct the course of a life, as Fryderyk Chopin pointed out to his friend, Tytus Wojciechowski, on a gloomy evening in Vienna, shortly after they had received their passports to London.

The two were in their hotel room making plans for the journey. Tytus was not sure that he would accompany Fryderyk all the way, but he had set his mind on Munich and Stuttgart.

"Of course, I shall go to Stuttgart," he said laughingly, "for you have promised to introduce me to the beautiful Miss Blahetka. Don't forget that, Fryderyk. Your word of honor, remember."

But Fryderyk was thinking neither of Miss Blahetka nor of Stuttgart. His mind was still burdened with the problem of securing payment for his compositions. He wondered disconsolately if Paris and London might prove to be a trifle more appreciative of the monetary value of the work of Fryderyk Chopin. The dreadful Haslinger had been a sad experience for the ambitious young musician.

Tytus, as he watched the unhappy expression on his friend's face, tried to divert his thoughts to something more pleasant. "Perhaps I'll fall in love with the exquisite and talented Miss Blahetka," he sang out now, and began playing a merry tune on the piano. Still there was no response from Fryderyk. He

was so deep in gloom that not even Tytus, who had a gift for rousing him, could draw him into conversation.

The candles in the silver chandelier must have found the two occupants of the room an interesting pair. One was blithe and full of song, the other quiet and gentle and devoted to the big piano that stood near the window. On this night, the tall candles must have nodded and smiled to one another often as they listened to the fitful and anxious conversation of the two. Occasionally it was gay; more often the sentences were spoken slowly and in tones of perplexity.

"We are going very far from home," Fryderyk said several times. "Every mile will take us farther away from Poland, you know, Tytus."

Tytus laughed and said that it was his opinion that Fryderyk was not at all interested in Miss Blahetka. "If you were, you would talk to me about her now, instead of mourning about the miles between you and Warszawa." Tytus laughed, and perhaps the dazzling candles agreed with him.

They were very handsome candles that stood like queens in the vast chandelier. They had listened to many conversations through the years that they had been in the old hotel in Vienna. They had watched many people arrive and many make preparations for departure. They had seen many farewells, and often had whispered the anxious question, "Will all be well?" to one another. On this night, they did it several times, dipping and fluttering, as they did so. They listened to Tytus try to lead his friend into a whimsical and amusing conversation about the unpredictable nature of womankind, and they must have been amused by his lack of success. They heard a knock come to the door as the evening was getting late, and they, too, may have

been excited by the news that the old servant spilled out rapidly when Fryderyk opened the door.

"Sirs! Sirs!" the servant cried out, "A man has arrived, and he says there is war in Warszawa."

"War!" Fryderyk exclaimed, and drew the man into the room.

"Who is fighting, and against whom?" Tytus asked.

"That I can't tell you," the servant answered with a shrug of his shoulders. "But I figure it this way—that the Poles are likely beating the Russians. Don't you think so?"

"Of course!" Chopin said, and gave the man who had sense enough to think the Poles were beating the Russians a generous tip. "Now find the traveller for us," he commanded.

It was Tytus who found him and brought him back to their room. He was a Frenchman and he told the news carefully, saying the Russian and Polish names with great care, as if his listeners were not familiar with them. He did not seem to realize that all streets and persons he mentioned were as well known to them as the streets and names of Paris were to him.

"On the night of November the twenty-ninth," he said, "the cadets in the Warszawa military school rebelled against Prince Constantine who, I understand, is Czar Nicholas's representative in Russian Poland."

"Yes! Yes!" Tytus and Fryderyk said together. "And then what? What happened next? The peasants, did they come in to help the cadets?"

But their informer shook his head regretfully. "I have told you all I know, my friends. The news was given out at a posting house some twenty miles from here. Couriers should come with

fresh word before to-morrow morning." He took his leave now, for he needed rest after his journey.

"I'm packing my bags right away," Fryderyk whispered excitedly. "I've had enough music until after Poland is free. From now until then, I shall use a rifle for practice."

"I'm with you," Tytus almost shouted, and began opening up their trunks.

As they worked hurriedly, pausing only occasionally to talk, anxious thoughts were scurrying through Fryderyk's mind, and soon he voiced them to Tytus. "There is one thing I deeply regret about this revolt," he said. "It is that it should have started in the officers' school, where the sons of noblemen are trained, and not in the villages of Poland. Sons of noblemen are not going to be supported by peasants and, without the ferocious strength of the people of the land, the revolt will collapse."

"You are thinking about the French Revolution," Tytus said. "For my part, I am confident that this is just the beginning. The peasants are probably pouring into Warszawa now. They may even be fighting. Don't forget, Fryderyk, that I have worked in organizations preparing for this very thing. Every freedom-loving Pole is ready for the signal for rising."

But Fryderyk was far from convinced. "I know the peasants well," he said, "and I do not share your opinion."

"Tell me what your conclusions are," Tytus begged. He was confident in his own analysis of what was likely to happen in Poland—might, in fact, be happening at the very moment—but he was curious to know how Fryderyk could have arrived at a different view of the situation.

"This is not our revolt, I am sure," Chopin said, "for it

has been started by dashing young officers, anxious to try their skill in battle maneuvers. They are eager for adventure and excitement. Being the sons of noblemen, Poland's freedom is not their battle cry, nor can it be their strength, as it would be of the peasants." Fryderyk paused and looked at his friend curiously.

"Go on," Tytus said briefly.

"We both know that the treasure of Poland's music is held in the souls of the Polish people," he resumed, talking now in an excited voice, "and in the same souls lie the moral and physical strength of Poland. I know this, for, in searching for music, I reached into the hearts and souls of the people. If the simple, hard-working people of Poland could be led in revolt, then we would be victorious. They are people who can fight and die for freedom, and those who live to enjoy it will grow into persevering, independent people who will treasure that freedom and guard it forever from aggressors. But not noblemen's sons. I tell you, Tytus, I know that I am right."

This impassioned speech left Fryderyk white and perspiring. The fire of burning conviction glowed in his eyes and, as Tytus looked at him, he thought, "If Fryderyk were there, he would give them the strength and leadership he says they need. Yes, he could put courage into the people."

Another thought then came to Tytus. "His spirit is strong enough," he said to himself, "but not his body. Every bead of perspiration that stands out on his brow is like his life blood being wasted. He must not go back."

Even though he thought that Fryderyk should not return, the two continued with their packing, and Tytus said nothing of the plan forming in his mind. As he worked, he thought,

"Every moment Fryderyk spends at the piano means more for the happiness of the world than as many hours spent fighting. Even if he were to shoot the czar and drive the Russians from Warszawa, it could not mean so much joy as his music." Tytus Wojciechowski was a sensible, discerning young man, and he decided that he, Tytus, should fight and help win victories, but that his friend, Fryderyk Chopin, should create music. "So each person is made for a purpose," Tytus told himself, in conclusion, and prepared to carry out his plan.

"I have an idea, Chopinek," he called out merrily.

"It is a long time since you called me Chopinek," Fryderyk interrupted. "What is your idea?"

"That we should honor our brothers who are fighting by drinking their health in glasses of wine," Tytus answered, laughing boisterously. "Then in the morning, we shall start our journey to take up arms with them."

"But I do not drink," Fryderyk reminded him, "and besides, I have no wish to hand out money to these Austrians. They, too, are the oppressors of our country."

Tytus did not reply until after he had run out into the corridor and ordered a pitcher of wine. When he returned, he said, "On the eve of battle, Fryderyk, you can surely break your rule of no drinking and no smoking. As for our Austrian oppressors, we shall probably frighten them with our victories over the Russians."

The wine came and Fryderyk drank. It was good wine and, when his tumbler was nearly empty, Tytus filled it again. Soon he was singing patriotic songs in a full, lusty voice. And drinking more wine—and more wine—and more wine. It was past midnight when he rose uncertainly to his feet, and Tytus, well

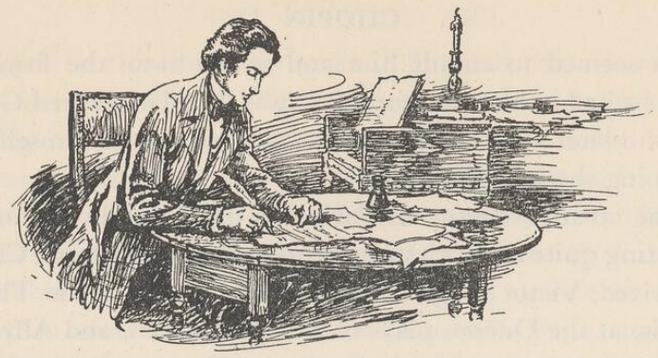
pleased with himself and his plan, helped him to bed. For a nightcap, he gave him another glass of wine and as he did so, he said, "Here, drink this. It will give you blood for battle. Drink it, I say. It is Austrian blood, and your thin body will grow fat as the body of the Austrian king." They both laughed at this, and then Fryderyk slept sweetly and soundly, like a kitten in the sun.

But not Tytus. He had an important letter to write. It was to Fryderyk and, when it was finished, Tytus carried his luggage down the stairs, and called for horses to carry him to Warszawa. The letter told Fryderyk Chopin that it was his duty to continue his journey, for his calling in life was to give the world beautiful music, the music of the Polish people, while it was his, Tytus's, duty to fight because he was strong and could endure the physical strain of war. Because he knew that he could not persuade Fryderyk by spoken words, he had taken this means of trying to convince him.

This revolt, begun at the end of November in 1830, became the National Insurrection of Poland, and was approved by the Polish Parliament on January the twenty-fifth, 1831. It brought all the part of Russian-occupied Poland under fire, and the czarist troops were poured into the country. As if their strength was not enough to quell the rising, the leaders of the revolt began to quarrel among themselves and, by their discord, they lost what they most needed—the staunch support of the Polish peasants. Early in September, the revolt was over, and Fryderyk Chopin, then in Stuttgart, for he had not returned to Warszawa, learned of his country's defeat. The czarist soldiers had occupied Warszawa and the Poles had surrendered. This sad intelligence was like a weight of lead on his heart when he

set out a few days later for Paris. Another burden was on him, and it was to harass him all his life—it was regret that he had not returned to Warszawa in spite of Tytus's carefully made plan. Not that he did not forgive Tytus; he did, fully, and even agreed that his reasoning was sound. Nevertheless, in after years, his heart was often sick with the thought that he had failed his country.

But, indeed, he had not. The fruit of his pain and his love for his country was his Etude in C minor (Opus 10) which is known as the "Revolutionary Étude." Into this powerful work, he poured all the fire that was in him—intense love for his fellow-men and passion for his country's right to freedom. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—these three combined made the theme for his Revolutionary Étude.



Eleven

The City of Art

Paris in the middle years of the nineteenth century was not only the capital of France but the distinguished center of European culture. The fame of her authors had gone far beyond her borders, even to England, where Victor Hugo had a following of considerable importance. Among the others who made up the sparkling galaxy were Honoré de Balzac, Alfred de Musset, Alphonse Lamartine, Eugene Sue, and Theophile Gautier. There was at least one woman who shone brilliantly in this dazzling firmament; she was Madam Dudevant, who wrote under the pseudonym of George Sand. Her contributions to *Figaro* and *Revue de Paris* were highly esteemed at this time and her two novels, *Rose et Blanche* and *Indiana,* were adding to her fame when Fryderyk Chopin arrived in Paris. He was just twenty-one years old, and the world of wit and literary accomplishment which he entered frightened him at first. For a

time, it seemed to engulf him and sweep away the firm confidence he had in his own genius. It was the black-haired George Sand who later succeeded in restoring his faith in himself, and in so doing she won his heart.

The creative energy of Paris was displayed in drama and in painting quite as much as in fiction. When Fryderyk Chopin first arrived, Victor Hugo's *Le Roi S'amuse* was at the Théâtre Français; at the Odéon, plays of Musset, Dumas, and Alfred de Vigny were put on successively. Melodramas and comedies by Melesville, Duvert, and Brazier were "on the boards," and the names of Hugo and Dumas appeared in vaudeville productions. As for painting, the list of exhibitors was long, and as renowned as it was long; Delacroix, Deveria, and Delaroche were among them.

The musical season of 1831 in Paris has been recorded as one of the most brilliant of the city's history. An opera based on the life of the famous murderer, the Marquise de Brinvilliers, was produced at the Opéra-Comique, and won resounding ovations. Part of its fame came from its subject, but a considerable amount was contributed by the nine illustrious musicians who were its composers—Auber, Batton, the elder Cherubini, Berton, Carafa, Boieldieu, Blangini, Paer, and Herold. To rival the musical resonance of the Opéra, were the concerts being given at the conservatory where the compositions of Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn were played by the pianist, Kalkbrenner; the cellist, Vaslin; the flutist, Dorus; the violinist, Kreutzer; the clarionist, Butteaux; and the bassoonist, Henry. A year later, the famous Hector Berlioz left Rome and came to Paris to add the glowing light of his talent to the splendor.

It is little wonder that Chopin was not only frightened by

the new world which he entered in Paris, but more than a little bewildered, too. There were times, when he sat down quietly to survey himself in this strange environment, that he almost decided to run away from it all; he would return to Warszawa and the family and friends who loved him; he would go back to Vienna; he would hurry to London. Such confusion of indecision confronted him that he was unable to arrive at any plan of action other than to remain in Paris, and this he did chiefly because George Sand gave him the courage to do so. But not even her interest in him was enough to restore his confidence in his own talent. In despair he sought out the pianist, Kalkbrenner, and begged him to give him piano lessons. This he did for a time, but after a few weeks the master decided that he had nothing to teach his pupil. So, instead of continuing in the role of teacher and student, they took that of friends, and Fryderyk dedicated his "Concerto in E minor" to the pianist, Kalkbrenner, who would have been his piano teacher had he needed one. Kalkbrenner later dedicated his "Variations" based on a Chopin mazurka, to Fryderyk.

In January, 1832, Chopin was ready to give a concert, and it was Kalkbrenner who encouraged him to do so. The concert, given in the famous Pleyel's Rooms in Cadet Street, may have been a success from a financial point of view but, considered from the aspect of reputation, it was more than many of Chopin's most enthusiastic supporters had expected. It was, they said, far greater than a mere success. A critic, in the *Revue Musicale* said, "Here is a young man who, by giving himself up to his natural impressions and following no model, has discovered, if not an absolute revolution in piano music, at least something of what composers have been seeking in vain for a long time past,

namely, an abundance of original ideas, whose counterpart does not exist anywhere."

Chopin was not a lonely Pole among people of many other nationalities gathered in Paris. After the failure of the insurrection, many Polish people sought refuge in France, and soon he found himself attending many Polish gatherings. His friend, Albert Grzymala, was secretary of a Polish literary society, and Chopin joined the group that was comprised of writers, politicians, and scientists.

Other doors were soon opened to him, too, for French and Polish aristocrats began inviting him to their homes. These invitations, pleasant though they may have been, presented a serious problem to a Chopin who was far from rich. This fact is brought out in many of his letters, especially in one he wrote to his friend, Dominik Dziewanowski, in which he said, "I have five lessons to give to-day. You think I am making a fortune? Carriages and white gloves cost a fair sum, and without them one would not be in good taste."

On occasions, he may have wished to forego the dubious pleasure of accepting the invitations given him by aristocrats, but this he dared not do, for at this time cultural development of art was fostered and sponsored by rich people and, without a wealthy patron, an artist could not hope for recognition. Nor could he expect to achieve any financial independence, for he must look to the rich to supply him with pupils to whom he might teach his art. It was as important in those days for an artist to be a master of the social graces as to be master of his art. The first requirement for success, so many artists have recorded, was to be recognized graciously by princes, barons, and

counts. With this accomplished, an artist had a right to expect more extensive fame and some financial remuneration from his efforts. Chopin found this condition both amusing and irritating, but more frequently the latter feeling welled up in him, as is shown in several of his letters. In the same letter to Dziewanowski, he said, "I myself am a revolutionist; moreover, I have no interest in money, only for friendship."

During his first years in Paris, Chopin lived in the Boulevard Poissonnière; later he went to Number Four Cité Bergère. After a friend of his childhood, Dr. Matuszynski, escaped from Warszawa and came to Paris, Fryderyk lived with him in Chaussée d'Antin Street.

Although Chopin had no liking for concerts, he was compelled to give many of them all through his life. When he came to Paris, he engaged an English woman, Miss Smithson, to be his agent, and under her management he gave a concert with Liszt. In December, 1833, he and Franz Liszt and Ferdinand Hiller gave one in the Paris Conservatory. During the following spring, he attended the music festival at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he met Felix Mendelssohn, who had just completed a course of lessons to the young Princess Victoria, heir presumptive to the throne of England. After the Aix-la-Chapelle festival, Chopin returned to Paris, and gave a concert with Berlioz, Hiller, and Liszt. At this concert, given in Société du Conservatoire, he played his "Andante Spianato" (Opus 22) and a number of his polonaises. At this concert, too, he achieved resounding fame, for his name was sent far and wide throughout Europe. By this concert, it could be said, he reached the pinnacle of his concert fame. And then for a time, a long time,

concerts were over. He was to give his thoughts to composing.

After he had decided to devote himself to composing and not to give concerts, nor to participate in any, he said to his friend, Liszt, "I am not fitted to give concerts . . . The crowd embarrasses me. I feel stifled by their heavy breathing, and paralyzed by their curious glances. I feel stupid before their strange faces."

This dislike of audiences was one reason for Chopin's decision not to give concerts, but another one, besides the wish to have time for composing, was the increased threat of illness. He was never in good health and now, after two strenuous seasons in Paris, he was very nervous and tired.

However, the danger of sickness did not hamper his composing, for he entered into one of the most prolific periods of his career. He produced many mazurkas, nocturnes, polonaises, etudes, variations, and krakowiaks, and met with some good fortune in having his work published. Kistner of Leipzig published a series of his work from Opus 6 to Opus 19. A French publisher, Schlesinger, issued twelve Grand Études (Opus 10); Concerto in E minor; Three Nocturnes (Opus 15); Rondo in E flat major (Opus 16); Four Mazurkas (Opus 17). Following these, were Grand Fantasia on Polish Airs (Opus 13); Krakowiak, Grand Rondo for orchestra and piano (Opus 14); Waltz in E flat major (Opus 18); Bolero in C major (Opus 19). All these compositions were popular in Prussia, France, and Austria. They brought him fame and almost enough money to pay for his carriage, his servant, and his fashionable clothes.

It is well, at this point, to give a description of Chopin's compositions. It is, in fact, essential, for his music did not follow the usual patterns. It was drawn almost entirely from the

music lore of the Polish people, and Chopin was probably the first composer to weave these ancient peasant dances and song into full, substantial music.

The mazurka is a gay Polish dance. The laughter that ripples through a mazurka seems always to be on the brink of becoming either boisterous or tearful. It belongs especially to the people of Mazowsze, and Warszawa lies in the heart of the province. Of this type of Chopin's compositions, Liszt wrote, "Both the music and the words reflect that opposition, which is so heroic and attractive in effect, between the pleasure of love and the sadness caused by danger, from which arises the need of cheering one's misery."

The krakowiak is a dance of the people living in the Krakow district, in which is the old capital of Poland. This type of Chopin's compositions was described so exquisitely in the *Gazette Musicale* that the description is quoted in part: "The fundamental elements of the krakowiak are distinguished from the mazurka partly by their striking resemblance to the Swiss ranz-des-vaches, partly by the lightness of the rhythm in two-four time, and partly also by a particular ting of gay animation . . . The art of counterpart in the krakowiak is united with so much poetry and such delicate taste, it is the highest resource which musical composition can offer."

These two Polish peasant dances, the mazurka and the krakowiak, are repeated constantly throughout Chopin's compositions. During the first years of his life in Paris, he seemed always to be pouring his love for his native land into his music, for almost every composition had the gaiety and whimsical sadness of these dances in them, and it was these two, chiefly, that opened the road of eternal fame to him.

Fryderyk Chopin loved music with a pure and unfaltering

devotion, and music rewarded him a thousandfold. A poet has spoken of the two as Mr. Genius and Miss Music, and likened them to two lovers, whose love survived all the storms and grief of life. This same poet, in a simple couplet, spoke of them as the devoted and adoring slave, Chopin, and the gracious goddess, Music, who, as a reward for his devotion, bestowed the gift of immortality on Fryderyk Chopin.



Twelve

Maria

In July, 1834, Fryderyk Chopin wrote a letter to his friend, Feliks Wodzinski, in Warszawa and with it he enclosed a note to Maria, Feliks' sister, in which he said, "I take the liberty of sending my estimable colleague, Miss Maria, a little waltz which I have just published." Maria was the bright-eyed, beautiful girl, dressed in pink silk, who had given him a bouquet of flowers at the farewell party in his honor the night before he left Warszawa. Although Fryderyk had known Maria almost from her babyhood, for his family and the Wodzinski family were friends, he had not known he loved her until the night of the party in Wola. Since that time, he had sent her many messages in letters written to her brothers, Feliks, Antoni, and Kazimierz, and to her mother. His Etude in F minor was named "Portrait of Maria's Soul," in her honor.

Soon after he arrived in Paris, he wrote to his sister, Ludwika, of his love and from then, until he and Maria met again four years later, he wrote frequently to Ludwika about her. Was she in good health? Was she happy? Did she love him? Had he many rivals? He asked many questions, and gave Ludwika many commissions of love to carry out for him. She must have done these services well, for soon Maria told Ludwika that she loved Fryderyk and was eager to see him. Their efforts to meet were not successful, however, until July, 1836, when Maria's mother took her to the fashionable Austrian resort of Marienbad, and there Fryderyk went to visit them.

The Countess Maria Wodzinski was seventeen at this time; she was beautiful, well graced with social manners, and very wealthy. Moreover, she loved music almost as much as she loved Fryderyk. As for Fryderyk, there is very little to say except that he recorded when he saw Maria that he was happy for the first time since he had left his family in Warszawa and that he loved her almost as much as he loved music.

"I will write beautiful music and make enough money for us," Fryderyk promised, as they walked along the garden paths of Marienbad, "and we shall be happy and famous together."

"And I will do everything in the world to help you," Maria whispered in reply. "If we are poor, we shall be poor together, for nothing, not even death, will separate us."

And they whispered and laughed and were happy together in Marienbad from late in August until early in September. Two days before Fryderyk was to leave for Paris, they told their plans for marriage to Maria's mother. She approved of them, but begged Fryderyk to keep the engagement a secret for a little while. He agreed to this request; in fact, he thought nothing

of it, for his mind was filled with the happy knowledge that Maria had promised to be his wife.

Once back in Paris, Fryderyk set to work with a will. His mind and heart were overflowing with music and he began composing with feverish eagerness. Before they parted, he had promised Maria that he would drink gamboge water regularly and be in bed by eleven o'clock every night. These two promises he carried out, and later, when she sent him warm slippers and woollen socks, he wore them, as she desired him to do. He found it pleasant to have her writing him letters filled with affectionate instructions on how to take care of his health.

Then something began to happen. The mails were slow, even unreliable, Fryderyk thought, for Maria's letters were not coming with the regularity that they had, at first, after her return to Poland. His happiness gave way to anxiety. When her greetings to him became only postscripts added to her brothers' letters, he knew that Maria was drifting away from him. Within a year, the engagement was over, and Maria became engaged to Count Josef Skarbek, who was her father's choice of a husband for her.

Through all the pain of this disillusionment, Fryderyk had one faithful supporter—his piano. When the misery caused by the knowledge that Maria had turned from him because he was a poor, sick musician became almost unbearable, he turned to the loyal instrument, and its black and white keys gave him some respite from his suffering. His Parisian friends, watching him, shook their heads, and grieved for him, for he looked not only ill and sad, but completely desolate, as if he were quite unaware of the material things about him.

As he wandered through the streets of Paris trying to find

relief from his disappointment and grief, he cried out silently for his mother. He needed the comfort of her love now, and he longed for it far more than he did for the restoration of Maria. And as he mourned because his mother was not with him, he kept asking himself two questions that had one answer. Why had he left his home and his family? Because of music and an indomitable will to achieve fame as a composer. Why did he not now return to Poland? The answer was the same. The genius of music that was in him demanded the compensation of fame and so, even while his heart yearned for love, he could not give up the struggle to achieve renown.

As for Maria Wodzinski—she was filled with satisfaction in her new love. As she rejoiced in it, she told her friends proudly that she had done well to free herself from a poor, consumptive musician like Fryderyk Chopin and make so good a conquest as the Count Skarbek. In 1841, she became the Countess Josef Skarbek, a title which soon became a heavy burden. After she had had it for seven troublesome years, her family succeeded in getting a divorce decree for her from the Vatican. Her next marriage, this time to a Mr. Orpiszewski, lasted eight years and ended in widowhood. She died in the year 1896, and there is no record in history that tells whether her life was happy or not.

Thirteen

Chopin Meets George Sand

A plump woman with piercing black eyes and blue-black hair that hung in long curls was attending a concert in Paris with Dr. Pagello, when Franz Liszt drew Fryderyk Chopin's attention to her. The year was 1836, and Chopin had lived in Paris for five years without meeting the renowned woman.

"There is George Sand," Liszt exclaimed in a whisper.

Chopin looked at her carefully. So this was Madam Aurore Dudevant, better known by her pseudonym of George Sand. Her nose was long and had an inquisitive tilt, as if she went about sniffing for news. Her eyes startled him, for they were both cold and fiery. They looked liked gimlets that could bore into a person's closest secrets. As he looked, Chopin recalled some of the things the critics had said and were saying about her books. They said her writing revealed that she had understanding of people and that many things she wrote about appeared to be drawn from actual experience. Chopin nodded his head in agreement. His next thoughts were about her children, Maurice and Solange. Did they, he wondered, enjoy their mother's fame, and was she a good, kind mother to them?

"Some of the greatest poets of our time have loved or love her," Liszt whispered.

"Indeed!" Fryderyk exclaimed.

"Musset loves her, and it has been said by some that Balzac, too, has offered her his heart," Liszt told him.

"I do not like a woman with such dark eyes," Chopin answered hurriedly.

Shortly after this, Fryderyk went to London and, when he returned, Franz Liszt introduced him to George Sand at a concert. The introduction had been asked for by the author, who, when she greeted Chopin, said, "I have heard that you heartily dislike me."

"How could I, when I do not know you?" Fryderyk asked, and added laughingly, "Perhaps when I know you, I shall have reason to dislike you."

"Wonderful! Wonderful! It's a good beginning for friendship," Liszt cried out.

George Sand had no answer for this, so she remarked soberly, "I like the way you speak French. Your Polish accent gives the language a pretty turn."

"German as he speaks it with a Polish accent sounds even better than French," Liszt said. He was very anxious that his two friends should like each other.

"In our speech, we Poles invariably reveal our nationality," Chopin said seriously, "and now it is the only way, for as a nation we are defeated. We can have no achievement."

"Ah, yes, I understand," George Sand answered. "I recall the insurrection. I know your country is divided among its enemies. So much blood was spilled and, in the end, the czar triumphed."

As she spoke, she turned toward Chopin to show him that sympathy for him and his country glowed in her eyes but, at



George Sand (Madam Dudevant) from a portrait by A. Charpentier; Franz Liszt from a daguerreotype made when he was in his thirtieth year; and Fryderyk Chopin, from the portrait painted by Ary Scheffer.

the moment, he had no wish for her understanding and sympathy. He had taken an acute dislike to the famous authoress and, instead of talking to her, he bade her a hasty good-bye, and hurried away. For the first time, the famous Miss Sand doubted her gift for making friends. The smile she flashed at Liszt was something like the puckering of lips that have unexpectedly tasted a sour apple.

"Chopin, I firmly believe, is the greatest piano composer the world has ever known," Liszt said now, anxious to break the uncomfortable silence that had followed Fryderyk's hasty departure.

"Probably!" Miss Sand said slowly and dubiously, "and he is probably the world's greatest infant, too. Arrogance emanates from him, as the smell of tobacco does from me."

Liszt laughed heartily at this, for it was a well-known fact that George Sand smoked as much tobacco as four men who were steady smokers. As they walked out of the concert hall, he began talking about Fryderyk's gift for music, but a glance at his companion's gloomy countenance silenced him. She, the great George Sand, was really very annoyed by what seemed to be the insolence of a young composer called Chopin.

"No doubt he had an appointment with the Countess Delfina Potocki," she said as they reached the sidewalk.

"I remember now that he told me he was to meet Osborne and Mendelssohn," Liszt said apologetically.

George Sand shrugged her shoulders to show that she had no patience with Liszt for trying to explain his friend's rudeness to her.

"I've heard a great deal about this Delfina Potocki," she said haughtily, "and of her two sisters, as well. They are the

daughters of Komar, a Pole who was estate manager for the Count Potocki. They had beauty and education, but they lacked money, and so they made a pact with one another to win rich husbands. And they have, as you know very well, Liszt."

Liszt laughed and waited for the author to continue her narrative. It was evident that she knew the history of the Komar family very well. If he had spoken he might have murmured, "and so this is how the great George Sand searches out material for her stories."

"Maria Komar married the Prince de Beauvau-Croan. Natalia became the wife of the Marquis Medici-Spada, and Delfina is the Countess Potocki. Two of the sisters live here in Paris in magnificent state, and your friend Chopin has dedicated two compositions to them. I suppose he is afraid they may forget the honor he has done them, so he has hurried off to play his 'Polonaise in F minor' and his Waltz no. 1 to them." Anger gleamed in George Sand's dark eyes, and Liszt wisely restrained his laughter.

"My dear lady, you have a remarkable memory both for unique family histories and for Fryderyk Chopin's compositions," he said, as he followed her into a tavern that was the meeting-place of many artists.

George Sand's intention was to find Grzymala, Chopin's journalist friend, and ascertain from him where Fryderyk had gone. She was certain that what he would say would prove her conjecture to be a fact. That was George Sand. She liked to think, and have her friends think, that she never made mistakes.



Fourteen

Conversation with Mickiewicz

Preludes — mazurkas — polonaises — nocturnes — sonatas — waltzes — études — krakowiaks — to all these types of musical composition Chopin gave a new significance, chiefly because he drew into them the folk songs of his native land and the folk melodies of other peoples, as well. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that any one of these was his own individual type of composition for, from time immemorial, composers had used them as a basis of expression. To name a few—Beethoven, Liszt, Schumann, Haydn, Strauss, and Tschaikowsky. Chopin gave vitality and striking, enduring individuality to the mazurka and the krakowiak, but to the musical ballad he gave life itself. Some writers have truly called him the father and the master of this

type of composition and have said that, through the ballad, Chopin enlightened the world.

Everything that the ballad is in literature, Chopin made it in music. It is simple and steady. It bubbles with mischief and lilts with gaiety. It promises and gives a story, sometimes quaint, sometimes full of romantic wonder, and sometimes dainty and whimsical and light as fairies dancing on midsummer's eve. As one hears the six-four or six-eight time, one gets a picture of a child listening intently to a wondrous tale falling, word by word, from a mother's lips. And sometimes, very often, in fact, there is a noble, patriotic quality in the music—marching feet—valiant resolve—undying devotion. Sadness, too, is in the ballad —sadness and resignation, and slow, unabating pain.

One day Robert Schumann and Fryderyk Chopin were having a conversation about music, and Schumann asked, "Will you tell me, please, how you came on your original ballad composition? Was the idea yours, entirely, or did it come to you as an idea from the compositions of some other?"

Without hesitation, Chopin answered, "I found inspiration in the poems of my compatriot, Adam Mickiewicz."

The story of Mickiewicz is a splendid one in itself; here it gains in beauty because it is associated with the tale of Fryderyk Chopin's genius.

A few years after Chopin's arrival in Paris, Adam Mickiewicz found refuge there. He had been exiled from his native land in 1824 because of his part in student revolts in Wilno, and had been ordered to live in Russia. After five years in that country, he made his way slowly to Paris by way of Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, where he met and became friends with the American Fenimore Cooper. Once in Paris, he found him-

self a rallying center for his exiled countrymen. They came to him who was considered the greatest Polish poet of the time, and a great patriot besides, to discuss the individual problems that confronted them as exiles, and they found ample opportunity for debating the ever-recurring questions of Poland's harassed political and social bondage to her overlords. Frenchmen, Lithuanians, and White Russians often joined the gatherings, especially after Mickiewicz's longest poem, *Pan Tadeusz,* which dealt with Polish life at the time of Napoleon's invasion of Russia, was published, and established the poet's fame in his adopted land.

Needless to say, one person most welcome in Mickiewicz's home in Paris and Sèvres was Fryderyk Chopin, and together the two talked of music and literature, and very frequently they discussed the significance of the ballad. Mickiewicz had found it a full and buoyant style of expression, especially when he wished to voice his love for an understanding of the simple man. He used the same form to express his respect for his country's spiritual leaders and, when he wanted to portray the love that burned like a steady flame in his heart for the ideals that inspired them, he used the simple ballad form. As he and Fryderyk Chopin, who was twelve years his junior, walked in the stately Gardens of Luxemburg or rode to Versailles and to Sèvres, they talked of the ballad and its power. It was no wonder that young Mr. Chopin, under the influence of his esteemed friend, should begin to test and try out the ballad as a mode of expression for his own art.

One day when the two were walking, Mickiewicz said suddenly, "I have been told that you have found much inspiration in my poetry, Fryderyk. Tell me, is it true?"

"Yes, it is true," Chopin answered vigorously. "Not only your form but your subjects have given me inspiration. Your ballads are leading me to new form in music."

And Chopin listed the particular ballads that he had been studying—"Switez," "Pobutka," "Switezianka," and "Co lubi." With typical frankness, he added that every poem of Mickiewicz's that dealt with the life of Polish or Lithuanian people had been a source of inspiration.

"I have called my compositions musical ballads," he said, "and have even given them the names of your poems."

Mickiewicz's face shone with pleasure. This was a tribute he loved.

"You are my master of poetry," Fryderyk continued, "and now, very soon, I mean to make a music ballad for your long poem, 'Konrad Wallenrod.' "

The joy that was in Mickiewicz's face was reflected in Chopin's. Of one accord, the two friends, without speaking, sat down on a park bench. They stayed there a long time listening to the birds and watching the light, feathery clouds move steadily and with infinite grace through the blue sky. There was no need for them to speak in words to each other, for their thoughts were running in the same musical rhythm. While they sat there in the park at Sèvres, each considering the creative genius of the other and the power each had to interpret the ideals of man to the world, they forgot the shame and misery and meanness that frequently smothered the good that is in mankind.

It was Mickiewicz who broke the silence finally.

"See that palace over there on the hill," he said, and pointed to an ancient stone chateau. "Well, my friend, the old

Princess Giedrojc lives there. She has a piano of exquisite tone, and would be delighted to have you play some of your ballads for us."

Fryderyk yawned and stretched himself. He had no wish to leave the comfort of the soft grass of the park. "Will there be a multitude of guests, do you think?" he asked. It was obvious that he was looking for a pretext for not going.

"Just her daughter and, perhaps, Maurycy Mochnacki, whose history of the Polish insurrection you know," Mickiewicz answered.

Still Fryderyk was reluctant to leave the green luxury of the park. "I have no respect for historians like Mochnacki," he stormed. "They are always wise after an event, but what do they achieve for the mass of people? Nothing."

Mickiewicz raised his hands in protest, and said, "I believe that Mochnacki is now working on some very important political scheme and that several renowned Frenchmen are assisting him."

This brought Chopin to his feet, but not to hurry away to the chateau. He stood up in order to give greater emphasis to what he had to say and, as he talked, he walked back and forth swiftly.

"What are they going to do now?" he cried out. "I'll tell you—bathe Poland in blood again. The Cossack dogs will come storming into our villages and kill the unarmed people."

He paused for a moment, then continued, "And when it is over, Mochnacki or some historian like him will write a history, and say it was a valiant and noble struggle but that, in the face of indifferent and selfish noblemen, nothing could be achieved."

"Not this time, Fryderyk," Mickiewicz said gently. "I agree with you that our noblemen have kept us in bondage,

but history is not going to repeat itself. You will see. Mochnacki believes, as we do, that the peasants have rights. He is as anxious as we are to purge our country of the selfishness of the nobility."

Now Fryderyk appeared to have forgotten the proposal to go to the palace of the Princess Giedrojc. All his thought seemed to be on the vague but desirable prospect of a liberated Poland.

"If the common people do not receive their rights," he shouted enthusiastically, "the day will come when they will seize what is theirs, and will do it over the dead bodies of Polish, Russian, Prussian, and Austrian noblemen."

History records that Adam Mickiewicz had the same political and social views as Fryderyk Chopin. They both held the leaders of the French Revolution in high esteem, and looked to democratic France for guidance in the coming struggle for freedom in Poland. At this time, Chopin hoped that freedom would be secured without bloodshed. Mickiewicz, because he was more of a realist, probably knew that war and misery were inevitable.

"So much for politics for the present," Mickiewicz said with a gentle laugh, and rose to his feet. "Let us go to the princess, now, and you can play your revolutionary compositions on her piano. The cause of 'People's Liberty' may gain new sympathizers as a result of your music."

As they approached the palace gates, Adam Mickiewicz paused and laid his hand on his friend's shoulder. "Do not be angry with me, my dear friend," he said, "when I say that your music speaks better for the people's liberty than your lips. Make music and play it, and by so doing you will do your noble share in winning freedom for our people. Your music has often

been my inspiration both for my poetry and my political essays."

Fryderyk smiled, but did not attempt to answer. Indeed, he could not have done so, at the moment, for tumult of emotion rose in his heart and made it impossible. But speech was not necessary, for he and Mickiewicz were feeling the same things, and in their hearts and minds they were singing in complete harmony. And with their thoughts and their songs they were fighting, and would fight, for the same cause.



A scene from Valdemosa.

Fifteen

Winter in Majorca

By the year 1838, George Sand, who had been extremely hurt by Fryderyk Chopin's rudeness to her, had succeeded in winning his friendship. When her son became afflicted with the same disease as Chopin, she decided to take the two of them to the warm and sunny Island of Majorca in the Mediterranean Sea, and about a hundred miles south of Barcelona.

It was not hard for her to persuade Fryderyk to leave Paris, for his old enemy, tuberculosis, was assailing him with renewed vigor. Moreover, he had come to depend on the strong-minded French author for advice and comfort when illness and loneliness preyed on him. George Sand was endowed with wisdom

and warm, understanding sympathy for her fellowmen and, besides, she had a keen wit and a sharp tongue that often proved the undoing of her enemies.

Fryderyk met George Sand and her son, who had been spending several days in a little village at the foot of the Pyrenees, in the city of Perpignan, and from here, the three went to Barcelona in the ship, *Phénicien*. From the picturesque Spanish city, they went in a little tramp steamer, *El Mallorquin,* to Majorca, one of the most beautiful of the Balearic Islands. This last part of their sea journey was made on a dark, hot night, and the tourists, amazed by the brilliance of the phosphorescent sea, stayed on deck to enjoy its strange, other-world beauty. George Sand described the night and the steersman in one of her books:

"Everybody on board seemed to be asleep, except the steersman who, in order to avoid following their example, sang all through the night. His voice was soft and restrained, as if he did not wish to waken the men of the watch—or perhaps, he sang softly because he was half asleep himself. We never tired of listening to him, for his song was very strange. He followed a rhythm and modulations quite foreign to our customs, and seemed to let his voice wander at its own sweet will, like the smoke of the vessel, wafted away on the breeze. It was a reverie rather than a song, and a kind of listless meandering of the voice in which thought had very little part. It followed the rocking of the ship and the gentle surge of the waves, resembling a vague improvisation, yet imprisoned in a form both soft and monotonous."

As Fryderyk Chopin lay listening to this song, memories of his past crept into his mind, and his heart, always quick to

respond to sounds, became filled with a deep, painful longing for his homeland and his people. The steersmen sang, and Chopin saw the forests of Poland and the Ukraine looming before him in all their dark, majestic beauty. He saw the broad meadows, and heard the peasants singing at their work.

The ship dropped anchor at Palma, the capital of Majorca, and the three searchers for health went ashore to look for lodgings. But there was no accommodation to be had in any of the hotels, and no rooms in any private houses. At last, a fruit dealer by the name of Gomez made what Fryderyk considered an excellent suggestion.

"There is a monastery of the Carthusian Friars in Valdemosa," he said, "and the good fathers frequently extend hospitality to tourists, and especially to those who are ill."

The three set out for Valdemosa, and found the monastery set on a hill, looking out to sea. Palm, orange, and lemon trees surrounded it, and flowers bloomed in a colorful profusion. Chopin was filled with delight, and his satisfaction did not decrease when he saw the plain, stern-walled cell that was to be his. He liked the calm and the stillness. When he sat down on the straight-backed chair that stood beside his bed, he felt as if the clean, plain room would breathe out to him the secret of good health, and give him the strength to compose the music that was crying out for expression.

"I shall be happy here," he whispered to himself with certainty, "and I shall work without ever becoming tired."

As they looked into the immediate future, George Sand, her son, and Fryderyk Chopin saw only one tiny flaw in their anticipated pleasure. It was the difficulty of procuring food. They would have to bring their bread and meat from the city.

Of fruit and wine, there was an abundance at the monastery. Two village girls, Nina and Catalina, agreed to do the carrying of food from the city.

And then the rain came. It began in the night, and soon became a torrent. It continued through the day and through many days and nights. Chopin was forced to stay in the monastery and, as the rain increased, the building became oppressive with chill dampness. With the rain, too, the problem of securing food became very serious, for the villagers, who had a surly dislike of all tourists and a marked distrust of all people from Paris, refused to sell them anything. If some native, more anxious for money than his neighbors, did condescend to part with a small quantity of his smoked fish, he charged such an exhorbitant price that the purchaser lost his appetite for it.

The rain continued and the villagers remained unmoved by the difficulties of the tourists in the monastery. Probably they rather enjoyed seeing them suffer, for they had an especial dislike for all people who came from Paris—a city of barbarians, they called it. So George Sand, her son, and Chopin lived within the monastery, and for breakfast, lunch, and dinner they had vegetables, fruit, wine—and rain, always rain.

During all these miserable days, Fryderyk Chopin worked with feverish haste, as if each hour were likely to be his last on earth. George Sand wrote an account of this in her book, *Un Hiver à Majorque:*

". . . I would find him at ten o'clock at night sitting at the piano, pale, with haggard eyes, and his hair almost standing on end. It would usually take him some moments to recognize me. Then he would make an effort to laugh, and play for me the sublime things he had just composed, or sometimes, the terrible,

heart-rending ideas which had taken possession of him, as if without his knowledge, during this time of solitude, melancholy, and fear. It was here that he wrote the finest of those short pages which he modestly called Preludes. They are masterpieces. Many of them bring to the mind's eye visions of dead monks and the sounds of their funeral dirges. . . . Others are hours of sunshine and health, amid the sounds of children's laughter, the distant thrum of the guitar, and the songs of birds among the wet leaves, or at the sight of pale little roses blooming above the snow. Others again are dreary and sad and break the heart, even though they charm the ear."

The musical power of Fryderyk Chopin grew in force and integrity but, as it grew, his body became weaker and weaker. His usually pale face took on a ghastly pallor, and a deep melancholy settled in his spirit. It bound his feelings and his thoughts as securely as prison chains might have held his body. The days passed in gloom and steady rain, and finally George Sand resolved that she must rescue her sick companions from the Majorca climate. By the twenty-sixth of February, 1839, they were back in France, and she wrote her friend, Madam Marliani, "At last, dear, here we are back in France. Another month and Chopin and I should have died in Spain, he of melancholy and disgust, and I of rage and indignation."

France again, and nothing but mournful recollections of a holiday that had promised so much! But, yes, much more, for out of the loneliness and misery of Majorca came the most exquisite of Chopin's preludes. To-day the rain and the pain are forgotten, and those preludes live in the full beauty of their tones and themes.



Countess Potocki, from an authentic portrait.

Sixteen

An Evening at Madam Marliani's

Madam Marliani, to whom George Sand wrote upon her return to France from Majorca, was a person of social importance in Paris. Her spacious house at Number Seven Square d' Orléans was the meeting-place of many artists, politicians, and members of the aristocracy. They came together there ostensibly for entertainment and the exchange of opinions, but the real reason was for food. Madam Marliani had a competent cook and her roast beef and lamb were among the best served in Paris. Besides this, the wine cellar at Number Seven was well stocked, and the hostess was generous in keeping the glasses of her guests filled.

On a certain afternoon shortly after his return from Majorca, Fryderyk Chopin, accompanied by two Polish friends, Grzymala, the journalist, and Fontana, went to Madam Marliani's for dinner. George Sand, dressed in a crinolined gown of blue satin trimmed with white lace, was there. So was Franz Liszt who had brought with him a laughing group of young Parisians, delighted to be in a gathering of famous people. There were pompous, baldheaded bankers, one famous painter, at least five writers, and quite a number of titled fathers and mothers who had brought their daughters to observe and enjoy the brilliant chatter of some of the city's most renowned wits.

Fryderyk Chopin was seldom happy when he attended any special gathering; usually he was in a mood of gloom or self-effacement, but this evening he was full of good humor. His dark eyes sparkled with fun and laughter, and his greetings to his hostess and fellow guests were gay and witty. When Madam Marliani asked him to "play" portraits of her guests, he consented graciously and with no evidence of reluctance.

Chopin was famous for this form of entertainment. He had made some friends through it but probably many more enemies, for in "playing" a portrait he could heap scorn and disdain on a person with more frankness than he would have dared to do with spoken words. This is how he did it: The person whose portrait was to be "played" would sit before him and, as Fryderyk scrutinized his subject's features and the expression of his countenance, he would play an interpretation on the piano. Big noses, ugly feet, beautiful profiles, delicate lips, exquisite complexions—all had their notes, and so did kindliness, cleverness, quick sympathy, patience, and many other characteristics. Sometimes his portraits were humorous; sometimes they were

full of understanding and sympathy; and usually they were so accurate that his audience marvelled at his perception. There were some who thought that he was especially acute in interpreting tragedy in worn and tired faces.

On this night, the Polish Countess Delfina Potocki, to whom he had dedicated several compositions, came to him timidly and begged, "Please, play my portrait, Fryderyk." Several guests who heard the tremor in her voice prayed silently that the composer would treat her with kindness, for it was obvious that she was afraid, and yet could not resist approaching Chopin, for whom she had great admiration.

For a few seconds, Fryderyk looked at her carefully. Her figure was slender and her face had a delicate loveliness. Her gown was rich and hung in luxurious folds over her crinoline. After a moment's hesitation, the musician took the soft shawl from her shoulders and spread it over the keyboard. Then he began to play on the covered keys. The music was broken and halting; sometimes it was soft, but each note of softness was followed by a swift tempest of harsh noise. Later, this was interpreted to mean pearls of great value being thrown into an angry sea. These introductory notes were followed by the chirping of birds and the swaying of trees. The listeners thought it all so real that they imagined their nostrils caught the fragrance of garden flowers. Then came deep, grave tones, but only for a moment, for they were smothered in laughter, and followed by the soft plump-plump of pearls falling in the sea. The carefree birds chirped again; the flowers bloomed again. And so the full portrait of the countess was "played," and her characteristics were drawn together in a mist of emotion, represented by the fragile cashmere shawl.

It was a sad revenge that Fryderyk Chopin had taken on the Countess Delfina. He had proclaimed her before her friends and his to be a person of no great sincerity. He had said as plainly as words could have done that he considered her incapable of serious thought, that, in his opinion, she was wasting her life in search of amusement, and that in one thing only was she constant—her incessant seeking for change and entertainment.

Countess Potocki left the piano sadly. She had read Chopin's interpretation correctly and, for the moment, at least, was deeply chagrined that he should have put her insubstantial character so completely into music. The realization that he felt sorry for her because she was throwing her life away in things that did not matter gave her little comfort.

As the last notes of the countess's portrait died away, Chopin paused to have a brief, whispered conversation with his friend, Grzymala, who wanted him to do a sketch of a beautiful woman sitting in a remote corner of the room and engaged in conversation with a wealthy banker. "See her," Grzymala whispered. "She is sitting beside a Venetian vase and reveals its grace." Fryderyk looked at her and shook his head. He had no wish to make a portrait of the woman.

"She is Maria," he said, "and she has got from life all that she wants, for now she is rich."

He looked about anxiously for George Sand and, when his eyes found her, at last, talking with Franz Liszt, he beckoned for her to come to him. She left Liszt, at once, and approached the piano.

"Delfina loves you, Fryderyk," she said as soon as she reached his side, "and I think she will during all her life."

Chopin's only comment on this was to continue to play his portrait of the countess. By so doing, he was telling George Sand that he felt certain Delfina Potocki would forget him easily.

"Perhaps, perhaps," Miss Sand agreed, and then reminded him of the number of compositions he had dedicated to the countess.

"You have honored her in your music, Fryderyk," she said, "and you have honored Maria Wodzinski, the Countess Alexandrine de Mariolles, and very many others. Why, the Countess d'Agoult has had at least twelve études from you, and the old Princess of Württemberg has had many mazurkas, but I, alas, have had not one. No nocturne. No mazurka. No étude. Not even a prelude. Tell me why, Fryderyk. Why is my name missing from your music?"

Chopin was spared having to answer this impetuous question, for now he brought his portrait of the Countess Potocki to an end, and the room was filled with a storm of applause. The lights in the vast chandeliers trembled and some went out. Then the hostess was by his side, saying enthusiastically, "I am, indeed, fortunate to have so great a master for my guest."

George Sand could not repeat her question, for the butler announced dinner, and the guests formed in a procession to go into the dining-room. It was not fashionable at this time in Paris to serve elaborate dinners or to array food in extravagant style on the table. There were linen and silver, of course, but both were simple and modest. It was usual for the fruit and wines to be very good, but the other food was exceedingly plain. Despite this, however, the meal lasted for three hours.

"Perhaps you will be good enough to play my portrait

now, Mr. Chopin," Madam Marliani said as she and her guests rose from the table.

Chopin bowed and, without speaking, went at once to the piano. His face, usually so expressive, bore a striking resemblance to gray stone, and his dark eyes had a chilly glitter as he began fingering the keys of the piano lightly. He continued this aimless picking of the keys for about three minutes, then rose, bowed, and hurried away from the piano.

"But, sir," Madam Marliani cried out, "is this all? Is my portrait so little?"

"Madam, I ate so little," he answered with profound dignity, "so I beg you, do not expect any more from me."

A titter of laughter ran through the salon, and Chopin and his friends very wisely withdrew. The hostess, it seemed to him, had tried to use him as the one source of entertainment for her guests, and he resented it. If she had been satisfied with his performances before dinner, he probably would have left her drawing-room graciously, but her effort to have him return to the piano after dinner angered him.

"They want to squeeze the last note out of my heart," he often cried out in rage to his friends after he had been a guest at one rich home or another.

On occasions such as this, it was his custom to slip away unobserved without waiting to take leave of his hosts. But for all his wrath at the time and all his resolve never to return to the homes of those who had used him for their guests' entertainment, he usually did so, for it was impossible for him to harbor ill-will, or even mild resentment, for a long period of time. Give him a few weeks or a couple of months, at the most, and he was ready to pour out his music again.

Seventeen

Sunny Nohant

With the exception of one year, Fryderyk Chopin, for a period of seven years, accompanied George Sand and her son and daughter to their summer home in Nohant. They left Paris in May and returned in October. This pleasant custom began in 1839, and it was a fortunate break for the composer for, with the years, his physical condition became increasingly delicate. He found Paris boring and strenuous. The demands that society put upon him, as his reputation grew, irritated him, but he was not so completely devoid of financial sense as not to know that many of them had to be met with a fair degree of grace and affability.

Once at Nohant, however, the responsibilities of being a famous musician dropped from him, and he set to work with a will to enjoy living. He rose at seven o'clock in the morning just as he did in Paris, but not to begin a series of tedious lessons. In Nohant, he rose to enjoy days of reading and composing and studying the music of his contemporaries and of those who, in other days, had had renown similar to that which was developing for him. There were days at Nohant which he devoted almost entirely to writing letters. From his childhood, he had found pleasure in this simple means of expression and association with

his friends and relatives. His Nohant letters are, for the most part, in a happier style than the letters he wrote at any other time, except those written when he was a boy and away on holidays.

The composer's taste in literature bore a close similarity to his taste in music. He liked Polish folk music and his favorite reading was the poetry of Poland's great poets, Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasinski. When he read French it was often the works of Voltaire, for whom he had a high regard. Just what part of Voltaire's work appealed most to him is not recorded, but probably it was his poetry, for Chopin, at all times, found inspiration in poetry. Doubtless, too, the biting satires of the French author appealed to Fryderyk, for he himself enjoyed satirical sketches, and frequently entertained his friends with them.

When he set himself to study the work of composers, he spent a great deal of time pouring over the compositions of Mozart. From his earliest childhood, he had found great enjoyment in the delicate and rhythmic symphonies of the renowned Austrian whose talent had developed in a similar manner to his own. Next to Mozart, he loved Sebastian Bach, and spent hours studying the stately music of this eighteenth century composer. For Beethoven, who was almost his contemporary, he had nothing more than an aloof respect. He was impressed by his long and very powerful compositions, but found neither inspiration nor pleasure in them. Weber, he considered too operatic, even melodramatic and, when Schumann's name was mentioned, he made no effort to hide his feelings; his contemporary, Schumann, made him nervous and uncomfortable, and he often dismissed a discussion about his music with a

shrug of his shoulders. For Schubert, he professed to have little regard, and said that he thought his technical skill much overrated. The truth of the matter was, Fryderyk Chopin had no liking for opera music and, on one occasion, at least, he explained to a friend why he did not write an opera.

"I do not like opera," he said. "For acting, I go to a theater; for music, I go to concerts. I do not know what to expect when I go to the opera."

After a pause, he added, "I admit that there was a time when I went to a great many operas, but that was long ago. Then I was anxious to learn and, in so doing, I became convinced that opera music is not worth while. It is shallow."

However, it may have been the operas he had attended in his youth that gave him the desire to act, or it may have been that he had a genuine talent for acting and mimicry. It is strange, though, that he found playing his own compositions for an audience irksome and annoying and that he enjoyed doing impersonations. Often when he was living in Nohant, he would invite the guests out to the garden to see and listen to his imitations of the mannerisms and speech of persons they knew well. Among the guests who frequently accepted his invitations and applauded his impersonations were the artist, Delocroix, the author, Balzac, and the composer, Liszt. George Sand, her daughter, Solange, and her son, Maurice, were usually there, too, and everyone laughed uproariously as the composer, Chopin, became the actor, Chopin.

It was his custom to start with persons for whom he had bitter dislike. The czar of Russia most frequently topped his bill, and after him came the emperor of Austria, to be followed

by the Prussian king. Then in rapid succession, he turned to the politicians of the day and the pompous critics who might have irritated one or other of the guests. Each one he portrayed with remarkable accuracy and, while his audience applauded, he hurried on to another. His repertoire was long and varied, and his descriptions as satirical as his mimicry was exact. When his monologues were completed, he was ready for a hearty dinner. In fact, his friends said that acting was the best appetizer he could have.

Once the frostiness of autumn began to mingle with the fresh fragrance of balsam, Fryderyk knew that he must leave the quiet of Nohant. He did this reluctantly for, in the secluded castle-like home of George Sand, he had a pleasant environment for work. However, he had to go back to Paris, for how else could he have earned money to have another holiday? So back he went, feeling gloomy and almost despondent, yet resolved to overcome his unhappiness.

His choice of a day for departure was not made hurriedly or without careful preparations. Weeks before, he wrote letters to his friend, Fontana, in Paris, asking him to search for rooms for him. He wanted a suite of two rooms and a hall, and no small hall, either, but a spacious one, to ensure that his living-quarters were well separated from those of his neighbors. His instructions to the obliging Fontana mentioned the type of decorations he desired. He did not want rooms adorned with flowery or brightly-colored wallpaper. Dark red and dark green were his favorite, and these colors he liked to have relieved by narrow, silvery or gray stripes.

"If there are any papers more to your taste or more fashionable," he wrote to Fontana on one occasion, "then I will like

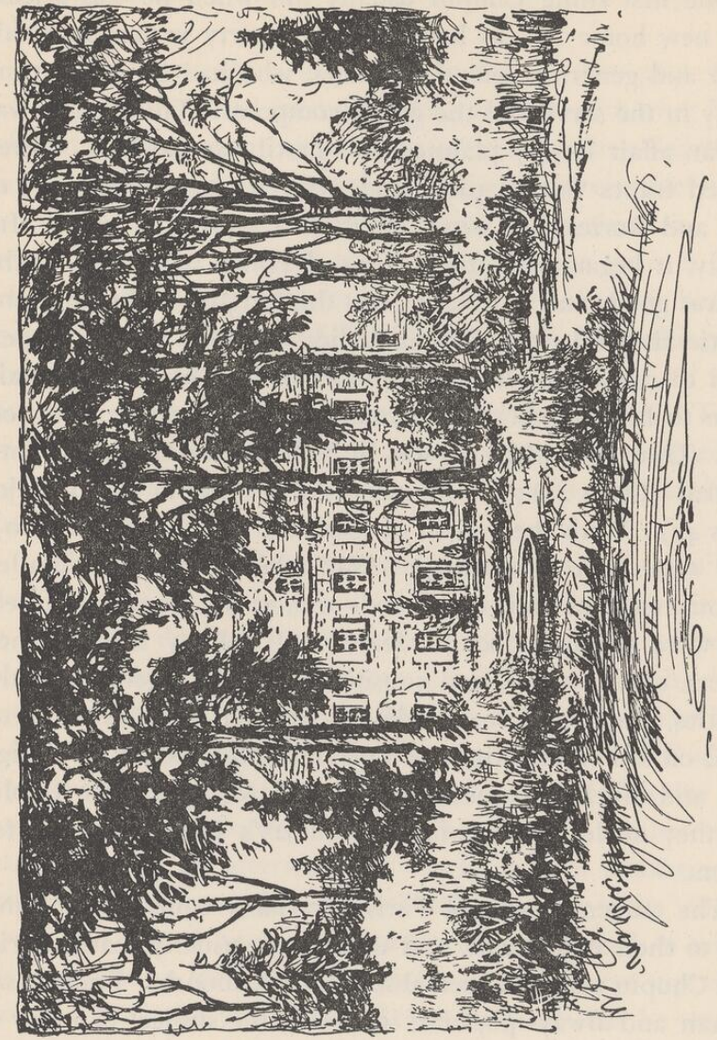
them but, as you know, I prefer what is simple and unpretentious, but elegant. I do not like garish colors."

Mr. Fontana, who was his loyal friend and admirer through many years, often carried Chopin's instructions to his tailor, as is shown in many of his letters. Here is an excerpt from one of his long letters of instructions: "Tell him to make me a pair of gray trousers. You can choose a dark tone of gray—something good, not striped, but plain and simple. You are an Englishman, so you should have a good notion of what I should have for winter. Dautremont, the tailor, will be glad I am coming back. I also need a black velvet waistcoat, but with very little pattern, not showy, but elegant and simple. If he hasn't any very fine velvet, tell him to make the waistcoat of good silk. Do not let him cut it very low."

There were instructions for the hatter, Duport, whose workshop was in Rue de la Chaussée d'Autin. "He has my measurements and knows what I want," Chopin wrote to Fontana, "but you show him a shape of your own choosing. Do not let him be too extreme."

The love for fine clothes, which Fryderyk had displayed when he was a child, had stayed with him through the years. When he was seven, a lace collar had delighted him; now the prospect of a new wardrobe served to lessen his regret at leaving Nohant.

When the rooms were found, the new clothes delivered or on the point of being delivered, and a servant engaged, usually for eighty francs, Fryderyk returned to Paris and was given an euthusiastic welcome by Mr. Fontana and Mr. Grzymala. Sometimes another Polish friend, Mr. Matuszynski, participated in the reception.



George Sand's home at Nohant.

The first thing Chopin usually did when he was settled in his new home was to have a dinner party in honor of his patient and generous friend, Fontana, who had spent his time lavishly in the service of the gifted composer. This dinner was no mean affair hastily planned and hastily despatched. Three hundred francs was its price and, with its accompaniment of music and stories and wine, it lasted a good five hours. Invariably, it began with the singing of Polish songs and, if the wine was good, and it usually was, this singing included many patriotic airs and many folk melodies. Chopin was easily persuaded to render his latest compositions and in these he paid tribute to his friends. For Fontana, he had written two nocturnes (Opus 37) while he was in Nohant; for Grzymala, four mazurkas (Opus 41); for Matuszynski, a waltz in A flat major (Opus 42). With the arrival of food, the guests entered into a happy state of reminiscences. With the soup, they recalled delicious meals of their childhoods and, as the meal progressed, there were stories of school feasts and holiday repasts when brothers, sisters, aunts, and cousins had come together for the festivities. Long before the dessert arrived, they usually embarked on sad recollections of Poland's subservience to foreign states, and much bitterness was mingled with the stern resolutions they made to share in the country's future struggle for freedom.

The current gossip of Paris invariably contributed something to their enjoyment, and there were usually many stories to tell Chopin who had been absent for five months. Franz Liszt, debonair and always popular, was often the subject of many of the tales, for he associated with the elite of Parisian society and was in demand, not only because of his art, but because of his

excellent manners that were enhanced by exquisitely tailored clothes.

At this time, Paris, according to the German poet, Heine, was literally engulfed in music. Every social gathering had its musical entertainment, so he wrote in the *Augsburg Gazette,* and described the condition humorously, if not appreciatively: "The fact is that in Paris we are drowned in floods of music. There is hardly a house in which one can take refuge, as in a Noah's ark, from this deluge of sound . . . The art of music has inundated our lives, a fact that I find disquieting." From this general description, Heine added a note about Liszt whom he usually found in the midst of a throng of "hysterical ladies." To this, he appended a graceful remark: "All other pianists are eclipsed by him, with the single exception of Chopin, the Raphael of the pianoforte."

The "Raphael of the pianoforte" made no effort to be the rival of Liszt for, although he did occasionally play the piano in public, he devoted much of his time and energy to teaching while he was in Paris. He began his day, wherever he was, at seven o'clock, and if he were in Paris he usually gave four lessons a day. In Nohant, he had but one pupil, Solange Dudevant, George Sand's daughter, but in Paris, he planned his day on an hourly routine, charging twenty francs an hour for lessons. By four o'clock in the afternoon, he was in need of relaxation, and this he usually found in George Sand's drawing-room where he stayed for several hours, but returned without fail to work at his composition for a few hours before going out to supper. By eleven o'clock, he was so completely fatigued that he was glad to return home and go to bed.

Going to bed seldom meant rest and sleep, for no sooner

was he comfortable, than a melody would begin ringing in his ears, and so persistent or so engaging would it be that he would have to get up and write it down. Sometimes the mere recording on a piece of paper would not suffice; the melody would become the master and demand to be played on the piano. Day and night, Fryderyk Chopin was the constant servant of music.



Eighteen

Sol

The night of February twenty-first, 1842, was clear and frosty in Paris. The deep blue sky was sparkling with stars, and the crisp winter air carried many sounds of pain and gladness, but those that came from the Salle Pleyel were resonant with gaiety, mingled with the muffled roll of carriage wheels and the constant beat of horses' hoofs. On this night, an event of major artistic importance was to take place in the spacious hall. The composer, Fryderyk Chopin, was to give a concert. The tickets had all been sold in advance. The most renowned citizens of the French capital were to be in attendance. Artists, critics,

statesmen, and a sprinkling of humble people who had been able to afford the price of tickets assembled at the entrance, and discussed the forthcoming concert and its master. There was gossip: what such and such a critic had said of him on such and such an occasion; what the master, Chopin, had replied to so and so at such and such a dinner. The stories about Fryderyk Chopin were varied; some were bitter; some revealed deep affection; some were cynical; and many were critical of his conduct; but none were disparaging of his talent. The word "genius" passed from many lips.

Chopin disliked giving concerts, partly because he became so fatigued by the steady playing that it was like recovering from an illness to regain his strength afterward, and partly because he was seldom conscious of any response from his audience. Their approval did not sustain him when he became weary. Their very presence made him nervous and ill at ease. But on this night it was different. From the moment he came on to the platform, pale and frightened, he felt the admiration of the people. Indeed, it was more than admiration that emanated from the audience to the man on the platform; it was deep affection. When he played his Prelude in D flat, he saw the quick tears come into many eyes and, almost for the first time in his life, he felt united with his audience. He saw the smiles of delight that came when he played mazurkas in A flat, B major, A minor. When he played his new ballad entitled, "Switezianka" he was aware of the response of his listeners, and of one particular listener, a little girl with bright black eyes and black curls. She was sitting with her mother in the first row, and her rosy cheeks were flushed almost to a cherry red now, for she was excited and eager to hear every tinkling note of the dainty bal-

lad. For the ballad was her favorite; she loved it so much that she felt it belonged to her. The little girl was Solange Dudevant and on this night, as she heard the music being played by her master, Chopin, her childish heart swelled with joy and pride. How she loved this dear friend who was her instructor, friend, and confidant! The fact that Sol was in the audience made playing easier for the master, for he had a deep affection for the engaging little girl who gave promise of being a wiser and better woman than her mother. From the time he and George Sand had become friends, Chopin had enjoyed the child's companionship. He taught her music, and found her responsive and appreciative. He had played games with her in Nohant, and had listened to the tales of her childish woes and joys. On this evening, which Solange firmly believed to be the most important in her life, they had come to the concert together and, when the master was leaving her with her mother, the child had begged for the assurance that they should drive home together. "Without Mother and without Maurice, just ourselves," Solange had insisted, and Chopin had promised.

After the ballad, Madam Viardot sang, and she was followed by the cellist, Franchomme. Then Chopin returned to the platform to play a group of delicate nocturnes. Of all his music, the composer probably liked his nocturnes best. On the wings of their fairy-like tones, he could be transported from the boring reality of life in Paris and, in imagination, be once more with his family in his childhood home. On this night, as he played his nocturnes, however, he was not recalling the happy environment of his youth. He was looking into the future and contemplating the child, Solange. She was as dear to him as if she were his own daughter, and he wanted her life to be filled

with happiness—not the foolish happiness of gratified wishes, but the full, enduring happiness that comes to one who does good work and accomplishes good things. As he played and observed the little girl looking at him intently, Chopin thanked God for the trust she had in him.

After the concert, Solange and Chopin drove away together. "Now then, Sol," Chopin said, "tell me quickly what mischief you have been into now." Solange had a habit of coming to him when she was about to incur her mother's anger.

"It is no mischief this time," the little girl said with a sob, "but I am greatly in need of your help. If I do not have it, I shall die. I know I shall."

"Come! Come! Do not be so tragic." Chopin tried to laugh, but the tears that glistened on Solange's long lashes were much too pathetic for laughter.

"Well, you see, I love a boy very, very dearly," Solange whispered, "and I must not tell Mama. If she were to know, she would scold me. She might even beat me with a stick."

"Never!" Chopin exclaimed. "If we can show her that the boy is worthy of your love, my dear Sol, I am sure she will not be angry."

"Do you think so?" Sol looked at Mr. Chopin anxiously. "Do you think that when she knows she will let me see him whenever I want to?"

"I am confident she will," Chopin answered, and kissed the child good night, for the carriage had drawn up before his home in Pigalle Street.

"Oh, I love you so much," Solange sighed happily. All her perplexity was gone, for she knew that the composer, who had a father's affection for her, would help her.

Before many years passed, Solange married and, throughout her life, she was a leader in several movements for political and social reforms in France. The battle that she helped to wage against poverty was one of the noblest in that country's history.

Sol lived a very long and useful life and as long as she lived, she paid tribute to the man who helped her solve many of the problems of her childhood. Even when she was an old woman, she remembered the kindness and wisdom of a dark-eyed man who had a frail body and a noble heart. He was Fryderyk Chopin.



Nineteen

The End of a Friendship

Into the lives of everyone, there comes a time when death looms before him like a greedy monster that cannot be appeased. One beloved friend is snatched away, and then another and another. Suddenly, in the year 1844, death took away several friends of Fryderyk Chopin, and the desolation that filled his heart was as hard to endure as a severe illness.

The first to die was his father; death came to him by way of the disease that menaced the whole family of Chopin—tuberculosis. The next person was Dr. Matuszynski, who had been Fryderyk's friend from the days when he had gone to school in Warszawa. There were several more deaths recorded in the frequent letters from Poland, so many, in fact, that Fryderyk began to fear the letters.

If they had failed to arrive with their usual regularity, how-

ever, his distress would have been increased for, with the passing of the years and his inability to return to his family, he had come to depend on the letters from his two sisters. They had both married; Ludwika was Mrs. Jedrzejewicz and Izabela was Mrs. Barcinski, but the new interests that had come to them with marriage had not caused them to forget their brother in Paris. Their letters were full of home news and gossip about their friends. Ludwika was always the older sister, measuring out endearments with admonitions. Fryderyk must not work too hard. At the first sign of a cold, he must go to bed. He must guard against chills and damp feet. He must be sure to eat good food and plenty of it. Ludwika's letters were full of affection. Sometimes she would remind him of their childhood days and recall some prank of his, or some festivity that had delighted them both. Her letters, even when they contained sad news, always brought a glow of warmth to Fryderyk's pale face. It was good to know that his sister's love never wavered; it was always the same, just as her confidence in his talent never decreased but grew with the years and ahead of his progress to fame.

Besides his two loyal sisters, there was one other in Warszawa who loved him and prayed for his safe-keeping. This was his mother who longed for his return to Poland. She hoped for it, and yet she realized that her delicate son probably could not stand the strenuous journey. Doubtless she was aware of the fact that his slender resources would not permit him to undertake the expense, especially as the time away would mean the giving up of his pupils for the period, and probably entirely, for some, at least, would go to other teachers.

So time passed, sometimes in a slow and indolent manner,

like the waters of the Seine flowing leisurely to the sea. But more often, the days and weeks and years went with the speed of a frisky colt galloping in a meadow. And sometimes, Fryderyk thought, they had no more purpose than the play of a colt. They brought pleasure; they brought pain; they brought disappointment, friendship, kindness, harshness, disillusionment. What a medley was life!

In this year, 1844, one of the dearest friendships of Fryderyk Chopin's life began to die. He and George Sand had been good friends for many years, but now harsh words began to fly between them. The first misunderstandings arose over George Sand's daughter, Solange. The girl, just growing into her teens, was devoted to Mr. Chopin. He was her music master and a friend who understood the thoughts and ambitions that were growing in her. When she wanted advice, she turned to Fryderyk Chopin rather than to her mother, and never to her brother, Maurice. This irritated both George Sand and her son, and one violent scene followed another. In less than two years after the disagreements began, the friendship was completely shattered, so completely that the participants and their friends realized that it was beyond repair.

George Sand was a tempestuous creature who took a queer delight in taking her revenge on those who had incurred her wrath. In 1846, her "revenge" on Fryderyk Chopin, in the form of a serial entitled, *Lucrezia Floriani,* began to appear in the *Courrier Français.* The story purported to be about an actress, Lucrezia, and a certain Prince Carol, but almost all its readers knew that the real Lucrezia was George Sand and the real Prince Carol, Fryderyk Chopin.

"She did not want your friendship," Chopin's friends told

him. "All she wanted was material for a novel. You should have known that, for she has used many other friendships for the same purpose."

Chopin wisely said nothing. Not even when George Sand's son sneered at him and asked, "Well, Master, have you read today's instalment of my mother's serial? Tell me, sir, is the record correct? Did it happen as she says it did?" He did not allow himself to make any reply but, while he maintained this resolute silence, great bitterness was growing in his heart.

"She needed ten years of my friendship," he said to himself, "in order to gather material for a novel."

Later he made this remark to a sympathetic friend, and added, "She is a fraud, this woman. She is willing to sell friendship for francs."

After Solange Dudevant was married to the sculptor, Clesinger, Fryderyk Chopin withdrew from the circle of friends in which he and George Sand had moved. He gave himself entirely to his music. He spent weary hours at the piano, and those who heard him play said afterward that the music was the most tragic they had ever heard. Perhaps the composer realized that the tale recorded in the music of this period was both too sad and too personal to be published. On the other hand, he may have played for no other reason than to gain release from the misery that was burdening his mind and heart, and so may not have set it down at all. This probably is true, for after his death no trace of any compositions done at this time could be found.

The music he wrote during the two years that his friendship with George Sand was faltering between continuance and collapse was very beautiful, and the selections are of such impor-

tance that they should be recorded here: Three Mazurkas (Opus 59); Barcarolle (Opus 60); Polonaise Fantaisie (Opus 61); Two Nocturnes (Opus 62); Three Mazurkas (Opus 63); Three Waltzes (Opus 64); Sonata for Piano and Cello (Opus 65).

After the year 1846, the muse of Chopin was silent. The man himself became a recluse. Some of his most devoted friends, knowing that his health was becoming very poor, approached him with solicitous advice and generous offers of help, but he would not listen to them. He treated everyone the same—he dismissed them abruptly with the sharp remark, "Further discussion is not necessary." For days, even for weeks, he did not leave his apartment and when, on occasions, he was prevailed upon to leave the gloomy rooms, he walked with such a slow step and his countenance was so overcast with sorrow and bitterness, his few remaining friends whispered, "Only a miracle can save him now. He has become indifferent to everything, even to music."



Twenty

Last Paris Concert

The month of February in the year 1848 was like a Paris street rat—dirty, muggy, cold, and heavy with the disagreeable smells of a winter that had no sunshine, but had an abundance of winds, beating rains, thick fogs. Sickness spread with the devastating speed of an epidemic, and a clammy chill penetrated the hearts and minds of the people. There was no sunshine and no happiness in the countenances of the people. Discontent and fear, even hate, gleamed in their eyes and, when they gathered in restaurants and taverns, they talked in whispers, and watched one another carefully and fearfully. No one knew whom he could trust but, even as distrust grew, the complaints of the people became louder. Soon they spoke out boldly against the despotic government of France. They said that people were

starving, that misery and pestilence were spreading throughout the land, and that brave people were dying in prisons. The demands for reform became louder and louder. The people who had talked in whispers now began to organize themselves and to speak their demands for reform in firm voices. Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality were the words most frequently on their lips, and this was true, not in Paris alone and not in France alone, but in all Europe. In Vienna, in Berlin, in Moscow, in Warszawa, in Rome—in most of the capitals of the continent, discontent was brewing and portending the coming of a bloody spring. This spring, history has since called the "People's Spring."

Fryderyk Chopin was very ill throughout the weary months of this winter. His face, always thin and haggard, became even more so, and the pallor that had once been rather fascinating now became startling. When he coughed, his mouth filled with blood. When he attempted to walk, his swollen legs almost collapsed beneath him. It became impossible for him to go, unaided, up and down the staircase that led from his apartment to the street, and the servants had to help him. Once he reached the street, he had to drag himself to a bench to rest, and so he made but slow progress—walking a few steps, then resting—but he never let himself accept the advice of his sister, Ludwika, for he was convinced that if he took to his bed he would soon not be able to rise from it at all.

He was in this sad condition of health when news came from Warszawa that revolt was approaching in Poland. One by one, his Polish friends came to say good-bye to him. They were about to leave Paris and return to their native land to have a share in the uprisings that were being planned for the spring.

As Fryderyk bade them Godspeed, joy and pain mingled in his heart. He was eager for what he hoped the revolt might bring, but deeply grieved because he was too ill to accompany his friends back to Poland. There were days when he resolved that he would go. In imagination, he saw himself there, sharing in the victory he hoped would be achieved. These days of optimism were followed by the realization that he would be useless in such a struggle. His slight body trembled in the wind. "I'm no more than a river reed," he cried out to himself. "I have no strength, no power."

As if sickness were not enough of a burden, financial problems began to confront him with steady and persistent regularity. He had to have two hundred francs a month to live on, but each month he fell short of his requirements. His debts mounted and so did the demands of his creditors. The need for money became so imperative that, although he was almost too weak to pedal a piano, he agreed to give a concert. The date was set for February sixteenth and the hall chosen was the Salle Pleyel where he had given a concert in 1844.

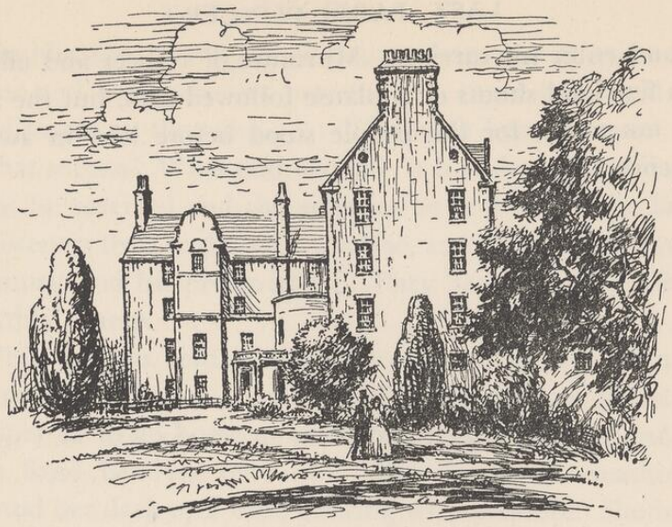
Even though revolt was brewing in Paris, the news that Fryderyk Chopin was coming out of his seclusion to give a concert aroused great enthusiasm and a rapid demand for tickets. Their price was high—twenty-five francs—but this did not deter the people. In a few days, every seat was sold and, when the famous composer stood before his audience, he could not see one empty seat in the building. This was Chopin's last concert in Paris, and many vivid descriptions of it have been preserved in books and newspaper files. One of the most beautiful appeared four days after the event in the *Gazette Musicale,* and part of it is quoted here:

"Besides the aristocracy of elegant women, the aristocracy of artists and amateurs was present, too, eager to behold this sylph of music on the wing . . . The sylph kept his word, and with what success! What enthusiasm! It is easier to describe the ovations he received and the ecstasies he aroused in the hearts of his listeners than to describe, analyse, and portray the mystery of his music and his presentation. They have not their like in our earthly sphere. . . ."

While he was resting after the concert, for he was much too exhausted either to accept any of the invitations given him for supper or to go home at once, he opened his eyes and saw George Sand bending over him. Her face was wreathed in smiles and her dark eyes were glowing with pleasure. She began to speak rapidly and in extravagant phrases. She apologized for her faithlessness and begged for forgiveness. Chopin may or may not have heard her, but he gave no sign of doing so. He rose from the couch and walked out of the room.

Outside, an enthusiastic crowd of people waited to greet him. They were not the people of the audience, for they had taken leave of him in the hall, but were those who had failed to secure tickets. Some of them, alas, were too poor to have the purchase price, but all of them, rich and poor alike, were anxious to pay tribute to the great man. The news of Chopin's failing health was known throughout Paris, and people had realized that this might be the last time they would be privileged to see the man whose music had delighted them and whose fame had spread throughout Europe. Naturally there were some in the throng who had come because of the gossip they had heard about him, but idle curiosity had not brought many, as was shown on their faces as they watched him walk down the steps of the

hall and enter his carriage. Murmurs of respect and affection and a few loud shouts of applause followed him, but the shouts were not noisy, for the people stood before him in awe and reverence.



Calder House, where Chopin lived while in Scotland.

Twenty-One

London

Among the friends Fryderyk Chopin made in Paris was a Scottish girl named Jane Wilhelmina Stirling. She was wealthy and, while she lived in Paris, she took quite a number of music lessons from the Polish composer, with the result that she became very devoted to him. After his concert in February, 1848, she renewed her invitation to him to visit her native land. When she saw how ill he was, and realized how urgently he needed money, she entreated him to leave Paris and go to London. In London, she promised him, he would be received hospitably

and she herself would assist in arranging concerts for him. So with visions of huge bank rolls before him, Chopin left Paris and went to London. This was to be no hurried trip, such as the one he had made years before, but a long, well-planned one and, if the climate proved to be not too disagreeable, he meant to go on a tour.

"Then I shall go back to Paris or, perhaps, to Warszawa and live peacefully," he told himself hopefully when he was crossing to Dover.

His first apartment in London was in Cavendish Square but, for all the aristocratic atmosphere of this spacious square, the composer found no comfort in the large, chilly rooms, so after a few days of shivering he moved to Welbeck Street, and took a suite for which he paid four guineas a month. But Welbeck Street proved as much of a disappointment as Cavendish Square, and he did not begin to adapt himself to an English environment until he moved to Dover Street where he leased an apartment for eighty pounds. Once he was settled, he sent out the letters of introduction that had been given to him by friends in Paris to people in London, and he wrote letters to his relatives in Paris.

From his childhood, Chopin had spent a great deal of time writing letters. He often complained that letter-writing was a tedious occupation and that he disliked it most heartily. Nevertheless, he wrote long letters, taking care always to express himself clearly and honestly. If he were out of patience with his health, he said so. If he had found his pupils irritating and unresponsive to his instruction, he described their failings in unflattering terms. After he arrived in Edinburgh in August of 1848, he wrote a letter to his family in Warszawa and, because

it gives such an accurate and sincere picture of the England as he saw it, it is set down here in part:

'My Dearest Ones,

'Thank you for your kind letter which came on to me here from London, where I spent three months, and succeeded in keeping fairly well. I gave two morning concerts there—one at the home of Mrs. Sartoris, and the other at Lord Falmouth's. Both were quite successful, but by no means showy.

'Mrs. Sartoris, by birth, Fanny Kemble, is the young daughter of the renowned English actor, and she herself is a fine singer. She was on the stage only two years, however, and then she married Mr. Sartoris, a wealthy and worldly man. She is received by London's most aristocratic society, goes everywhere, and is visited by everyone. Our acquaintance dates back to Paris.

'Lord Falmouth is a patron of music and something of an amateur musician; he is rich and very much of the great lord. He gave me his mansion in St. James's Square for a concert, and has been most amiable. In the street, he looks so poor one might offer him thru'pence, but in his home he has a throng of servants, and is much better dressed. I knew his niece in Paris, but met him first at a concert in London.

'Mario sang for me three times at one concert and I played four times. At the other concert, Viardot sang three times and I played four times. Such short and concise concerts are new to them here, but they liked them very much. They are accustomed to having only long, twenty-number concerts with ponderous announcements.

'I sent a few notes from *The Athenaeum,* a paper respected by artists. I have no others; for that matter, what do you want

with others—just somebody saying it's good! Get Antek to translate for you.

'I limited the audience to two hundred at Lord Falmouth's and to a hundred and fifty at Mrs. Sartoris's. At a guinea a ticket, I had three hundred guineas after the expenses were deducted. London is frightfully expensive during the season. My lodging alone, without anything additional, cost me eighty pounds. It's true that I had a high and large drawing-room in which there were three pianofortes: one was sent by Pleyel; another came from Erard; and the third, Broadwood put in. My lodging had a fine, large staircase and a splendid entrance. Besides, Dover Street is near Piccadilly—hence the eighty pounds. Carriage, manservant—everything is extremely dear—so that if I had not had home lessons at a guinea, and several daily, I don't know what would have happened me.

'I don't know whether I wrote you from London about the several grand evenings I had shortly after I arrived. The Duchess of Sutherland had the queen to dinner one day, and in the evening about eighty persons of the most exclusive London society. Besides the Prince of Prussia, who was about to leave London, and the royal family, there were only such persons as old Wellington—and so on (it is hard to find a parallel). The duchess presented me to the queen, who was gracious and talked to me twice. Prince Albert came up to the pianoforte. Everyone told me that both these things are rare. The Italians, who sang on this occasion, were Mario, Lablache, and Tamburini. No woman singer.

'I wish I could describe the Duchess of Sutherland's residence, but I can't. Those who know say that the Queen of England has no such home. All the royal palaces are old; splen-

did, but neither so beautiful nor so elegant as Stafford House (The Duke of Sutherland's palace) . . .

'After that evening at the Duchess of Sutherland's, I was told I was to play at the queen's palace, but I did not, and I do not know why, probably because I did not apply for the privilege. Here, you have to apply for everything—there is such a congestion of things. Not only did I not apply, but I did not call on the court's music master, whose duty it is to arrange concerts for the queen. This man also conducts the Philharmonic Society's Conservatoire in Paris. The Philharmonic Society invited me to play for them—a great favor or, rather, honor. Everyone who comes here tries to get it, and this year neither Kalkbrenner nor Hallé played, despite much effort. I refused once because I was not well, or so I said, but the real reason was that I would have had to play one of my concertos with the orchestra, and these gentlemen give only one rehearsal, and that in public with the admission by free ticket. . . . So I sent my regrets. One newspaper took offense at this, but this is of no consequence. After my afternoon concerts, many papers had good comments, except *The Times* in which a Mr. Davison (a creature of poor Mendelssohn's) writes; he does not know me, and imagines, so I have heard, that I am a rival of Mendelssohn . . .

'But to come back to the world of London. My price for an evening was twenty pounds, but I had only three such evenings. The second one was at the home of Marquis of Douglas, who is the son of the Duchess of Hamilton, whom I knew long ago in Paris. The young marchioness is a princess of Baden. She presented me to the Duchess of Cambridge, the queen's aunt, who talked to me a great deal whenever I met her afterward, and

to the Princess of Weimar. The Duke of Hesse was there also, and the elite of London ladies—Lady Jocelyn, one of the famous beauties; Lady Lincoln, a sister of the Marquis of Douglas, Young Lady Granville, Lady Cadogan, my former pupil . . . and some diplomatists, among whom were several Germans . . .

'My third paid appearance or, rather, the first in order was at Lady Gainsborough's. She was formerly maid of honor to the queen, and has collected the cream of the aristocratic world around her . . . Why should I enumerate all these names! I have got to know many of the great world. . . . Among the literary men, Carlyle, Rogers, an old and very famous poet and an honored friend of Byron, Dickens, Hogarth, who was an intimate friend of Walter Scott, etc., etc., and who wrote a fine article about my second concert in *The Daily News*. Among the notabilities, is Lady Byron with whom I am on very friendly terms. We converse like the goose with the sucking pig, she in English, I in French . . .

'I can't leave out Lady Augusta Bruce, daughter of Lady Elgin and a maid of honor to the queen's mother, the Duchess of Kent. She is very kind and amiable and good; she is an old acquaintance from Paris. It is difficult to enumerate them all, but I must remember Mrs. Grote whom I met in Paris. She is the wife of a member of Parliament, a very cultivated woman and the enthusiastic admirer of Jenny Lind. She met us at the same time, and once invited only us two, and we did not leave the piano from nine till one in the morning . . .

'The queen has come back to town after some demonstrations against her, and has attended the opera for a first public appearance. The occasion chosen was the first appearance of Jenny Lind, who also had just arrived, so there was an enormous

rush for tickets. On the last evening, stalls sold for three guineas. I did not know about it, having just arrived; and on the very day someone told me that if I knew Mrs. Grote, she could help me. I called on her, and she at once invited me to her own box. The performance was magnificent; the queen received more applause than Jenny Lind; they sang 'God Save the Queen,' with the whole audience and Wellington and the local notabilities standing. It was an imposing sight—that real respect and reverence for the throne and for law and order; they could not contain their enthusiasm.

'Miss Lind came to my concert!!! which meant a lot for the fools. She cannot appear anywhere without the people turning their opera glasses on her. But she never sings anywhere except in the opera, not even at great functions. She would have sung for me, Mrs. Grote said, but I never dreamed of asking her to, although she is a kind girl and we are on excellent terms. It's not the same as with others. One can call it the Scandinavian streak; it's a totally different nature from southerners such as Pauline Viardot. She is not pretty, but pleasant looking at home; on the stage I don't like her, but in *Sonnambula,* from the middle of the second act she is perfectly beautiful in every and all respects as an actress and a singer. People say that she will marry Mrs. Grote's brother, but I know for certain that it is not true! Some say she is secretly married; but her betrothed is waiting for her in Sweden. Mrs. Grote is a very kind woman, though eccentric and a good deal of a radical. She receives a great many interesting visitors: dukes, lords, and scholars; in a word, the celebrities of the great world. She talks in a base voice and does not wrap the truth in cotton wool . . . Nevertheless, she has a kind heart, and has given me proofs of it: she invited

me to visit her in the country with Miss Lind and Mrs. Sartoris; but I could not. Another person whom I like very much is Mrs. Sartoris (Fanny Kemble). She already knew me from the old days, and at the evening receptions in London society has never asked me to play if she saw I did not like it. She herself sings well, and has a lovely voice. She has two children, as beautiful as angels. She herself was very pretty, but has grown fat now, so only the head remains, like a cameo. I feel at home with her; she is natural; she knows my little weaknesses through our common friends, Dessauer and Liszt. In talking with her, I have often felt as if I were with someone who knows you; but all she knows are the rooms in which we stayed at the Thun's in Tetschen, where she also spent some pleasant hours. She tells me that they often speak of us there.

'That is enough about London. I will not recount other persons to you, but among others I found here some old acquaintances who have been kind to me.

'When I left London ten days ago, I was met at the train for Edinburgh by a gentleman who introduced himself as coming from Broadwood, who knew me, too (he had seen me at Lipinski's at Frankfort in 1836), and who has his own music business in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Broadwood has also arranged that my Daniel (who is a better person than many gentlefolk and handsomer than many Englishmen) should travel in the same coach; and I made the four hundred and seven English miles from London to Edinburgh, by Birmingham and Carlisle, in twelve hours by express train (the class of train that stops least often). I stopped at Edinburgh, where a lodging had been engaged for me in the best hotel (Douglas's) for one and a half days to rest. I looked about this exquisite city, of which

I send some very poor views on this paper (I could not get any better ones).

'People who constantly have beautiful things in front of their noses always admire what is less fine, but unfamiliar, because they are not used to it.

'I met some courteous friends of my friends, who took me about in their carriage to see the town. (Everybody is going to Scotland now, for the opening of the shooting season.) After a rest in Edinburgh where, as I passed a music shop, I heard a blind man playing a mazurka of mine, I got into a carriage, harnessed in the English style with a horse, which Lord Torpichen had sent, and came here, twelve miles from Edinburgh. Lord Torpichen is seventy years old, a brother-in-law of Mrs. Erskine and Miss Stirling, my excellent Scottish ladies, whom I have long known in Paris and who take so much trouble for me. I visited them constantly in London, and could not refuse to come here, especially as I had nothing more to do in London, and I need a rest . . . The place is called Calder House. It is an old manor surrounded by an enormous park with ancient trees; you can see only lawns, trees, mountains, and sky. The walls are eight feet thick; there are galleries with dark corridors on all sides—and portraits of persons in various costumes, some Scottish, some in armour, some in robes; nothing lacking for the imagination. There is even some kind of ghost which appears, but which I have not yet seen. Yesterday I looked at all the portraits but I have not seen that of the one who wanders around the castle. My room is the most beautiful room imaginable. They have put me far from everyone else, so that I can play and do what I like freely; for with these people, as Bartek will tell you, the first thing to do for a guest, is not to interfere with

him. I found a Broadwood piano in my room; in the drawing-room there is a Pleyel, which Miss Stirling brought with her. Every day someone arrives to stay for a few days. The arrangements are most luxurious: libraries, horses, carriages, at your disposal, personal servants, etc. Here they usually meet for lunch at two o'clock (everybody eats breakfast in his own room, when and how he pleases) and for dinner at seven. In the evening they sit up as late as they choose. I play Scottish songs for the old lord, who hums the tune with me, poor fellow, and expresses his feelings to me in French, as best he can. Although everyone in high society speaks French, especially the ladies, the general conversation is mostly in English, and I then regret that I don't know the language; but I have neither the time nor the desire for it. However, I understand simple things; I can't starve or come to grief; and that is enough . . .

'I am due in Manchester on August twenty-eighth to play at a concert at which Italians from London will sing: Alboni, and so on. They are to pay me sixty guineas for it, and that sum is not to be refused. I leave here in a week. Two hundred and something in English miles, eight hours railway journey. There, good acquaintances await me, very rich manufacturers, with whom Neukomm lives (that best pupil of Haydn's, formerly *Kapellmester* to the emperor of Brazil; you know him by name). There is also Mrs. Rich, a daughter of Mr. Mackintosh (a greatly respected former member of Parliament, orator, and writer), and my great friend; also these ladies, Erskine and Stirling. After the concert, I return to Glasgow, to the sister-in-law of this lord here; from there to Lady Murray, then to Stirling, and at the very beginning of October they want me to play in Edinburgh. If it will bring in something, and I am strong

enough, I shall gladly do it, for I don't know how to turn around this winter. I have my lodging in Paris, as usual, but don't know how to make ends meet.

'Many persons want me to stay in London for the winter, in spite of the climate. I want something else, but don't myself know what. I will see in October, according to my health and purse, for an extra hundred guineas in my pocket would do no harm. If only London were not so dark and the people so heavy, and if there were no fogs or smells of soot, I would have learned English by now. But these English are so different from the French, to whom I have grown attached as to my own. They think only in terms of pounds; they like art only because it is a luxury; kindhearted, but so eccentric that I understand how one can himself grow stiff here, or turn into a machine. If I were younger, perhaps I would go in for a mechanical life, give concerts all over the place, and succeed in a not unpleasant career (anything for money!) but now it is hard to start turning oneself into a machine. It is fine weather here to-day, the park has a wonderful light on it—it is morning—and I forget everything. I am with you; I am happy; and I shan't think about the winter till it is imperative to do so. Now I embrace you heartily.

Ch.

'P.S. How good that Ludwika is in the country! And Mummy and Izabela ought to go, too, in spite of the garden, in which I see all kinds of flowers, fruits, and fences. I send kisses and kisses to Bartek, and to Kalasanty, too.

'I won't send Ludwika wishes for her name day, for there is no need to say them. May the Lord God keep and bless you, preserve and give you health, and let your children grow and

be your comfort. Write to me in Paris at the usual address, for your letters will be forwarded to me wherever I may be. I will be sure to let you know where I am going to spend the winter.

Ch.'

Twenty-Two

A Scottish Girl

Stirling Castle is a rugged old fortress that has stood for centuries at the gateway to the Highlands. Its ancient bastions cast a shadow of gloom over the pleasant town that is not so very different to-day from what it was in the year 1848, when Fryderyk Chopin walked in the gardens with Jane Stirling, the friend who had persuaded him to undertake a tour of Great Britain.

From the rocky hill on which the castle stands, they could see Ben Lommond in dull blue outline and, because the September day was fairly clear and bright with sunshine, they could discern the housetops of Glasgow. The carses of Stirling that stretched away in undulating meadows went unobserved, for they were commonplace in comparison with the distant views and with the tales of Scottish glory that Miss Stirling was narrating to the visitor. Not all the stories were of glory, either, for she probably told him of the Douglas who was murdered in the Castle's dungeons and of the tragic battles that were fought within the shadows of the basaltic mound that supported the renowned rampart. Doubtless she told him of Bannockburn and Kilsyth and the second Falkirk that followed the futile siege of the Jacobites. The narrative could have been a long one and,

coming from Jane Stirling, in whose veins coursed the blood of some of Scotland's most ardent patriots, it would be both romantic and brave. Perhaps, as he listened, a ballad of Scottish strength and bold defiance may have begun to grow in rhythm in Fryderyk Chopin's mind. On the other hand, he may have been so exhausted by the slow climb to the heights that he had only half his ears for the adventure stories that rippled so lightly from his hostess's lips.

After they had admired the brilliance and the glowing warmth of the autumn colors spreading over the countryside, and especially in the gardens of the castle, they were glad to rest on a bench in a sheltered nook that protected them from the east wind that was gradually mounting to a stiff, salty breeze. As they sat there, shivering a little, Chopin's face became overcast with sadness. He liked the clear, musical tones of Miss Stirling's voice and usually these, combined with the buoyancy of her manner and the altogether pleasant expression of her face, were sufficient to make him forget his fear for his health and his need for money. But not to-day. The perplexities of the present dominated the composer's mind.

"It is a mad idea to return to Poland now," Miss Stirling said suddenly, breaking a long silence.

Chopin sighed deeply, but said nothing. Poland had been far from his thoughts at the moment. He had been thinking—well, perhaps—about the years of his life that were just behind him. He liked this sincere Scottish woman. He liked the rugged, substantial character of her country and the kindness with which she and relatives had received him. Perhaps he was regretting that he had not "discovered" Scotland before.

"You are much too ill to make that tedious journey," Miss



Jane Stirling from a portrait by Deveria.

Stirling continued. "Besides, what is likely to happen to you if you go? You'll be thrust into prison on some pretext or other."

"Well, what of it?" Chopin asked with a wry smile. "Prison has been the fate of many a better Pole than I am."

"But you—you would die. You couldn't stand the misery and privation," Jane Stirling exclaimed, her face becoming pale with anxiety. She could not help wishing that this man whom she loved so devotedly would forget the trials of his country for a time, at least, and let her help him to regain his strength.

"My life is not of much consequence," Chopin muttered. "You must realize from looking at me and hearing me cough that I have not long to live. Now tell me, how could my few years be better spent than in helping to liberate my native country? Think, my dear. If Scotland were in the position Poland is, what would you do?"

Miss Stirling ignored the question, and said emphatically, "By your death you can do nothing for Poland, but by your life you can give all mankind exquisite music, and that is more than what politicians and soldiers can give. Don't you understand? You must live. For all of us, you must live."

"I don't believe it. I can't feel that my life now means anything," Chopin answered with an impatient shrug of his shoulders. "I have few friends, and many of my enemies have scorned my patriotism as something feeble and weak. If I go back now, I shall prove them wrong. Is that not good reasoning?"

"Not at all," Jane Stirling answered firmly. "Your enemies are of no importance. Your friends know you for what you are

—a man with a superb gift for music. They know that you should live so that you may give more of that gift to the world."

A spasm of coughing was the only reply Chopin gave to this and, for a long time after the troublesome cough had been silenced, the only sound that broke the stillness of the garden was that of the wind wheezing through the trees. The autumn afternoon was gliding into a chilly evening and, of one accord, the two friends rose from their shelter, and started toward the path that led to the castle gates.

"Please do not try to persuade yourself any more," Jane Stirling begged. "Forget about your enemies, and remember that here in Scotland you have only devoted friends. Stay with us. Don't return to France and those who have made you miserable. We will take care of you, and you will grow strong, even rosy-cheeked."

Chopin laughed harshly, and then whispered softly, "I am grateful for your invitation, dear Jane, but, don't you see, I am not far from death. When I look into the mirror each morning, I think I am more like a shadow than I was the day before."

"A shadow! You! How stupidly you talk!" Miss Stirling exclaimed with assumed anger. She had associated with the sick composer enough to know that at times it was necessary to speak firmly to him, and not to express sympathy.

"But it is true," Chopin answered. "You must realize that I am sick, very sick. There are times when I rebel against my fate, and resolve that I will not let the disease be my master, but usually I am reconciled to it. I wish that I had not wasted my life. I wish that I could have had a wife and children. I would have been happy playing my music to them. Indeed, I'm sure I should have had a greater desire to compose, but now—" He

left the sentence unfinished, and Jane Stirling could see that he was searching unsuccessfully for the right words to express his deep feelings.

"Stay here, Fryderyk," she begged as they stepped into the waiting carriage. "Stay here where those who love you can look after you, and so help you to give the world more beautiful music. Your friends can come here from Paris and Warszawa. Our clear Scottish air will be good for you."

Silently, Fryderyk Chopin took his Scottish friend's hand. As he held it in a firm clasp, he tried to thank her, but words failed him. If death had not seemed to be looming so close to him, he might have asked her to share his life with him. As it was, he knew beyond a shadow of doubt that the disease that had menaced his family for several generations would soon claim him as its victim. He could not plan a new life when life itself was going from him.



Twenty-Three

In Edinburgh

A short time after Fryderyk Chopin's visit to Stirling Castle and to the home of Jane Stirling's sister in Glasgow, he returned to Edinburgh so ill that he had to stay in bed. He disliked this most heartily because he thought that when he was in bed he could not battle with the disease that threatened him. Day after day, he argued with his Polish physician against the wisdom of keeping him confined to a shuttered room but, although Dr. Lishinski listened patiently to the musician's protests, he did not change his prescription. It was bed, rest, and complete isolation from cold winds, and this really meant no fresh air. After several days of burning fever, Chopin was willing to accept the doctor's rule with fewer complaints. There were times, especially when the house was quiet at night, that

he attempted to stand on his feet and to walk about the room into which the chill autumn winds often penetrated, despite shutters, closed doors, and crannies stuffed with wool.

One day when the good doctor found his patient moving about his room feebly, he helped him back to bed. Not until he had him safely wrapped in his blankets, did he warn him of the danger that threatened him every time he left the warm security of his bed. Chopin listened carefully to Dr. Lishinski, and then with a deep sigh, he said. "What a shame I did not meet you years ago, my good sir. Perhaps, if I had done so, I might live much longer."

"If you will be sensible," Dr. Lishinski answered, "you may still have a long life ahead of you. Rest and sleep are the best medicines you can have, my friend, and I want you to take long drafts of both of them." As he spoke, the doctor stood close to Chopin, and wagged his long, graying beard in his face.

That beard of Dr. Lishinski's betrayed his Polish origin for, although many men had beards, only Poles had beards exactly like the doctor's. It was long and bushy and shapely. This doctor was a homeopathic physician who had come from Poland to study in the famous medical school in Edinburgh, and had remained to practise his profession in that city. He had married a Scottish woman, and simplified his difficult Polish name of Lyszczynski to Lishinski. His home in Warrington Crescent was the rendezvous of many Poles, both travellers and exiles. It was natural for Fryderyk Chopin to have sought out Dr. Lishinski when he was in need of a doctor's care, for he had come to the northern city with letters of introduction to him.

As the doctor sat watching his patient try vainly to carry out his instructions to sleep, he could not help thinking how much like a beautiful painting Fryderyk Chopin was. His face had a fever flush and his dark eyes sparkled. "Perhaps if I had had him years ago, I could have helped him," the doctor said to himself, and shook his head sadly. He feared that he and Chopin were fighting a losing battle, yet he was unwilling to acknowledge it. "While there is yet life, there is hope," Dr. Lishinski murmured softly, and wiped his patient's damp brow with a handkerchief that had been wrung out of a solution of vinegar and water.

"It cannot be true that I can live for a long time," Chopin muttered unexpectedly. "You are only trying to allay my fears when you say such a thing, but you don't need to. I'm resigned to dying."

"What!" the doctor exclaimed, feigning annoyance. "Can it be that you are still wide awake? Go to sleep, I beg you. Sleep, and you will surely live to play your music in the conservatory in Warszawa again."

"I can't sleep." Fryderyk replied petulantly. "I can't, because the fever is burning me up. It is suffocating me. Besides, I hear voices, sad, weeping voices, and one of them is my mother's."

"Sleep!" the doctor murmured. "Sleep, and the sun will shine for you again."

"Perhaps you are right, my dear Lishinski," Chopin said suddenly, rising slightly and leaning on his elbow. "I shall live for a long time, but not physically; it will be in my music. Ah, yes, in my music." He laughed softly, as he said this, as if the

idea of living in his music was a new and pleasant thought to him.

Dr. Lishinski said nothing, but rose and put his hand on the sick man's shoulder, and so pushed him gently down on to his pillows. As he arranged the bed covers and brought another blanket from the chair near the fireplace, he was thinking, "That is what I meant, really. Fryderyk Chopin's body cannot live for many years, but his music most certainly will."

"I tell you, Dr. Lishinski," Chopin called out almost gaily, "my life in my music is in a precarious condition, too. Very, very precarious. If I do not sort out the good stuff from the trash, then the trash will certainly obliterate me. Perhaps you will help me, dear sir, to save my life in music, and so permit me to rise from my bed."

"But, my friend, what nonsense you talk!" Dr. Lishinski laughed, too, pleased that Fryderyk was making an effort to be cheerful. "I know quite well that all your music should be preserved. Whoever heard of the great Chopin writing trash? Just let anyone come here with the suggestion that certain compositions of the renowned Fryderyk Chopin should be destroyed, and I'll—I'll scratch his eyes out."

The surprised servants, who knew that the composer was seriously ill, were startled to hear the sound of carefree laughter coming from the sick-room. Miss Stirling and her sister, who were waiting in the drawing-room, heard the joyous sound, and smiled their pleasure to each other. Perhaps he was going to rally. Perhaps there was physical justification for Dr. Lishinski's optimism. Mrs. Erskine and Miss Stirling went away from the house where Chopin was living feeling happy and confident.

For the first time in days, their fears left them, and, indeed, there was very good reason, for they had not heard Fryderyk Chopin laugh so joyously since the days when they had first known him in Paris.

Alas, Chopin's gaiety was short-lived. It did not survive a night of coughing and consuming fever. When Dr. Lishinski came the next day, he found him tired and forlorn and yet determined to leave his bed. The doctor all but lost his good natured manner as he tried to reason with him.

"Doctor Lishinski, I must get my affairs set in order," Chopin said the instant the doctor stepped into the room. "I know quite well that my end is approaching, and there are innumerable papers to be checked, and some to be destroyed."

"There will be plenty of time for the tedious business of filing your notes and finishing any compositions that you may not have completed," the doctor said. "You need not get out of your comfortable bed while your fever is still high. Rest, I tell you, and soon, not to-morrow, perhaps, or next week, but soon, nevertheless, you will be better."

Then, as Dr. Lishinski watched over him, puzzling what he could do to persuade the composer that death need not come to him for a long time, if he would but take care of himself, the inexplicable magic that is sleep touched Chopin's eyes, and they closed gently. His breathing that had been heavy and labored gradually became smooth. Sleep had come, at last, and the doctor stole noiselessly from the room. In a whisper, he warned the servants to keep away from the sick chamber and from the adjoining corridor. "He sleeps. He sleeps quietly like a baby,"

Dr. Lishinski told them, and hurried away to his consulting office.

Sleep is surely one of the dearest gifts a kind and wise Providence has given to mankind. On this bleak October day when the wind from the North Sea blew in a wild tempest over Edinburgh, Fryderyk Chopin slept the hours away. Morning glided into afternoon and afternoon was dissolved by the gray mist of twilight. A servant stole in from time to time, like a thief in the night, to put wood on the fire, yet the man on the bed did not stir. The fire crackled and spat out sputtering clusters of sparks, but they had no effect on the sleeper. It was as if a loving fairy had taken pity on him, and put a spell on the cough that had wracked his poor body. Dr. Lishinski returned from his office at nightfall, and stood in the shadows of the room, lighted only by the fire's glow, and marvelled at what had happened. This was no drugged sleep; it was as natural as that which comes to a child after a day of play. Like a tide going out, the fever was ebbing. The face that had been flushed was white now and the brow that had been puckered was smooth.

"It is wonderful," the doctor murmured, and went away to wait in the adjoining sitting-room for what would happen next.

The good fairy, Sleep, reigned for hours in the room of Fryderyk Chopin and, doubtless, while she held her silent court, she must have thought about the man whom she had come to comfort and strengthen. Perhaps her sister, the Lady Night, may have approached her, and the two may have talked of the man whose slumber was so sweet.

"Who is he to whom I have given sleep?" the fairy Sleep may have asked.

"His name I cannot tell you," Night may have answered, "but during the hours when the doctor was trying to woo you to his pillow, I heard him called both a poor, sick, lonely man, and a genius."

"Ah me, a genius, indeed!" Sleep may have sighed, and in her sigh would be sorrow and pleasure, for all the fairy creatures have kinship with the lonely and the sick and the specially gifted. These creatures of magic are their guardians, and when Sleep whispered an enquiry as to the character of this sleeper, it would be easy for the Lady Night, who was astute and had vast experience, to reply.

"A real genius is one in whose mind and heart the fire of eternal love burns with constant flame," she would say, "and this poor, sick man whose physical body is so frail has expressed his love for mankind in music. He has put men's joy into music, and their sorrow, their pain, their hopes, and the dearest wishes of their hearts. When his body dies, he will not be dead. He will live forever in the music he has made, so well has he served mankind."

It was in the last, long hours of the night that Sleep took her magic spell from Fryderyk Chopin's eyes and, with a light fluttering of her skirts, hurried away. The Lady Night lingered watchfully in the shadows, and smiled when she saw the man stir and then push back the blankets that covered him. She may have wished that she could have put a restraining hand on him when he sat up in his bed, and then stepped falteringly to the floor. As he made his uncertain way to the desk in a remote corner, and lighted a candle, she may have had to brush a tear of disappointment from her fairy eyes. On the other hand, she may not have paused to shed tears, at all, for it was probably

she who caused Dr. Lishinski to come hurrying into the room.

Fryderyk Chopin had written but one word, "Testament," when the good doctor entered the room. A tear had blurred the ink.

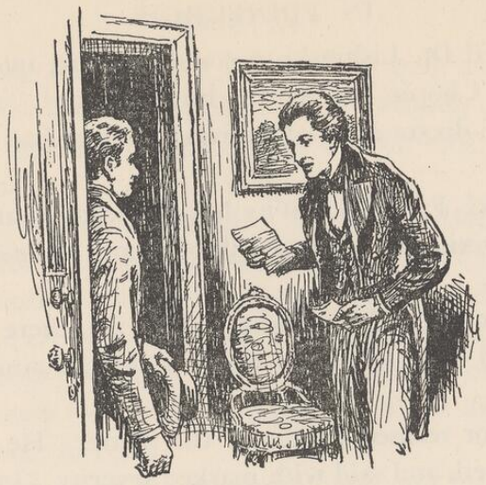
"Fryderyk! Fryderyk! Why have you left your bed?" the doctor asked anxiously. "There will be plenty of time to-morrow for letters."

"Who knows?" Chopin asked. "For me, there may be no to-morrow and now, while my mind is clear, I must write my notes."

The doctor refused to discuss the matter. He led his patient back to bed, and said with marked severity, "In your rashness, you will undo all the good that sleep has brought you."

"But I must put my rubbish in order." Chopin answered. "I expect to croak in some corner soon now, so I must write my testament. I do not want my friends to have trouble after my death."

After he had spoken, Chopin laughed in imitation of the doctor. Hearing him, Dr. Lishinski thought that his prophecy had come true and that Fryderyk Chopin had really taken a turn for the better.



Twenty-Four

Return

Fryderyk Chopin responded to Dr. Lishinski's treatment of rest and warmth and sleep sufficiently to be able to make the tedious journey from Edinburgh to London by early November. Once he arrived there he began making preparations for a concert. It was to be a big event, for the entertainment season was at its height, and Chopin went about his arrangements with enthusiasm. Even when neuralgia added pain to the misery of weakness, he refused to give up his plan or even to postpone the date. The chief reason for his resolution was that the revenue from the concert was to be donated to a fund organized recently in London for Polish refugees. Once more a battle for Polish freedom had been waged and lost, and many, who had fought,

had fled to Great Britain and France. Fryderyk Chopin had followed the struggle anxiously and, now that defeat had been sustained again, he wanted desperately to do what he could to mitigate the suffering of those who had been vanquished and forced into exile.

The concert, which proved to be the last one of Chopin's life, was given on November the sixteenth. Between selections, the composer had to rest on a couch in his dressing-room and, when he returned to the platform, he often had to be assisted. This was because his limbs had swollen again as they had done in Paris a few years earlier. Nevertheless, he succeeded in playing for a little more than an hour. When the performance was over, his friend, Mr. Szulczewski, hurried him home to bed, and the next day consultations with physicians began once more.

"You must leave London at once," the doctors said. "The dampness and the fog here will smother you."

Chopin agreed, and said that he would go back to France. This brought protests from Miss Stirling who had come to London with her sister for the concert. She wanted him to return to Scotland. Once more she offered him a safe haven in her spacious and comfortable home but, as he had done in Scotland, he turned from it. There may have been some quality of inhospitality in the Scottish environment, but it is more likely that as death approached he wanted to be in familiar surroundings. He had some idea, too, that, from Paris, he might attempt the journey to Warszawa.

"Must I die on foreign soil?" he cried out to one of his Polish friends. "Must I, even though my old mother waits for me so faithfully at home in Poland?"

The friend had no answer for this piteous question. When

Chopin added that he had neither money nor fame, Mr. Szulczewski, who was looking after him at the time, exclaimed, "You have great fame now, and daily it is increasing. As for money, that can be procured, both for you and your family in Poland if they have need of it."

"That is true," Miss Stirling said. "You have friends who are ready to help you."

Fryderyk Chopin looked from Mr. Szulczewski to Miss Stirling. Had ever man had better friends, he may have been thinking, but more likely he was trying to understand just why Jane Stirling was so loyal to him. It could not be that she loved him as a woman loves the man she hopes to marry, he thought, for he was too ill to arouse that love. Still it could not be the affection a pupil has for a teacher, or even the admiration a music lover might have for a gifted composer and pianist. As he sat in his London apartment on this drab November afternoon, he decided to give up trying to understand the faithfulness of Jane Stirling. He appreciated it; he was deeply grateful for it; yet he could not bring himself to accept her urgent invitation to return to Scotland.

"From the bottom of my heart, I thank you both," he said to his friends, and then added heartily, "but I want to return to France immediately. After I have rested there, I may be able to go to Warszawa. I want to be with my people." The infinite sadness in his voice brought quick tears to Jane Stirling's eyes.

He wrote to his friend, Wojciech Grzymala, in Paris that he would be returning soon, and asked him to prepare his house for him, and to engage a servant. When the rough crossing from Dover to Calais was accomplished, at last, and the uncomfortable journey from Calais to Paris made, he found fires burning in his

living-room and bed-room, and the tables in both rooms adorned with violets, his favorite flowers. It was one of the pleasantest homecomings of his life.

The short voyage between Dover and Calais revived memories for him. He recalled another sea trip—the one he had made years before to Majorca with George Sand and her son Maurice. Then the air had been balmy and the day golden with sunshine. Then he had gone aboard gaily, his heart and his footsteps light; now the sea was a gloomy gray; the wind was biting cold; and he had no gaiety, no strength, no hope. A ship's steward helped him aboard and Jane Stirling followed with a steamer rug and a thick Shetland shawl.

As she and the steward tried to make the sick man comfortable, he stopped thinking of that other brief voyage, and began to contemplate the present. He would miss Jane Stirling and her quiet ministrations. He would miss the sense of well-being that came to him when he was with her. Yet he could not accept her invitation, echoed by her sister and her uncle, that he return to Scotland, and stay there until he was strong. He could not do it, but now, as the moment for saying farewell had almost come, he was grieved by his perversity.

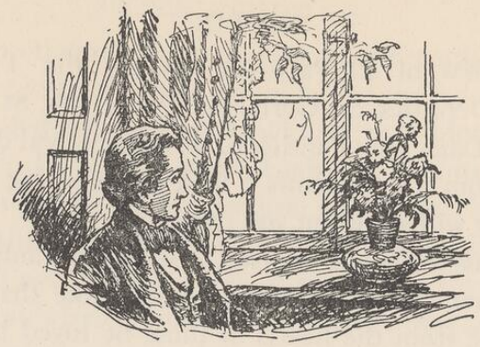
"But Miss Jane will forget me soon," Chopin said to himself, "and that is as it should be, for no woman could be happy for long, loving and caring for a man who has one foot in the grave." Later, he said the same thing to friends in Paris who asked him why he had not married the good Miss Stirling.

The thought of marriage may have been in Miss Stirling's mind when Fryderyk Chopin first arrived in Scotland, but she probably was thinking only of helping to save the life of a composer who had a wonderful gift. She would have been will-

ing even to give up her claim to friendship if, by so doing, she could have assisted in lengthening his life. This was proven a few months later, when she received news from Paris that Chopin was living in abject poverty and that, sick though he was, he was trying to give music lessons at twenty francs an hour. On the very day that this information came to her, Jane Stirling sent Fryderyk Chopin twenty-five thousand francs.

"He must not know who has sent it," she said to herself as she folded the notes into an envelope and directed it to Chopin's address in Paris. The precious packet arrived while Chopin was occupied with a lesson, and the houseman forgot to give it to him. Indeed, Chopin did not learn of his release from poverty for several weeks—not until Jane Stirling asked a mutual friend to find out if the money had been received, and that friend went in search of the forgotten envelope.

Twenty-five thousand francs! The surprise was almost too much for the starving musician. A great medley of mazurkas, polonaises and ballads surged through his mind when the friend delivered the money to him. Now, he need not struggle with lessons. The music that was waiting to be written would be written.



Twenty-Five

Sister Ludwika

After he received Jane Stirling's gift, the fear of poverty left Chopin, and his friends easily succeeded in persuading him to rent a summer home in Chaillot Street. The season's fee was four hundred francs, but anxious friends secretly paid two hundred francs, and Fryderyk Chopin rejoiced in the amazingly low rent of two hundred francs. From the big windows of the spacious apartment, he could look out on the swiftly moving panorama of Parisian summer life. There before him he had life in many moods and many colors, and once more his heart became light and almost gay. The steady approach of death lost some of its oppressive grimness, and he began writing hopeful letters to his relatives. In one of them, he listed the famous buildings that were spread before his eyes when he sat in the window corner of his sitting-room:

"To-day the weather is fine, so I am sitting here and ad-

miring my view of all Paris—the towers, the Tuileries, the Chamber of Deputies, St. Germain, l'Auxerrois, St. Etienne du Mont, Notre Dame, the Panthéon, St. Sulpice, Val de Grace, the Invalides. From five windows I look and nothing but gardens between. You will see when you come."

Before this letter was written to his sister Ludwika, he had written another one—a serious, pleading note that must have taken all hope from the hearts of those he loved in Warszawa. He said that he knew his life was nearing the end and that he was not strong enough to journey to Poland. He begged her to come to him, therefore, and to bring her husband and two children with her. He wanted to see young Ludwika and Kalasanty before he died, and longed for his sister's loving care. Toward the end of the letter, he wrote in a lighter vein, and promised the family a choice of living quarters in the Champs Elysées or the Square d'Orléans. He concluded with a promise to his brother-in-law, Kalasanty Jedrzejewicz, that he would give him the most expensive cigars in all Paris.

The waiting for a reply to this urgent letter was hard to bear. He knew almost to a day when it should arrive in Warszawa and, in imagination, he saw his mother and his sisters and their husbands sitting down to discuss it. The two children, he thought, would be hovering in the background, aware that something unusual was being considered. His mother, very bent and very old, would be in her low rocking-chair. Sometimes she would have to wipe tears from her eyes. She would not have much to say in the discussion, but she would be intent on what her daughters and their husbands were saying. Occasionally, he imagined, his mother would show disappointment in the decisions reached by the four but usually she would be pleased

with what the others said—as pleased as she could be, for he knew how deeply grieved she would be by the knowledge that he, her son, had given up all hope of ever returning to her and his native land. He saw his sister, Ludwika, writing the answer to his letter, but there his imagination failed him; he could not look over her shoulder and read what she was writing.

At last, however, the reply came from Warszawa, and Fryderyk Chopin's hands trembled with eagerness as he opened it. They had not disappointed him! Ludwika was coming! He read this part of the letter over and over again. Her husband and son were staying at home to look after Mrs. Chopin, but Ludwika's daughter was to accompany her. It was a long letter that Ludwika had written, full of news of Warszawa and their friends and, when the first excitement of knowing that his sister would be with him soon had subsided, Chopin read the letter carefully. His eyes blurred with tears as he did so, but he could not have told whether they were tears of sadness or pleasure. This is part of what Ludwika wrote:

". . . But what is most important is that all Warszawa is talking about your musical fame. I walk around the city as proud as a peacock, for every one points a finger at me, and says, 'there goes the sister of Fryderyk Chopin.' So you must realize that you have not wasted your life. You are known everywhere. Fryderyk, you are great. Mama is so proud of you. Every day she talks of you, and almost every day recalls how we packed your trunk when you were leaving us to go beyond the borders."

The days between the arrival of this letter and that of the two Ludwikas were laggard days, indeed, but at last a carriage rattled up to the door of Chopin's house in Chaillot Street, and

the composer knew that his sister and her daughter had come. There is no need to describe the reunion between the brother and sister. The little Ludwika, looking on, may have been surprised that it was so quiet, for there was neither sobbing nor laughing but, if she were an observant child, she must have seen joy glowing like luminous fires in the dark eyes of her mother and her uncle. As the days flew by, she may have had some cause to complain that she was forgotten. Her mother gave all her attention to "Uncle Fryderyk," and "Uncle Fryderyk," at times, appeared to forget that he had a young niece who was eager to see the sights of Paris.

Ludwika's voice tinkled like a constantly ringing bell, and Fryderyk Chopin loved its soft, low, happy sound. He liked the laughter that rippled from his sister's lips, and his heart grew blithe and young again as they talked of their childhood and of old Zywny who had been their tutor.

"Do you remember when we went roaming through the forest with him?" Ludwika asked.

"Of course, I remember," Fryderyk answered and a twinkle came into his eyes. "I must inform you, my dear Ludwika, that Zywny much preferred walking with me alone. 'The lovely fair sex,' he said, 'always embarrass me.' "

They laughed heartily at this, and little Ludwika, sitting in a corner with a book, must have wondered why they seemed so amused by something that she considered nothing more than a "queer stupidity." She remembered old Zywny vaguely, and did not think there had been anything very humorous about him.

"Zywny liked you better than he did me," Mrs. Jedrzejewicz said, "for he knew that you had the talent of a genius. Until

the day of his death, he spoke of you with adoration and magnificent pride. 'I was the first teacher of the great Fryderyk Chopin,' he told everyone."

"But he wasn't," Chopin interrupted. "Not at all, for you were. Remember, Ludwika?"

And there was more laughter. The listening child was completely baffled. She could see no cause for laughter in the fact that her mother had taught her brother music. *She* had tried to teach *her* brother, Kalasanty, and had found it no laughing matter.

"You were a good advertisement for Zywny," Ludwika told her brother. "Students stood in a line before his door. Rich people sent their children to the 'master of Chopin,' and when he died, Zywny left a good-sized fortune."

Then in a quiet voice that had a quality that fascinated the little Ludwika, even though she could not understand it, Mrs. Jedrzejewicz said, "Old Zywny died with your name on his lips, Fryderyk, and almost his last words were, 'It was worth while living, for I discovered Chopin.' "

"He was a faithful friend and a conscientious teacher," Chopin sighed, "and I shall always remember him for what he was—honest and good and loyal to his chosen work."

Reminiscences of their childhood were followed by long conversations about Poland. Was the Wola countryside still beautiful? And the Wisla—was its roar as steady and rumbling as it used to be? And the peasants—were their songs as full and melodious as they had been when the Chopin brother and sister had walked through country lanes? These, and many other questions, Fryderyk asked, and sometimes there were tears in his eyes when he asked them, and sometimes the sadness in his

voice was as poignant as the wail of an injured animal. On occasions, a strong, resolute expression would come into his eyes and sit firmly on his lips, and then he would talk about conditions of the Polish people. He wanted to know about the rule of the foreign masters, and he would say, "Tell me about the fight for Poland's freedom. Is anything being done?" It was well that his sister was fully informed on Polish political affairs.

"The 'People's Spring,' as you know, was not won by the people. The despots came off victorious," she said one day, "and terror spread and increased throughout the country. Everything Polish—schools, churches, and many humanitarian institutions—were destroyed, some by order of the czar, some by the Prussian king, and others by the emperor in Vienna. But the people are organizing very quietly, Fryderyk, and soon now there will be insurrections. You'll see; they will burst forth in every part of the country whether it is dominated by czar, emperor, or king."

"And will they be successful?" Chopin asked eagerly.

"We think they will be," Mrs. Jedrzejewicz answered. "We are confident that soon now the time for Poland's freedom must come."

"It must," her brother said vigorously. "It must. It must," and if a fit of coughing had not interrupted, they might have talked for a long time about the happy prospect of a free motherland. As it was, Ludwika had to run for a glass of water for her brother and when she returned she was startled to see that his face had become a waxy gray color.

"You must rest now," she said firmly. "Lie down and I'll cover you with this warm Polish blanket."

"You treat me as if I were a child," he protested, but it

was apparent that he liked the treatment, for he let his sister help him to his couch and his eyes followed her lovingly as she moved about the room, bringing him tea, and later, while she put the tea things away and tidied the room, they talked softly as Ludwika worked, for the little girl had gone off to bed and they did not want to disturb her.

Actually the young Ludwika was not sleeping, for she was much excited about the day that was near at hand. Her uncle had promised her that he would begin teaching her music in the morning and, after her first lesson was completed, a friend of Chopin's was coming to take her sight-seeing. Ludwika, eager young traveller that she was, had made a list of the places she wanted to see. She and her uncle had made it together, sitting in the window lounge of the apartment. The stately buildings had been chosen in order of their appeal to Ludwika. She liked the bold clear silhouette of Notre Dame, so it had been placed at the top of her list. The Tuilieries seemed intriguing, too, so it came next. The Chamber of Deputies appeared cold and much too dignified, so it came at the bottom of the list. The vast house went to sleep finally, and so did little Ludwika, perhaps to dream of the adventures awaiting her on the morrow.

The warm, beautiful summer slipped away lightly and, before Fryderyk Chopin realized it, dull autumn days came to warn him that he must leave the gracious old house in Chaillot Street, and return to his apartment in the Place Vendôme. His sister, Ludwika, took charge of the moving, and a student of Chopin's, named Gutmann, assisted her. This young Mr. Gutmann had a deep affection for his gifted master, and told Mrs. Jedrzejewicz many times that, above everything else in the

world, he wanted to do things for Chopin. "I consider it a great honor," he said earnestly.

It was this young and diligent Mr. Gutmann who carried Ludwika Jedrzejewicz's invitation to Delfina Potocki that she visit them when they were again established in the winter apartment. The invitation had been made in response to an insistent request from Chopin himself. Although the preparations for the moving were being made efficiently and quietly, yet no sooner were they begun than he started coughing and spitting blood again. For a time after his sister's arrival, the cough had lost much of its raking, harsh quality, and the composer had begun to hope that death's approach had been stayed in its course, but now, when the cough was renewed vigorously and blood began to spout from his mouth once more, he lost hope. He thought death was glaring at him like an insatiable demon, and he longed to see several friends who had not come near him for a long time. Hence, the invitation to Countess Potocki.

She came to the gray old house in Place Vendôme a few days after the moving, and almost cried out with shock when she saw her old friend. He had never been strong but now he looked nothing more than a wraith. His skin was drawn and transparent. His voice was husky and feeble. Only his eyes, his large dark eyes, had not changed. They still smiled at her, and the smile was as it had always been—whimsical and tantalizing.

"Sing for me, Delfina," Chopin asked, and she needed no second request. She went to the piano, and sang the songs they had learned together years before when Chopin had first come to Paris. Some of them were quaint Polish folk songs. Others were tunes that they had liked, but had forgotten. And

some were from the music of all time. Delfina Potocki loved to sing and, through the years, she had kept her voice tuned to the songs she had sung for Fryderyk Chopin.

As she sang now before the people gathered in Chopin's sitting-room, something strange began to happen to the composer. His sister was probably the first one to notice it, but the devoted Mr. Gutmann had eyes that were almost as alert. Doctor Cruveille observed the change in his patient's countenance, and quietly took his thin hand in his strong one. What seemed to be taking place was hard for those who saw it to describe. It was as if the great composer had said farewell to a world he had known for a long and troublous time, and on the wings of song had gone to another one that was gentle and exquisitely beautiful. From the sublime expression on his face, it seemed as if the new world held all happiness, all tenderness, and all music. "In that moment," one of them said later, "it was as if Fryderyk stepped into eternity and bequeathed his immortality to the world he had left behind."

The singer finished her song. With a sudden effort that surprised his anxious watchers, Fryderyk Chopin returned to the realities about him. The little niece, Ludwika, ran up to kiss the hand of the beautiful woman whose songs had delighted her, and conversation flowed naturally. But not for everyone in the room, for Mrs. Jedrzejewicz, Mr. Gutmann, and Doctor Cruveille could not put the vision of what they had seen from their eyes. Thankfulness filled their hearts, though, for they had thought Fryderyk was, in actual fact, taking leave of their world. As it was, the songs of forests, wheat fields, gliding river water, and the wind in the mountain tops—all songs that be-

longed to his childhood—had given him such pleasure that he had forgotten the world of reality about him for a short time. Now, however, his laughter mingled with that of his guests. He was gay and happy and even ventured to talk boldly of his future plans.



Twenty-Six

Funeral March

Fryderyk Chopin raised himself from the pillows of his bed, and looked about hurriedly for paper and pencil. They were on the table near him, and he reached out his hand but, before he could grasp them, he was seized with a choking cough. His whole body was wracked by it, and he had to lie back on his pillows to rest. Once he had recovered a little strength, he tried again, and this time he clutched paper and began to write. His sister was sitting in a remote corner of the room, and Fryderyk knew by her breathing that she had dropped to sleep. Mr. Gutmann had been near his bed, but he had left for a moment to answer a rap on the street door. Feverishly, for Chopin did not want to be observed by anyone, he wrote, "This cough will

choke me soon, and I beg you to have my body opened so that there will be no possibility of me being buried alive."

When the note was written, the dying man hid it under the pillows. He did not want his sister to find it while he still lived, but he was anxious that she should have it soon afterward. This fear of being buried alive dated back to a wild tale that he had heard in his childhood, and every time since when illness had made him think he might die soon, the old fear had risen up like an angry animal to frighten him.

Once the note was written and hidden, Chopin lay back on his pillows. He heard the wind howling outside. It rattled the windows and the trees bent and crackled and creaked. It was as if this powerful wind were making the tall trees of the Place Vendôme pay humble tribute to it. The night, it seemed, was held by the wind's command, and together the two entered the sick-room where Fryderyk Chopin waited to receive death and yet strove to have strength enough to defy it. The wind wheezed down the chimney of the fire-place, and scattered the ashes over the floor. The night came in stealthily, and darkened the shadows until Fryderyk could not see the outlines of his sister's form in the big chair. The wind cried as if shaken by grief; then it roared as if mischievous glee rode on its broad wings. Chopin, striving to control his cough, shuddered and drew his blankets up more closely about him.

The room was stuffy, for in those days there was a prejudice against fresh air being admitted to the presence of a person ill with tuberculosis. The heavy smell of many medicines added to the general stuffiness, and so did the odor of a yellow candle that had burned low and was sputtering fitfully. Gloom, thick, ominous gloom, filled the room. The wind moaned a little as if it had received knowledge of the sad thing that was happening.

His life would be over in a few minutes, Chopin knew, and as he lay there, his mind naturally turned to his past and not to his past alone, but to that of the people he loved, peasant people striving to win the freedom they coveted; workers battling to rise above the burden poverty had put upon them. In many ways, his life had been like that of a worker; but he had had two battles to fight; one, to put into music the thoughts that filled his mind and the feelings that surged in his heart, and the other, to achieve his purpose in music, despite the heavy burden sickness put upon him.

People had been his constant inspiration. In his boyhood he had found peasants in the countryside to love, and he had put their simple songs and lives into his music. In his young manhood and through the guidance of the poet Mickiewicz, the people of his country's past had entered into his ballads. Then their stupendous but yet unfulfilled struggle for freedom had been his theme. It would be impossible to set down fully the total source of inspiration that his love for people gave Fryderyk Chopin. In them was his conception of the Creator. He beheld eternal art in them. Within their minds and hearts and in the strength of their bodies, they held the power to achieve full life, and social justice, he believed, was the key to that life. He was dying now with the thought that it would glow throughout the world—a world he would not know, but one that might know him in his music. He had never been able to fight physically for Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, but in his music he had done so with unflinching purpose and loyalty, and as long as man shall live, the music of Fryderyk Chopin will reveal to him the purity and beauty of just and beautiful living.

Ludwika stirred in her sleep. She sat upright in her chair. The wind had blown the fire out; the room was bitterly cold. She was searching for fuel for a new fire when she heard a veritable tempest of coughing. She ran and Mr. Gutmann and Doctor Cruveille followed her. For a few minutes, the three bent over the dying man, striving unsuccessfully to relieve the oppressive pain that came with coughing. His old friend, Franchomme, sat in the outer room, and so did the Countess Delfina Potocki, but Chopin was unaware of their presence, for he was engaged in his last defiant struggle with death. "Cher ami," he whispered to Gutmann. Then he said the same sweet words in Polish—"Drogi przyjacielu." In that instant, his hand caressed that of his sister's, and so he died, surrounded by friends and held in the loving arms of the sister who had given him his first music lesson.

It seemed to the little band of watchers as if strong, tuneful music filled the stuffy room. It was slow music that had more tragedy than solemnity in its measures. The tempest's roar was in it, and the soft whirr of leaves, and the thundering crash of forest trees being torn from their roots. Fire flamed in this music and typhoons cut with lightning devastation; rain beat a powerful refrain and all living creatures cried out against the destruction. The music continued its deafening rhythm; weariness crept into it, and a little resignation. It was deep like the ocean and so completely powerful that no doors and no windows could keep it out. The watchers, whose ears, in imagination, heard this music, knew it well, for it was part of Fryderyk Chopin's "Funeral March."

But this was not all the March, and Ludwika, the sister, and Gutmann, the devoted pupil, must surely have heard more

of it, in imagination, as they laid Chopin's body back on the pillows. Perhaps they did not hear the laughing and jeering that was in it, but the sound of marching footsteps must have reached them—tired, monotonous footsteps walking steadily to a newly dug grave in the churchyard. And the sound of the church bells ringing a dirge—they must have heard it—and the mighty crash as of something falling into an abyss. Then came a song, mournful, simple, quiet, and very desolate, for this represented fields and forests bereft of human life.

. . . And so Fryderyk Chopin died at half past two o'clock in the morning of October the seventeenth in the year 1849. When the cold day dawned, his request that his "Funeral March" be played at the time of his death was fulfilled.

On October the thirtieth the body of Fryderyk Chopin was taken from the Church of St. Magdalen to the cemetery Pére Lachaise where, later, his grave was marked by a tombstone made by John Clesinger, the husband of George Sand's daughter, Solange. The heart of Fryderyk Chopin was carried back to his native land, as he had asked that it should be, and was placed in the nave of the Holy Cross Church on Krakowskie Przedmiescie in Warszawa. On the wall above, these words are written; "Gdzie skarb twoj, tam i serce twoje," which in English means, "Where your treasure lies, there, too, lies your heart."

Fryderyk Chopin loved his country deeply and sincerely. He loved people with the same full love and he devoted his music to them. His music, for all time and in every country of the world, must carry a message of love and faith; of confidence in men; of struggle and hope and happiness.

The Compositions of Fryderyk Chopin

Opus 1. First Rondo for piano. (Dedicated to Madame von Linde)

Opus 2. La ci darem la mano, with variations for piano and an accompaniment for orchestra. (Dedicated to T. Wojciechowski)

Opus 3. Introduction and Polonaise brillante, for piano and violoncello. (Dedicated to J. Merk)

Opus 4. Sonata for piano. (Dedicated to Jozef Elsner. Published posthumously)

Opus 5. Rondo in the style of a mazurka for piano. (Dedicated to Countess Alexandrine de Moriolles)

Opus 6. Four Mazurkas for piano. (Dedicated to the Countess Paulina Plater)

Opus 7. Five Mazurkas for piano. (Dedicated to Mr. Johns)

Opus 8. First Trio for piano, violin and violoncello. (Dedicated to Prince Antoni Radziwill)

Opus 9. Three Nocturnes for piano. (Dedicated to Madame Camille Pleyel)

Opus 10. Twelve Grand Etudes for piano. (Dedicated to Madame Camille Pleyel)

Opus 11. Grand Concerto for piano with orchestra. (Dedicated to Kalkbrenner)

Opus 12. Variations brillantes for piano on the favorite Rondo from Herold's Ludovic: "Je vends des scapulaires." (Dedicated to Miss Emma Horsford)

Opus 13. Grand Fantasia on Polish airs, for piano with orchestra. (Dedicated to M. J. P. Pixis)

Opus 14. Krakowiak, Grand Concert Rondo for piano, with orchestra. (Dedicated to Princess A. Czartoryski)

Opus 15. Three Nocturnes for piano. (Dedicated to F. Hiller)

Opus 16. Rondo for piano. (Dedicated to Mlle. Caroline Hartmann)
Opus 17. Four Mazurkas for piano. (Dedicated to Madame Lina Freppa)
Opus 18. Grand Valse for piano. (Dedicated to Miss Laura Horsford)
Opus 19. Bolero for piano. (Dedicated to the Countess E. de Flahault)
Opus 20. First Scherzo for piano. (Dedicated to M. T. Albrecht)
Opus 21. Second Concerto for piano with orchestra. (Dedicated to Countess Delfina Potocki)
Opus 22. Grand Polonaise brillante preceded by Andante spianato. (Dedicated to the Baroness d'Est)
Opus 23. Ballade for piano. (Dedicated to Baron Stockhausen)
Opus 24. Four Mazurkas. (Dedicated to Count de Perthuis)
Opus 25. Twelve Etudes for piano. (Dedicated to Countess d'Agoult)
Opus 26. Two Polonaises for piano. (Dedicated to M. J. Dessauer)
Opus 27. Two Nocturnes for piano. (Dedicated to Countess Apponyi)
Opus 28. Twenty-four Preludes for piano. (Dedicated to Pleyel. The German edition is dedicated to J. C. Kessler)
Opus 29. Impromptu for piano. (Dedicated to Countess Lobau)
Opus 30. Four Mazurkas for piano. (Dedicated to the Princess of Württemberg)
Opus 31. Second Scherzo for piano. (Dedicated to Countess Adèle von Fürstenstein)
Opus 32. Two Nocturnes for piano. (Dedicated to Baroness Billing)
Opus 33. Four Mazurkas for piano. (Dedicated to Countess Mostowski)
Opus 34. Three Valses Brillantes for piano. (Dedicated No. 1—to Mlle. de Thun-Hohenstein; No. 2—to Mme. G. d'Ivri; No. 3—to Mlle. A. d'Eschtal)
Opus 35. Sonato for piano.
Opus 36. Second Impromptu for piano.
Opus 37. Two Nocturnes for piano.
Opus 38. Second Ballade for piano. (Dedicated to R. Schumann)
Opus 39. Third Scherzo for piano. (Dedicated to A. Gutmann)
Opus 40. Two Polonaises for piano. (Dedicated to J. Fontana)
Opus 41. Four Mazurkas for piano. (Dedicated to E. Witwicki)

Opus 42. Valse for piano.
Opus 43. Tarantella for piano.
Opus 44. Polanaise for piano. (Dedicated to the Princess Charles de Beauvau)
Opus 45. Prelude for piano. (Dedicated to the Princess Elizabeth Czernicheff)
Opus 46. Allegro de concert for piano. (Dedicated to Mlle. F. Müller)
Opus 47. Third Ballade for piano. (Dedicated to Mlle. P. de Noailles)
Opus 48. Two Nocturnes for piano. (Dedicated to Mlle. L. Duperré)
Opus 49. Fantaisie for piano. (Dedicated to Princess C. de Souzzo)
Opus 50. Three Mazurkas for piano. (Dedicated to Leon Szmitkowski)
Opus 51. Allegro Vivace. Third Impromptu for piano. (Dedicated to Countess Eszterhazy)
Opus 52. Fourth Ballade for piano. (Dedicated to Baroness C. de Rothschild)
Opus 53. Eighth Ballade for piano. (Dedicated to A. Leo)
Opus 54. Scherzo No. 4 for piano. (Dedicated to Mlle. J. de Caraman)
Opus 55. Two Nocturnes for piano. (Dedicated to Miss J. W. Stirling)
Opus 56. Three Mazurkas for piano. (Dedicated to Miss C. Maberly)
Opus 57. Berceuse for piano. (Dedicated to Mlle. Élise Gavard)
Opus 58. Sonata for piano. (Dedicated to Comtess E. de Perthuis)
Opus 59. Three Mazurkas for piano.
Opus 60. Barcarolle for piano. (Dedicated to Baroness Stockhausen)
Opus 61. Polonaise-fantaisie for piano. (Dedicated to Madame A. Veyret)
Opus 62. Two Nocturnes for piano. (Dedicated to Mlle. R. de Konneretz)
Opus 63. Three Mazurkas for piano. (Dedicated to Countess Czosnowski)
Opus 64. Three Valses for piano. (Dedicated No. 1—to Countess Potocki; No. 2—to the Baroness Rothschild; No. 3—to the Baroness Branicki)
Opus 65. Sonata for piano and violoncello. (Dedicated to A. Franchomme)

Opus 66. Fantaisie-impromptu.
Opus 67. Four Mazurkas.
Opus 68. Four Mazurkas.
Opus 69. Two Valses.
Opus 70. Three Valses.
Opus 71. Three Polonaises.
Opus 72. Nocturne, Funeral March and Three Ecossaises.
Opus 73. Rondo for two pianos.
Opus 74. Seventeen Polish Melodies.

Without Opus numbers:

Grand duo concertant—for piano and violoncello—on themes from Robert the Devil.
Three Etudes.
Mazurka in A minor.
A twenty-sixth Prelude.

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Index

This is a person and place index, although a few titles of books and newspapers have been included. The subject of the book, Fryderyk Chopin, has not been included.

Aix-la-Chapelle 89
Albert, Prince Consort 147
Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung 45
Americans 3, 6
"Andante Spianato" 89
Antek 147
Atheneum, The 146
Auber 71, 86
Augsburg Gazette 127

Bach Sabastian 121
Balearic Islands 110
Balzac, Honoré de 19, 85, 98, 122
Bangini 86
Bannockburn 156
Barcelona 109
Barcinski, Mrs. (*See Chopin, Izabela*)
Bartek 154
Batton 86
Beethoven, Ludwig 11, 45, 51, 86, 102
Belvedere Palace 16, 18
Berlin 40, 41, 64, 73, 140
Berlin Musical Gazette 44
Berlioz, Hector 89
Berton 86
Birmingham 151
Blahetka (*Journalist*) 51, 71
Blahetka, Miss 59, 77, 78
Blonie 25
Bonaparte, Napoleon 14
Boieldieu 50
Brazier 86
Brazil 153
Brinvilliers, Marquis de 86
Broadwood 151
Brochow 9
Brunn 26, 27
Bruce, Lady Augusta 149
Byron, Lady 149
Byron, Lord 149

Cadet Street 87
Cadogan, Lady 149
Calais 172, 173
Calder House 152
Carafa 86
Cambridge, Duchess of 148
Carlyle, Thomas 149
Carlisle 151
Carthusian Friars 111
Cavendish Square 145
Celinski 49
Charpentier, A. 99
Cherubini 86
Chopin Family (*early history*) 7, 8

Chopin, Emilia 19, 23, 24, 27, 37, 62
Chopin, Izabela 23, 63, 64, 135, 154, 176
Chopin, Ludwika 12, 23, 29, 37, 51, 63, 94, 135, 140, 154, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 185, 188
Chopin, Mikolaj 8, 9, 15, 18, 22, 51, 58, 63, 64, 134
Chopin, Mrs. Mikolaj 9, 13, 16, 63, 64, 135, 154, 176, 177
Cimarosa, Cortez 41
Clesinger, John 137, 189
Clesinger, Solange (*See Dudevant, Solange*)
Constantine, Prince 16, 18
Cooper, Fenimore 103
Crueville, Dr. 183, 185

Daniel 151
Danube 50, 58
Dautremont 124
Deveria 86, 158
Delacroix 86
Delaroche 86
Dessauer 151
Dickens, Charles 149
Dietrichstein, Count 52
Don Giovanni 46
Dorus 86
Dotzauer 71
Douglas, Marquis of 148
Dover 172, 173
Dover Street 145
Dresden 44, 54, 64, 70, 71
Dudevant, Madam (*See Sand, George*)
Dudevant, Maurice 97, 110, 112, 122, 131, 137
Dudevant, Solange 97, 122, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 189
Dumas, Alexandre 86
Duport 124
Duvert 86
Dziewanowski, Dominik 88

Edinburgh 145, 151, 152, 162, 167
Einsiedelei 26
El Mallorquin 110
Elsner, Josef 29, 30, 34, 35, 36, 45, 47, 48, 60, 66, 67
England (*See Great Britain*)
Erard 147
Erskine, Mrs. 152, 165, 171
Europe 4, 8, 14, 15, 89, 140
Eusebius 45, 46

Falkenstein 42
Falkirk 156
Falmouth, Lord 146
Figaro 85
Florestan 45
Fontana, Julek 23, 30, 31, 32, 34, 123, 126
France 90, 140, 160, 171
Franchomme 131
Frankenstein 25
Frankfort 151
Freischutz 44
French Revolution 80, 107

Gainsborough, Lady 14(
Gallenberg, Count 50
Gautier, Theophile 85
Gazette Musical 91, 141
Glac 25
Germany 103
Giedrojc, Princess 106, 107
Gladkowski, Konstancja 59, 60, 61, 62

Glasgow 151, 153
Gomez 111
Grabowski, Josef 62
Granville, Lady 149
Great Britain 156, 171
Grote, Mrs. 149, 150
Grzymala, Albert 88, 101, 117, 124, 126, 172
Gutmann, Mr. 181, 182, 183, 188
Gyrowec 15, 16

Hamilton, Duke of 148
Handel 41
Haslinger 45, 50, 51, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77
Hauke 54
Haydn 49, 86, 102, 153
Heine (*German Poet*) 127
Herold 86
Hesse, Duke of 149
Highlands of Scotland 156
Hiller, Ferdinand 89
Hohemenza 26
Hube 49
Hugo, Victor 85, 86
Humboldt (*Excellency von*) 38, 42

Indiana 85
Italy 103

Jacobites 156
Jarocki, Dr. 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 49
Jedrzejewicz, Kalasanty (*Father and son*) 176, 177, 179
Jedrzejewicz, Mrs. (*See Chopin, Ludwika*)
Jedrzejewicz, Ludwika 176, 177, 178, 181, 183
Jocelyn, Lady 149

Kalasanty, 154
Kalisz 25, 70
Kalkbrenner 86, 87
Karl, Prince 42
Kemble, Fanny (*See Sartoris, Mrs.*)
Kent, Duchess of 149
Kilsyth 156
Kistner 90
Klodowa 25
Kolberg, Wilhelm 23, 25, 28
Kola 25
Konstancja (*Gladkowski, Konstancja*)
Krasinski 121
Kreutzer 52
Komar, Mr. 101
Komar, Delfina (*See Potocki Countess Delfina*)
Komar, Maria (*Princess de Beauvau-Croan*) 101
Komar, Natalia (*Marquise Medici Spada*) 101
Kosciuszko, Tadeusz 39, 40, 42
Krakow 39, 49
Krakowskie Przedmiescie 189
Kreyssing, Dr. 70
Krzyzanowski, Justyna (*See Chopin, Mrs. Mikolaj*)
Kummer 71
Kur-Gaste 26
Kutno 25
Kurpinski 29

Lachner 52
Lamartine, Alphonse 85
Lau-Brunn 26
Leipzig 90
Leporello 46
Le Roi S'amuse 86
Leszczynski, Stanislaw (King) 7, 8
Lichnowski, Countess 52

Lignicki, Princess 42
Lincoln, Lady 152
Lind, Jenny 149, 150, 151
Lipinski's at Frankfort 151
Lishinski, Dr. 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 169, 170
Liszt, Franz 89, 91, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 117, 122, 151
London 64, 77, 87, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 151, 153, 154, 170
Lowicka, Princess 16
Lowicz 25
Lubecki, Prince 16
Lucrezia, Floriani 136
Lithuanians 104
Luxemburg Gardens 104

Maciejowski 49, 54, 55, 56, 57
Mackintosh 153
Majorca Island 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 172
Manchester 152
Maria (*See Wodzinski, Maria*)
Marienbad 94
Mario 146
Mariolles, de Alexandrine 118
Marliani, Madam 113, 114, 115, 119
Matuszynski, Dr. Jan 67, 89, 124, 126, 134
Mayseder 52
Mazowsze 6
Mediterranean Sea 109
Mendelssohn 42, 89, 100, 148
Meyerbeer 50
Mickiewicz, Adam 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 121, 187
Miedzyborz 25
Miroszewski 37
Mochnacki, Maurycy 106, 107
Moravia 50
Moscow 140
Mozart 11, 19, 45, 46, 49, 86, 121
Munich 77
Murray, Lady 153
Musset, Alfred de 85, 86

Nancy 8
National Insurrection 83
Neukomm 153
Niemcewicz 16
Nohant 120, 122, 123, 124, 125, 127
North Sea 167

Onslow 41
Olesnica 25
Opéra-Comique 86
Orpiszewski, Mr. 96
Osborne, Mr. 100
Ostrow 25

Paer 86
Pagello, Dr. 97
Palma 111
Pan Tadeusz 104
Paris 42, 64, 77, 85, 86, 87, 90, 91, 95, 96, 101, 103, 112, 120, 126, 127, 131, 135, 139, 140, 141, 142, 144, 145, 148, 161, 174, 176
"People's Spring" 140, 180
Pére Lachaise 189
Phénicien 110
Philharmonic Society 148
Piccadilly 147
Pleyel Salle 129, 141, 147, 153
Poland 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 18, 24, 28, 39, 40, 49, 66, 70, 76, 78, 80, 81, 83, 107, 111, 134, 140, 141, 157, 179
Potocki, Count 16
Potocki, Countess Delfina 100, 114, 117, 181, 182, 183, 188

Poznan 7, 28, 46
Prague 54, 71
Prussia 40
Pyrenees 110

Queen of England (*See Victoria, Queen of England*)

Radziwill, Prince 16, 28, 42, 46
Raphael 127
Reinerz 25, 26, 27
Revolutionary Étude 84
Revue Musicale 87
Revue de Paris 85
Rogers 149
Rose et Blanche 85
Rossini 71
Russia 40, 76, 103, 104, 122

St. James's Square 146
Sand, George 19, 86, 87, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 118, 120, 122, 123, 125, 127, 131, 136, 137, 142, 173
Sartoris, Mrs. 146, 147, 150, 151
Saxony 54
Scheffer, Ary II, 99
Schubert 49, 122
Schumann, Robert 10, 45, 102, 103, 121
Scotland 152, 157, 158, 159, 160, 171, 172, 173
Scott, Sir Walter 149
Seine 77, 136
Sèvres 104, 105
Seyfried 52
Skarbek, Count 12, 15, 16
Skarbek, Countess 9, 10
Skarbek, Count Josef 95, 96
Skarbek, Countess Josef (*See Wodzinski, Maria*)
Skarbek (*family*) 15
Skarbek (*palace*) 15
Slask 24, 27, 50
Slowacki 121
Smithson, Miss 89
Sochaczew 1, 3, 7, 12, 25
Société du Conservatoire 89
Solange (*See Dudevant, Solange*)
Sonnambula 150
Spotini 42
Stafford House 148
Strauss 102
Stirling Castle 156, 162
Stirling, Jane 144, 152, 153, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 165, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175
Strzyzewo 27
Stuttgart 71, 77, 83
Sue, Eugene 85
Sutherland, Duchess of 147
Sutherland, Duke of 148
Sweden 150
Switzerland 103
Szopa 7, 8
Szulczewski, Mr. 171, 172

Tamburini 147
Teplitz 55
Tetschen 151
Théâtre Français 86
Tibaldi, Fraulein 41
Times, The 148
Torpichen, Lord 152
Tschaikowsky 102
Turka 25

Un Hiver a Majorque 112
United States of America 7

Valdemosa 111
Van Dyke 12

Vatican, the 96
Veltheim, Miss 52
Versailles 104
Viardot, Madam Pauline 131, 146, 150
Victoria, Queen of England 89, 147
Vienna 40, 45, 50, 51, 58, 59, 60, 64, 70, 71, 75, 76, 77, 87, 140
Vigny, Alfred de 86
Von Schatzel 41

Warta 25
Warszawa 1, 15, 16, 22, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 38, 40, 41, 44, 48, 50, 51, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 65, 66, 68, 74, 76, 78, 79, 82, 83, 84, 91, 134, 135, 145, 161, 171, 189
Washington, George 3, 6, 7, 12
Wawel Castle 49
Weber 121
Weimar, Prince of 149
Welbeck Street 145
Wellington, Duke of 147, 150
Wiesolowski, Mrs. 27
Wilno 103
Wisla 179
Witwicki 66
Wodzinski, Brothers 23, 66
Wodzinski, Antoni 93
Wodzinski, Felix 93
Wodzinski, Kazimierz 91
Wodzinski, Madam 94
Wodzinski, Maria 66, 68, 93, 94, 95, 96, 118
Wojciechowski, Tytus 23, 45, 59, 70, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84
Wola 56, 65, 179
Wroclaw 25, 27, 70
Wurfel 51
Württemberg, Princess 118

Zelazowa Wola 1, 3, 4, 7, 11, 12
Zelter 42
Zullichau 44
Zywny, Wojciech 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 24, 29, 30, 47, 66, 178, 179

INSTYTUT FRYDERYKA CHOPINA-NARODOWY BIBLIOTEKA

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991
NARODOWY
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CHOPINA
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Fryderyk Chopin at the age of twenty-five. From a portrait painted by Ary Scheffer in 1835.

Chopin

by

ANTONI GRONOWICZ

Rendered in English by Jessie McEwen

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