Рихард Вагнер

My Life. Volume 2

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Richard Wagner
My Life – Volume 2

PART III
1850-1861

MINNA had been lucky enough to find quarters near Zurich which corresponded very closely with the wishes I had so emphatically expressed before leaving. The house was situated in the parish of Enge, a good fifteen minutes' walk from the town, on a site overlooking the lake, and was an old-fashioned hostelry called 'Zum Abendstern,' belonging to a certain Frau Hirel, who was a pleasant old lady. The second floor, which was quite self-contained and very quiet, offered us humble but adequate accommodations for a modest rent.

I arrived early in the morning and found Minna still in bed. She was anxious to know whether I had returned simply out of pity; but I quickly succeeded in obtaining her promise that she would never again refer to what had taken place. She was soon quite herself again when she began to show me the progress she had made in arranging the rooms.

Our position had for some years been growing more comfortable, in spite of the fact that at this time various difficulties again arose, and our domestic happiness seemed tolerably secure. Yet I could never quite master a restless inclination to deviate from anything that was regarded as conventional.

Our two pets, Peps and Papo, largely helped to make our lodgings homelike; both were very fond of me, and were sometimes even too obtrusive in showing their affection. Peps would always lie behind me in the armchair while I was working, and Papo, after repeatedly calling out 'Richard' in vain, would often come fluttering into my study if I stayed away from the sitting-room too long. He would then settle down on my desk and vigorously shuffle about the papers and pens. He was so well trained that he never uttered the ordinary cry of a bird, but expressed his sentiments only by talking or singing. As soon as he heard my step on the staircase he would begin whistling a tune, as, for instance, the great march in the finale of the Symphony in C minor, the beginning of the Eighth Symphony in F major, or even a bright bit out of the Rienzi Overture. Peps, our little dog, on the other hand, was a highly sensitive and nervous creature. My friends used to call him 'Peps the petulant,' and there were times when we could not speak to him even in the friendliest way without bringing on paroxysms of howls and sobs. These two pets of course helped very much to increase the mutual understanding between myself and my wife.

Unfortunately, there was one perpetual source of quarrel, arising from my wife's behaviour towards poor Nathalie. Until her death she shamefully withheld from the girl the fact that she was her mother. Nathalie, therefore, always believed that she was Minna's sister, and consequently could not understand why she should not have the same rights as my wife, who always treated her in an authoritative way, as a strict mother would do, and seemed to think herself justified in complaining of Nathalie's behaviour. Apparently the latter had been much neglected and spoiled just at the critical age, and deprived of any proper training. She was short in stature and inclined to become stout, her manners were awkward and her opinions narrow. Minna's hasty temper and continual jeering made the girl, who was naturally very good-natured, stubborn and spiteful, so that the behaviour of the 'sisters' often caused the most hateful scenes in our quiet home. I never lost my patience at these incidents, however, but remained, completely indifferent to everything going on around me.

The arrival of my young friend Karl was a pleasant diversion in our small household. Ho occupied a tiny attic above our rooms and shared our meals. Sometimes he would accompany me on my walks, and for a time seemed quite satisfied.

But I soon noticed in him a growing restlessness. He had not been slow to recognise, by the unpleasant scenes that again became daily occurrences in our married life, at what point the shoe pinched that I had good-naturedly put on again at his request. However, when one day I reminded him that in coming hack to Zurich I had other objects in view besides the longing for a quiet domestic life, he remained silent. But I saw that there was another peculiar reason for his uneasiness; he took to coming in late for meals, and even then he had no appetite. At first I was anxious at this, fearing he might have taken a dislike to our simple fare, but I soon discovered that my young friend was so passionately addicted to sweets that I feared he might eventually ruin his health by trying to live on large quantities of confectionery. My remarks seemed to annoy him, as his absences from the house became more frequent, I thought that probably his small room did not afford him the comfort he required, and I therefore made no objection when he left us and took a room in town.

As his state of uneasiness still seemed to increase and he did not appear at all happy in Zurich, I was glad to be able to suggest a little change for him, and persuade him to go for a holiday to Weimar, where the first performance of Lohengrin was to take place about the end of August.

About the same time I induced Minna to go with me for our first ascent of the Righi, a feat we both accomplished very energetically on foot. I was very much grieved on this occasion to discover that my wife had symptoms of heart disease, which continued to develop subsequently. We spent the evening of the 28th of August, while the first performance of Lohengrin was taking place at Weimar, in Lucerne, at the Schwan inn, watching the clock as the hands went round, and marking the various times at which the performance presumably began, developed, and came to a close.

I always felt somewhat distressed, uncomfortable, and ill at ease whenever I tried to pass a few pleasant hours in the society of my wife.

The reports received of that first performance gave me no clear or reassuring impression of it. Karl Ritter soon came back to Zurich, and told me of deficiencies in staging and of the unfortunate choice of a singer for the leading part, but remarked that on the whole it had gone fairly well. The reports sent me by Liszt were the most encouraging. He did not seem to think it worth while to allude to the inadequacy of the means at his command for such a bold undertaking, but preferred to dwell on the sympathetic spirit that prevailed in the company and the effect it produced on the influential personages he had invited to be present.

Although everything in connection with this important enterprise eventually assumed a bright aspect, the direct result on my position at the time was very slight. I was more interested in the future of the young friend who had been entrusted to my care than in anything else. At the time of his visit to Weimar he had been to stay with his family in Dresden, and after his return expressed an anxious wish to become a musician, and possibly to secure a position as a musical director at a theatre. I had never had an opportunity of judging of his gifts in this line. He had always refused to play the piano in my presence, but I had seen his setting of an alliterative poem of his own, Die Walkure, which, though rather awkwardly put together, struck me by its precise and skilful compliance with the rules of composition.

He proved himself to be the worthy pupil of his master, Robert Schumann, who, long before, had told me that Karl possessed great musical gifts, and that he could not remember ever having had any other pupil endowed with such a keen ear and such a ready facility for assimilation. Consequently I had no reason to discourage the young man's confidence in his capacity for the career of a musical director. As the winter season was approaching, I asked the manager of the theatre for the address of Herr Kramer, who was coming for the season, and learned that he was still engaged at Winterthur.

Sulzer, who was always ready when help or advice was needed, arranged for a meeting with Herr Kramer at a dinner at the 'Wilden Mann' in Winterthur. At this meeting it was decided, on my recommendation, that Karl Ritter should be appointed musical director at the theatre for the ensuing winter, starting from October, and the remuneration he was to receive was really a very fair one. As my protege was admittedly a beginner, I had to guarantee his capacity by undertaking to perform his

duties in the event of any trouble arising at the theatre on the ground of his inefficiency. Karl seemed delighted. As October drew near and the opening of the theatre was announced to take place 'under exceptional artistic auspices.' I thought it advisable to see what Karl's views were.

By way of a debut I had selected Der Freischutz, so that he might open his career with a well-known opera. Karl did not entertain the slightest doubt of being able to master such a simple score, but when he had to overcome his reserve in playing the piano before me, as I wanted to go through the whole opera with him, I was amazed at seeing that he had no idea of accompaniment. He played the arrangement for the pianoforte with the characteristic carelessness of an amateur who attaches no importance to lengthening a bar by incorrect fingering. He knew nothing whatever about rhythmic precision or tempo, the very essentials of a conductor's career. I felt completely nonplussed and was absolutely at a loss what to say. However, I still hoped the young man's talent might suddenly break out, and I looked forward to an orchestral rehearsal, for which I provided him with a pair of large spectacles. I had never noticed before that he was so shortsighted, but when reading he had to keep his face so close to the music that it would have been impossible for him to control both orchestra and singers. When I saw him, hitherto so confident, standing at the conductor's desk staring hard at the score, in spite of his spectacles, and making meaningless signs in the air like one in a trance, I at once realised that the time for carrying out my guarantee had arrived.

It was, nevertheless, a somewhat difficult and trying task to make young Ritter understand that I should be compelled to take his place; but there was no help for it, and it was I who had to inaugurate Kramer's winter season under such 'exceptional artistic auspices.' The success of Der Freischulz placed me in a peculiar position as regards both the company and the public, but it was quite out of the question to suppose that Karl could continue to act as musical director at the theatre by himself.

Strange to say, this trying experience coincided with an important change in the life of another young friend of mine, Hans von Bulow, whom I had known in Dresden. I had met his father at Zurich in the previous year just after his second marriage. He afterwards settled down at Lake Constance, and it was from this place that Hans wrote to me expressing his regret that he was unable to pay his long-desired visit to Zurich, as he had previously promised to do.

As far as I could make out, his mother, who had been divorced from his father, did all in her power to restrain him from embracing the career of an artist, and tried to persuade him to enter the civil or the diplomatic service, as he had studied law. But his inclinations and talents impelled him to a musical career. It seemed that his mother, when giving him permission to go to visit his father, had particularly urged him to avoid any meeting with me. When I afterwards heard that he had been advised by his father also not to come to Zurich, I felt sure that the latter, although he had been on friendly terms with me, was anxious to act in accordance with his first wife's wishes in this serious matter of his son's future, so as to avoid any further disputes after the friction of the divorce had barely been allayed. Later on I learned that these statements, which roused a strong feeling of resentment in me against Eduard von Bulow, were unfounded; but the despairing tone of Hans's letter, clearly showing that any other career would be repugnant to him and would be a constant source of misery, seemed to be ample reason for my interference. This was one of the occasions when my easily excited indignation roused me to activity. I replied very fully, and eloquently pointed out to him the vital importance of this moment in his life. The desperate tone of his letter justified me in telling him very plainly that this was not a case in which he could deal hastily with his views as to the future, but that it was a matter profoundly affecting his whole heart and soul. I told him what I myself would do in his case, that is to say, if he really felt an overwhelming and irresistible impulse to become an artist, and would prefer to endure the greatest hardships and trials rather than be forced into a course he felt was a wrong one, he ought, in defiance of everything, to make up his mind to accept the helping hand I was holding out to him at once. If, in spite of his father's prohibition, he still wished to come to me, he ought not to hesitate, but should carry out his wishes immediately on the receipt of my letter.

Karl Ritter was pleased when I entrusted him with the duty of delivering the letter personally at Bulow's country villa. When he arrived he asked to see his friend at the door, and went for a stroll with him, during which he gave him my letter. Thereupon Hans, who like Karl had no money, at once decided, in spite of storm and rain, to accompany Karl back to Zurich on foot. So one day they turned up absolutely tired out, and came into my room looking like a couple of tramps, with visible signs about them of their mad expedition. Karl beamed with joy over this feat, while young Bulow was quite overcome with emotion.

I at once realised that I had taken a very serious responsibility on my shoulders, yet I sympathised deeply with the overwrought youth, and my conduct towards him was guided by all that had occurred for a long time afterwards.

At first we had to console him, and stimulate his confidence by our cheerfulness. His appointment was soon arranged. He was to share Karl's contract at the theatre, and enjoy the same rights; both were to receive a small salary, and I was to continue to act as surety for their capabilities.

At this time they happened to be rehearsing a musical comedy, and Hans, without any knowledge of the subject, took up his position at the conductor's desk and handled the baton with great vigour and remarkable skill. I felt safe as far as he was concerned, and all doubt as to his ability as musical director vanished on the spot. But it was a somewhat difficult task to overcome Karl's misgivings about himself, owing to the idea ingrained in his mind that he never could become a practical musician. A growing shyness and secret antipathy towards me soon manifested itself and became more noticeable in this young man, in spite of the fact that he was certainly gifted. It was impossible to keep him any longer in his position or to ask him to conduct again.

Bulow also soon encountered unexpected difficulties. The manager and his staff, who had been spoiled by my having conducted on the occasion already mentioned, were always on the look-out for some fresh excuse for requisitioning my services.

I did, in fact, conduct again a few times, partly to give the public a favourable impression of the operatic company, which was really quite a good one, and partly to show my young friends, especially Bulow, who was so eminently adapted for a conductor, the most essential points which the leader of an orchestra ought to know.

Hans was always equal to the occasion, and I could with a clear conscience say there was no need for me to take his place whenever he was called upon to conduct. However, one of the artistes, a very conceited singer, who had been somewhat spoiled by my praise, annoyed him so much by her ways that she succeeded in forcing me to take up the baton again. When a couple of months later we realised the impossibility of carrying on this state of things indefinitely, and were tired of the whole affair, the management consented to free us from our irksome duties. About this time Hans was offered the post of musical director at St. Gall without any special conditions being attached to his engagement, so I sent the two boys off to try their luck in the neighbouring town, and thus gained time for further developments.

Herr Eduard von Bulow had, after all, come to the conclusion that it would be wiser to abide by his son's decision, though he did not do so without evincing a good deal of ill-humour towards me. He had not replied to a letter I had written him to explain my conduct in the matter, but I afterwards learned that he had visited his son in Zurich by way of patching up a reconciliation.

I went several times to St. Gall to see the young men, as they remained there during the winter months. I found Karl lost in gloomy thought: he had again met with an unfavourable reception when conducting Gluck's Overture to Iphigenia, and was keeping aloof from everybody. Hans was busily rehearsing with a very poor company and a horrible orchestra, in a hideous theatre. Seeing all this misery, I told Hans that for the time being he had picked up enough to pass for a practical musician or even for an experienced conductor.

The question now was to find him a sphere which would give him a suitable scope for his talents. He told me that his father was going to send him to Freiherr von Poissl, the manager of the Munich

Court Theatre, with a letter of introduction. But his mother soon intervened, and wanted him to go to Weimar to continue his musical training under Liszt. This was all I could desire; I felt greatly relieved and heartily recommended the young man, of whom I was very fond, to my distinguished friend.

He left St. Gall at Easter, 1851, and during the long period of his stay in Weimar I was released from the responsibility of looking after him.

Meanwhile Ritter remained in melancholy retirement, and not being able to make up his mind whether or not he should return to Zurich, where he would be disagreeably reminded of his unlucky debut, he preferred for the present to stay in seclusion at St. Gall.

The sojourn of my young friends at St. Gall had been pleasantly varied during the previous winter by a visit to Zurich, when Hans made his appearance as pianist at one of the concerts of the musical society there. I also took an active part in it by conducting one of Beethoven's symphonies, and it was a great pleasure to us both to give each other mutual encouragement.

I had been asked to appear again at this society's concerts during the winter. However, I only did so occasionally, to conduct a Beethoven symphony, making it a condition that the orchestra, and more especially the string instruments, should be reinforced by capable musicians from other towns.

As I always required three rehearsals for each symphony, and many of the musicians had to come from a great distance, our work acquired quite an imposing and solemn character. I was able to devote the time usually taken up by a rehearsal to the study of one symphony, and accordingly had leisure to work out the minutest details of the execution, particularly as the technical difficulties were not of an insuperable character. My facility in interpreting music at that time attained a degree of perfection I had not hitherto reached, and I recognised this by the unexpected effect my conducting produced.

The orchestra contained some really talented and clever musicians, among whom I may mention Fries, an oboist, who, starting from a subordinate place, had been appointed a leading player. He had to practice with me, just as a singer would do, the more important parts allotted to his instrument in Beethoven's symphonies. When we first produced the Symphony in C minor, this extraordinary man played the small passage marked adagio at the fermata of the first movement in a manner I have never heard equalled. After my retirement from the directorship of these concerts he left the orchestra and went into business as a music-seller.

The orchestra could further boast of a Herr Ott-Imhoff, a highly cultured and well-to-do man who belonged to a noble family, and had joined the orchestra as a patron and as an amateur musician. He played the clarionet with a soft and charming tone which was somewhat lacking in spirit. I must also mention the worthy Herr Bar, a cornet-player, whom I appointed leader of the brass instruments, as he exercised a great influence on that part of the orchestra. I cannot remember ever having heard the long, powerful chords of the last movement of the C minor Symphony executed with such intense power as by this player in Zurich, and can only compare the recollection of it with the impressions I had when, in my early Parisian days, the Conservatoire orchestra performed Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

Our production of the Symphony in C minor made a great impression on the audience, especially on my intimate friend Sulzer, who had previously kept aloof from any kind of music. He became so incensed when an attack was made on me by a newspaper that he answered the gratuitous critic in a satirical poem composed with the skill of a Platen.

As I have already said, Bulow was invited in the course of the winter to give a pianoforte recital at a concert at which I promised to produce the Sinfonia Eroica.

With his usual audacity he chose Liszt's piano arrangement of the Tannhauser Overture, a work as brilliant as it is difficult, and therefore a somewhat hazardous undertaking. However, he caused quite a sensation, and I myself was astounded at his execution. Up to this time I had not paid it the attention it deserved, and it inspired me with the greatest confidence in his future. I frequently had occasion to admire his masterly skill both as conductor and accompanist.

During that winter, apart from the occasions in my young friend's life already briefly alluded to, there were frequent opportunities of displaying his capabilities. My acquaintances used to foregather in my house, and formed quite a little club for the purposes of mutual enjoyment, which, however, would hardly have been successful without Bulow's assistance.

I sang suitable passages from my opera, which Hans accompanied with an expressiveness which delighted me very much. On an occasion like this I also read aloud extracts from my manuscripts. For instance, during a series of successive evenings I read the whole of my longer work, Oper und Drama, written in the course of this winter, and was favoured by a steadily growing and remarkably attentive audience.

Now that after my return I had secured a certain degree of peace and tranquillity of mind, I began to think of resuming my more serious studies. But somehow the composition of Siegfried's Death did not seem to appeal to me. The idea of sitting down deliberately to write a score which should never go further than the paper on which it was written, again discouraged me; whereas I felt more and more strongly impelled to lay a foundation on which it might some day be possible to present such a work, even though the end had to be gained by roundabout means. To secure this object it seemed above all necessary to approach those friends, both at home and abroad, who interested themselves in my art, in order to expound to them more clearly the problems that demanded solution, which, although definite enough to my own mind, had scarcely as yet even entered into their heads. A singularly favourable opportunity for so doing offered itself one day when Sulzer showed me an article on 'Opera' in Brockhaus's Modern Encyclopedia. The good man was fully convinced that in the opinions expressed in this article I should find a preliminary basis for my own theories. But a hasty glance sufficed to show me at once how entirely erroneous they were, and I tried hard to point out to Sulzer the fundamental difference between the accepted views, even of very sensible people, and my own conceptions of the heart of the matter. Finding it naturally impossible, even with all the eloquence at my command, to elucidate my ideas all at once, I set about preparing a methodical plan for detailed treatment of the subject as soon as I got home. In this way I was lead to write this book which was published under the title of Oper und Drama, a task which kept me fully occupied for several months, in fact until February, 1851.

But I had to pay heavily for the exhausting toil expended on the conclusion of this work. According to my calculations, only a few days of persevering industry were needed for the completion of my manuscript, when my parrot, which usually watched me on my writing-table, was taken seriously ill. As it had already completely recovered from several similar attacks, I did not feel very anxious. Although my wife begged me to fetch a veterinary surgeon who lived in a village which was rather far off, I preferred to stick to my desk, and I put off going from one day to the next. At last one evening the all-important manuscript was finished, and the next morning our poor Papo lay dead on the floor. My inconsolable grief over this melancholy loss was fully shared by Minna, and by our mutual affection for this treasured pet we were once more tenderly united in a way likely to conduce to our domestic happiness.

In addition to our pets, our older Zurich friends had also remained faithful to us, in spite of the catastrophe which had befallen my family life. Sulzer was without a doubt the worthiest and most important of these friends. The profound difference between us both in intellect and temperament seemed only to favour this relationship, for each was constantly providing surprises for the other; and as the divergencies between us were radical, they often gave rise to most exhilarating and instructive experiences. Sulzer was extraordinarily excitable and very delicate in health. It was quite against his own original desire that he had entered the service of the state, and in doing so he had sacrificed his own wishes to a conscientious performance of duty in the extremest sense of the word, and now, through his acquaintance with me, he was drawn more deeply into the sphere of aesthetic enjoyment than he regarded as justifiable. Probably he would have indulged less freely in these excesses, had I taken my art a little less seriously. But as I insisted upon attaching an importance to the artistic destiny

of mankind which far transcended the mere aims of citizenship, I sometimes completely upset him. Yet, on the other hand, it was just this intense earnestness which so strongly attracted him to me and my speculations. This not only gave rise to pleasant conversation and calm discussion between us, but also, owing to a fiery temper on both sides, sometimes provoked violent explosions, so that, with trembling lips, he would seize hat and stick and hurry away without a word of farewell. Such, however, was the intrinsic worth of the man, that he was sure to turn up again the next evening at the accustomed hour, when we both felt as though nothing whatever had passed between us. But when certain bodily ailments compelled him to remain indoors for many days, it was difficult to gain access to him, for he was apt to become furious when any one inquired about his health. On these occasions there was only one way of putting him in a good temper, and that was to say that one had called to ask a favour of him. Thereupon he was pleasantly surprised, and would not only declare himself ready to oblige in any way that was in his power, but would assume a really cheerful and benevolent demeanour.

A remarkable contrast to him was presented by the musician Wilhelm Baumgartner, a merry, jovial fellow, without any aptitude for concentration, who had learned just enough about the piano to be able, as teacher at so much an hour, to earn what he required for a living. He had a taste for what was beautiful, provided it did not soar too high, and possessed a true and loyal heart, full of a great respect for Sulzer, which unfortunately could not cure him of a craving for the public-house.

Besides this man, there were two others who had also from the very first formed part of our circle. Both of them were friends of the pair I have already mentioned; their names were Hagenbuch, a worthy and respectable deputy cantonal secretary; and Bernhard Spyri, a lawyer, and at that time editor of the Eidgenossische Zeitung. The latter was a singularly good-tempered man, but not overburdened with intellect, for which reason Sulzer always treated him with special consideration.

Alexander Muller soon disappeared from our midst, as he became more and more engrossed by domestic calamities, bodily infirmities, and the mechanical drudgery of giving lessons by the hour. As for the musician Abt, I had never felt particularly drawn towards him, in spite of his Schwalben, and he too speedily left us to carve a brilliant career for himself in Brunswick.

In the meantime, however, our Zurich circle was enriched by all kinds of additions from without, mainly due to the political shipwrecks. On my return, in January, 1850, I had already found Adolph Kolatschek, a plain, though not unprepossessing-looking man, though he was a bit of a bore. He imagined himself born to be an editor, and had founded a German monthly magazine, which was to open a field for those who had been outwardly conquered in the recent movements to continue their fight in the inner realm of the spirit. I felt almost flattered at being picked out by him as an author, and being informed that 'a power like mine' ought not to be absent from a union of spiritual forces such as was to be established by his enterprise. I had previously sent him from Paris my treatise on Kunst und Klima; and he now gladly accepted some fairly long extracts from my still unpublished Oper und Drama, for which he moreover paid me a handsome fee. This man made an indelible impression on my mind as the only instance I have met of a really tactful editor. He once handed me the manuscript of a review on my Kunstwerk der Zukunft, written by a certain Herr Palleske, to read, saying that he would not print it without my express consent, though he did not press me to give it. It was a superficial article, without any true comprehension of the subject, and couched in most arrogant terms. I felt that if it appeared in this particular journal it would certainly demand inconvenient and wearisome rejoinders from me, in which I should have to restate my original thesis. As I was by no means inclined to enter upon such a controversy, I agreed to Kolatschek's proposal, and suggested that he had better return the manuscript to its author for publication elsewhere.

Through Kolatschek I also learned to know Reinhold Solger, a really excellent and interesting man. But it did not suit his restless and adventurous spirit to remain cooped up in the small and narrow Swiss world of Zurich, so that he soon left us and went to North America, where I heard that he went about giving lectures and denouncing the political situation in Europe. It was a pity that this talented

man never succeeded in making a name for himself by more important work. His contributions to our monthly journal, during the brief term of his stay in Zurich, were certainly among the best ever written on these topics by a German.

In the new year, 1851, Georg Herwegh also joined us, and I was delighted to meet him one day at Kolatschek's lodgings. The vicissitudes which had brought him to Zurich came to my knowledge afterwards in a somewhat offensive and aggressive manner. For the present, Herwegh put on an aristocratic swagger and gave himself the airs of a delicately nurtured and luxurious son of his times, to which a fairly liberal interpolation of French expletives at least added a certain distinction. Nevertheless, there was something about his person, with his quick, flashing eye and kindliness of manner, which was well calculated to exert an attractive influence. I felt almost flattered by his ready acceptance of my invitation to my informal evening parties, which may, perhaps, have been fairly agreeable gatherings, as Bulow entertained us with music, though to me personally they afforded no mental sustenance whatever. My wife used to declare that, when I proceeded to read from my manuscript, Kolatschek promptly fell asleep, while Herwegh gave all his attention to her punch. When, later on, as I have already mentioned, I read my Oper und Drama for twelve consecutive evenings to our Zurich friends, Herwegh stayed away, because he did not wish to mix with those for whom such things had not been written. Yet my intercourse with him became gradually more cordial. Not only did I respect his poetical talent, which had recently gained recognition, but I also learned to realise the delicate and refined qualities of his richly cultivated intellect, and in course of time learned that Herwegh, on his side, was beginning to covet my society. My steady pursuit of those deeper and more serious interests which so passionately engrossed me seemed to arouse him to an ennobling sympathy, even for those topics which, since his sudden leap into poetic fame, had been, greatly to his prejudice, smothered under mere showy and trivial mannerisms, altogether alien to his original nature. Possibly this process was accelerated by the growing difficulties of his position, which he had hitherto regarded as demanding a certain amount of outward show. In short, he was the first man in whom I met with a sensitive and sympathetic comprehension of my most daring schemes and opinions, and I soon felt compelled to believe his assertion that he occupied himself solely with my ideas, into which, certainly, no other man entered so profoundly as he did.

This familiarity with Herwegh, in which an element of affection was certainly mingled, was further stimulated by news which reached me respecting a new dramatic poem which I had sketched out for the coining spring. Liszt's preparations in the late summer of the previous year for the production in Weimar of my Lohengrin had met with more success than, with such limited resources, had hitherto seemed possible. This result could naturally only have been obtained by the zeal of a friend endowed with such rich and varied gifts as Liszt. Though it was beyond his power to attract quickly to the Weimar stage such singers as Lohengrin demanded, and he had been compelled on many points to content himself with merely suggesting what was intended to be represented, yet he was now endeavouring by sundry ingenious methods to make these suggestions clearly comprehensible. First of all, he prepared a detailed account of the production of Lohengrin. Seldom has a written description of a work of art won for it such attentive friends, and commanded their enthusiastic appreciation from the outset, as did this treatise of Liszt's, which extended even to the most insignificant details. Karl Ritter distinguished himself by providing an excellent German translation of the French original, which was first published in the Illustrirte Zeitung. Shortly after this Liszt also issued Tannhauser in French, accompanied by a similar preface on its origin, and these pamphlets were the chief means of awakening, now and for long after, especially in foreign countries, not only a surprisingly sympathetic interest in these works, but also an intimate understanding of them such as could not possibly have been attained by the mere study of my pianoforte arrangements. But, far from being satisfied with this, Liszt contrived to attract the attention of intellects outside Weimar to the performances of my operas, in order, with kindly compulsion, to force them upon the notice of all who had ears to hear and eyes to see. Although his good intentions did not altogether succeed

with Franz Dingelstedt, who would only commit himself to a confused report on Lohengrin in the Allgemeine Zeitung, yet his enthusiastic eloquence completely and decisively captured Adolf Stahr for my work. His detailed view of Lohengrin in the Berlin National-Zeitung, in which he claimed a high importance for my opera, did not remain without permanent influence upon the German public. Even in the narrow circle of professional musicians its effects seem not to have been unimportant; for Robert Franz, whom Liszt dragged almost by force to a performance of Lohengrin, spoke of it with unmistakable enthusiasm. This example gave the lead to many other journals, and for some time it seemed as though the otherwise dull-witted musical press would energetically champion my cause.

I shall shortly have occasion to describe what it was that eventually gave quite a different direction to this movement. Meanwhile Liszt felt emboldened by these kindly signs to encourage me to renew my creative activity, which had now for some time been interrupted. His success with Lohengrin gave him confidence in his ability to execute a yet more hazardous undertaking, and he invited me to set my poem of Siegfried's Death to music for production at Weimar. On his recommendation, the manager of the Weimar theatre, Herr von Ziegesar, offered to make a definite contract with me in the name of the Grand Duke. I was to finish the work within a year, and during that period was to receive a payment of fifteen hundred marks (L75).

It was a curious coincidence that about this time, and also through Liszt, the Duke of Coburg invited me to arrange the instrumentation for an opera of his own composition, for which he offered me the sum of two thousand seven hundred marks (L135). In spite of my position as an outlaw, my noble patron and would-be employer offered to receive me in his castle at Coburg, where, in quiet seclusion with himself and Frau Birchpfeiffer, the writer of the libretto, I might execute the work. Liszt naturally expected nothing more from me than a decent excuse for declining this offer, and suggested my pleading 'bodily and mental depression.' My friend told me afterwards that the Duke had desired my co-operation with him in his score on account of my skilful use of trombones. When he inquired, through Liszt, what my rules for their manipulation were, I replied that before I could write anything for trombones I required first to have some ideas in my head.

On the other hand, however, I felt very much tempted to entertain the Weimar proposal. Still weary from my exhausting labour on Oper und Drama, and worried by many things which had a depressing effect on my spirits, I seated myself for the first time for many months at my Hartel grand-piano, which had been rescued from the Dresden catastrophe, to see whether I could settle down to composing the music for my ponderous heroic drama. In rapid outline I sketched the music for the Song of the Norns, or Daughters of the Rhine, which in this first draft was only roughly suggested. But when I attempted to turn Brunhilda's first address to Siegfried into song my courage failed me completely, for I could not help asking myself whether the singer had yet been born who was capable of vitalising this heroic female figure. The idea of my niece Johanna occurred to me, whom, as a matter of fact, I had already destined for this rule when I was still in Dresden on account of her various personal charms. She had now entered upon the career of prima donna at Hamburg, but, judging from all the reports I had received, and especially from the attitude towards me that she openly adopted in her letters to her family, I could only conclude that my modest hopes of enlisting her talents on my behalf were doomed to disappointment. I was, moreover, confused by the fact that a second Dresden prima donna, Mme. Gentiluomo Spatzer, who had once enraptured Marschner with Donizetti's dithyrambics, kept hovering perpetually before my mind as a possible substitute for Johanna. At last, in a rage, I sprang up from the piano, and swore that I would write nothing more for these silly fastidious schoolgirls. Whenever I saw any likelihood of being again brought into closer contact with the theatre I was filled with an indescribable disgust which, for the time being, I was unable to overcome. It was some little consolation to discover that bodily ill-health might possibly be at the bottom of this mental disorder. During the spring of this year I had been suffering from a curious rash, which spread over my whole body. For this my doctor prescribed a course of sulphur-baths, to be taken regularly every morning. Although the remedy excited my nerves so much that later

on I was obliged to adopt radical measures for the restoration of my health, yet in the meantime the regular morning walk to the town and back, surrounded by the fresh green and early spring flowers of May, acted as a cheerful stimulant on my mental condition. I now conceived the idea of the poem of Junger Siegfried, which I proposed to issue as a heroic comedy by way of prelude and complement to the tragedy of Siegfrieds Tod. Carried away by my conception, I tried to persuade myself that this piece would be easier to produce than the other more serious and terrible drama. With this idea in my mind I informed Liszt of my purpose, and offered the Weimar management to compose a score for Junger Siegfried, which as yet was unwritten, in return for which I would definitely accept their proposal to grant me a year's salary of fifteen hundred marks. This they agreed to without delay, and I took up my quarters in the attic-room evacuated the previous year by Karl Ritter, where, with the aid of sulphur and May-blossom, and in the highest spirits, I proposed to complete the poem of Junger Siegfried, as already outlined in my original design.

I must now give some account of the cordial relations which, ever since my departure from Dresden, I had maintained with Theodor Uhlig, the young musician of the Dresden orchestra, which I have already described, and which by this time had developed into a genuinely productive association. His independent and indeed somewhat uncultivated disposition had been moulded into a warm, almost boundless devotion to myself, inspired both by sympathy for my fate and a thorough understanding of my works. He also had been among the number of those who had visited Weimar to hear my Lohengrin, and had sent me a very detailed account of the performance. As Hartel, the music-dealer in Leipzig, had willingly agreed to my request to publish Lohengrin on condition that I should not demand any share in the profits, I entrusted Uhlig with the preparation of the pianoforte arrangement. But it was more the theoretical questions discussed in my works that formed the chief link that bound us together by a serious correspondence. The characteristic which especially touched me about this man, whom from his training I could regard merely as an instrumentalist, was that he had grasped with clear understanding and perfect agreement those very tendencies of mine which many musicians of apparently wider culture than his own regarded with almost despairing horror, as being dangerous to the orthodox practice of their art. He forthwith acquired the literary facility necessary for the expression of his agreement with my views, and gave tangible proof of this in a lengthy treatise on 'Instrumental Music,' which appeared in Kolatschek's German monthly journal. He also sent to me another strictly theoretical work on the 'Structure of Musical Theme and Phrase.' In this he showed the originality of his ideas about Mozart's and Beethoven's methods, to an extent which was only equalled by the thoroughness with which he had mastered the question, especially where he discussed their highly characteristic differences. This clear and exhaustive treatise appeared to me admirably adapted to form the basis for a new theory of the higher art of musical phrasing, whereby Beethoven's most obscure construction might be explained, and elaborated into a comprehensible system that would allow of further application. These treatises attracted the attention of Franz Brendel, the astute publisher of the Neue Zeitschrift fur Musik, to their brilliant young author. He was invited by Brendel to join the staff of his paper, and soon succeeded in changing his chief's previous attitude of indecision. As Brendel's aims were on the whole perfectly honourable and serious, he was quickly and definitely led to adopt those views which from this time began to make a stir in the musical world under the title of the 'New Tendency.' I thereupon felt impelled to contribute an epoch-making article to his paper on these lines. I had noticed for some time that such ill-sounding catch-phrases as 'Jewish ornamental flourishes' (Melismas), 'Synagogue Music,' and the like were being bandied about without any rhyme or reason beyond that of giving expression to meaningless irritation. The question thus raised regarding the significance of the modern Jew in music stimulated me to make a closer examination of Jewish influence and the characteristics peculiar to it. This I did in a lengthy treatise on 'Judaism in Music.' Although I did not wish to hide my identity, as its author, from all inquiries, yet I considered it advisable to adopt a pseudonym, lest my very seriously intended effort should be degraded to a purely personal matter, and its real importance be thereby vitiated. The stir, nay, the

genuine consternation, created by this article defies comparison with any other similar publication. The unparalleled animosity with which, even up to the present day, I have been pursued by the entire press of Europe can only be understood by those who have taken an account of this article and of the dreadful commotion which it caused at the time of its publication. It must also be remembered that almost all the newspapers of Europe are in the hands of Jews. Apart from these facts, it would be impossible to understand the unqualified bitterness of this lasting persecution, which cannot be adequately explained on the mere ground of a theoretical or practical dislike for my opinions or artistic works. The first outcome of the article was a storm which broke over poor Brendel, who was entirely innocent, and, indeed, hardly conscious of his offence. This erelong developed into a savage persecution which aimed at nothing less than his ruin. Another immediate result was that the few friends whom Liszt had induced to declare themselves in my favour forthwith took refuge in a discreet silence. As it soon seemed advisable, in the interests of their own productions, to give direct evidence of their estrangement from me, most of them passed over to the ranks of my enemies. But Uhlig clung to me all the more closely on this account. He strengthened Brendel's weaker will to endurance, and kept helping him with contributions for his paper, some of them profound and others witty and very much to the point. He fixed his eye more particularly on one of my chief antagonists, a man named Bischoff, whom Hiller had discovered in Cologne, and who first invented for me and my friends the title of Zukunftsmusiker ('Musicians of the Future'). With him he entered into a prolonged and somewhat diverting controversy. The foundation had now been laid for the problem of the so-called Zukunftsmusik ('Music of the Future'), which was to become a European scandal, in spite of the fact that Liszt quickly adopted the title himself with good-humoured pride. It is true that I had to some extent suggested this name in the title of my book, Kunstwerk der Zukunft; but it only developed into a battle-cry when 'Judaism in Music' unbarred the sluices of wrath upon me and my friends.

My book, Oper und Drama, was published in the second half of this year, and, so far as it was noticed at all by the leading musicians of the day, naturally only helped to add fuel to the wrath which blazed against me. This fury, however, assumed more the character of slander and malice, for our movement had meantime been reduced by a great connoisseur in such things, Meyerbeer, to a clearly defined system, which he maintained and practised with a sure hand until his lamented death.

Uhlig had come across my book, Oper und Drama, during the early stages of the furious uproar against me. I had presented him with the original manuscript, and as it was nicely bound in red, I hit upon the idea of writing in it, by way of dedication, the words, 'RED, my friend, is MY theory,' in contradistinction to the Gothic saying, 'Grey, my friend, is all theory.' This gift elicited an exhilarating and most delightful correspondence with my lively and keen-sighted young friend, who, after two long years of separation, I felt sincerely desirous of seeing again. It was not an easy matter for the poor fiddler, whose pay was barely that of a chamber musician, to comply with my invitation. But he gladly tried to overcome all difficulties, and said he would come early in July. I decided to go as far as Rorschach, on the Lake of Constance, to meet him, so that we might make an excursion through the Alps as far as Zurich. I went by a pleasant detour through the Toggenburg, travelling on foot as usual. In this way, cheerful and refreshed, I reached St. Gall, where I sought out Karl Ritter, who, since Bulow's departure, had remained there alone in curious seclusion. I could guess the reason of his retirement, although he said that he had enjoyed very agreeable intercourse with a St. Gall musician named Greitel, of whom I never heard anything further. Though very tired after my long walking tour, I could not refrain from submitting the manuscript of my Jungcr Siegfried, which I had just finished, to the quick and critical judgment of this intelligent young man, who was thus the first person to hear it. I was more than gratified by its effect upon him, and, in high spirits, persuaded him to forsake his strange retreat and go with me to meet Uhlig, so that we might all three proceed over the Santis for a long and pleasant stay in Zurich. My first glance at my guest, as he landed at the familiar harbour of Rorschach, filled me at once with anxiety for his health, for it revealed but too plainly his tendency to consumption. In order to spare him, I wished to give up the proposed

mountain climb, but he eagerly protested that exercise of this kind in the fresh air could only do him good after the drudgery of his wretched fiddling. After crossing the little canton of Appenzell, we had to face the by no means easy crossing of the Santis. It was my first experience also of travelling over an extensive snow-field in summer. After reaching our guide's hut, which was perched on a rugged slope, where we regaled ourselves with exceedingly frugal fare, we had to climb the towering and precipitous pinnacle of rock which forms the summit of the mountain, a few hundred feet above us. Here Karl suddenly refused to allow us, and to shake him out of his effeminacy I had to send back the guide for him, who, at our request, succeeded in bringing him along, half by force. But now that we had to clamber from stone to stone along the precipitous cliff, I soon began to realise how foolish I had been in compelling Karl to share our perilous adventure. His dizziness evidently stupefied him, for he stared in front of him as though he could not see, and we had to hold him fast between our alpenstocks, every moment expecting to see him collapse, and tumble into the abyss. When we at last attained the summit, he sank senseless on the ground, and I now fully understood what a terrible responsibility I had undertaken, as the yet more dangerous descent had still to be made. In an agony of fear, which, while it made me forget my own danger altogether, filled me with a vision of my young friend lying shattered on the rocks below, we at last reached the guide's cottage in safety. As Uhlig and myself were still determined to descend the precipitous further side of the mountain, a feat which the guide informed us was not without danger, I resolved to leave young Ritter behind in the hut, as the indescribable anguish I had just endured on his behalf had been a warning to me. Here he was to await the return of our guide, and in his company take the not very dangerous path by which we had come. We accordingly parted, as he was to return in the direction of Gall, while we two roamed through the lovely Toggenburg valley, and the next day by Rappersweil to the Lake of Zurich, and so home. Not until many days later did Karl relieve our anxiety concerning him by arriving at Zurich. He remained with us a short time, and then departed, probably wishing to escape being tempted into more mountain climbing, which we had certainly planned. I heard from him afterwards when he had settled for some time in Stuttgart, where he seemed to be doing well. He soon made great friends with a young actor, and lived on terms of great intimacy with him.

I was sincerely delighted by the close intercourse I now had with the gentle young Dresden chamber musician, whose manly strength of character and extraordinary mental endowments greatly endeared him to me. My wife said that his curly golden hair and bright blue eyes made her think an angel had come to stay with us. For me his features had a peculiar and, considering his fate, pathetic interest, on account of his striking resemblance to King Friedrich August of Saxony, my former patron, who was still alive at that time, and seemed to confirm a rumour which had reached me that Uhlig was his natural son. It was entertaining to hear his news of Dresden, and all about the theatre, and the condition of musical affairs in that city. My operas, which had once been its glory, had now quite vanished from the repertoire. He gave me a choice example of my late colleagues' opinion of me by relating the following incident. When Kunst und Revolution and Kunstwerk der Zukunft appeared, and were being discussed among them, one of them remarked: 'Ha! he may worry a long time before he will be able to write conductor before his name again.' By way of illustrating the advance made in music, he related the manner in which Reissiger, having on one occasion to conduct Beethoven's Symphony in A major, which had been previously executed by me, had helped himself out of a sudden dilemma. Beethoven, as is well known, marks the great finale of the last movement with a prolonged forte, which he merely heightens by a sempre piu forte. At this point Reissiger, who had conducted the Symphony before me, thinking the opportunity a favourable one, had introduced a piano, in order at least to secure an effective crescendo. This I had naturally ignored, and had instructed the orchestra to play with their full strength throughout. Now, therefore, that the conducting of this work had once more fallen into my predecessor's hands, he found it difficult to restore his unlucky piano; but, feeling that he must save his authority, which had been compromised, he made a rule that mezzo forte should be played instead of forte.

But the most painful news he gave me was about the state of utter neglect into which my unhappy operatic publications had fallen in the hands of the court music-dealer Meser, who, seeing that money had to be continually paid out, while nothing came in, regarded himself as a sacrificial lamb whom I had lured to the slaughter. Yet he steadily refused all inspection of his books, maintaining that he thereby protected my property, as all I possessed having been confiscated, it would otherwise be seized at once. A pleasanter topic than this was Lohengrin. My friend had completed the pianoforte arrangement, and was already busy correcting the engraver's proofs.

By his enthusiastic advocacy of the water cure, Uhlig gained an influence over me in another direction, and one which was of long duration. He brought me a book on the subject by a certain Rausse, which pleased me greatly, especially by its radical principles, which had something of Feuerbach about them. Its bold repudiation of the entire science of medicine, with all its quackeries, combined with its advocacy of the simplest natural processes by means of a methodical use of strengthening and refreshing water, quickly won my fervent adherence. He maintained, for instance, that every genuine medicine can only act upon our organism in so far as it is a poison, and is therefore not assimilated by our system; and proved, moreover, that men who had become weak owing to a continuous absorption of medicine, had been cured by the famous Priesnitz, who had effectually driven out the poison contained in their bodies by expelling it through the skin. I naturally thought of the disagreeable sulphur baths I had taken during the spring, and to which I attributed my chronic and severe state of irritability. In so doing I was probably not far wrong. For a long while after this I did my best to expel this and all other poisons which I might have absorbed in the course of time, and by an exclusive water regimen restore my original healthy condition. Uhlig asserted that by persevering conscientiously in a water cure, he was perfectly confident of being able to renew his own bodily health entirely, and my own faith in it also grew daily.

At the end of July we started on an excursion through the centre of Switzerland. From Brunnen, on the Lake of Lucerne, we proceeded via Beckenried to Engelberg, from which place we crossed the wild Surenen-Eck, and on this occasion learned how to glide over the snow fairly easily. But in crossing a swollen mountain torrent Uhlig had the misfortune to fall into the water. By way of quieting my uneasiness about him, he at once exclaimed that this was a very good way of carrying out the water cure. He made no fuss about the drying of his clothes, but simply spread them out in the sun, and in the meanwhile calmly promenaded about in a state of nature in the open air, protesting that this novel form of exercise would do him good. We occupied the interval in discussing the important problem of Beethoven's theme construction, until, by way of a joke, I told him that I could see Councillor Carns of Dresden coming up behind him with a party, which for a moment quite frightened him. Thus with light hearts we reached the Reuss valley near Attinghausen, and in the evening wandered on as far as Amsteg, and the next morning, in spite of our great fatigue, at once visited the Madran valley. There we climbed the Hufi glacier, whence we enjoyed a splendid view over an impressive panorama of mountains, bounded at this point by the Tody range. We returned the same day to Amsteg, and as we were both thoroughly tired out, I dissuaded my companion from attempting the ascent of the Klausen Pass to the Schachen valley, which we had planned for the following day, and induced him to take the easier way home via Fluelen. When, early in August, my young friend, who was always calm and very deliberate in his manner, set out on his return journey to Dresden, I could detect no signs of exhaustion about him. He was hoping on his arrival to lighten the heavy burden of life a little by undertaking the conductorship of the entr'acte music at the theatre, which he proposed to organise artistically, and thus set himself free from the oppressive and demoralising service of the opera. It was with sincere grief that I accompanied him to the mail-coach, and he too seemed to be seized with sudden foreboding. As a matter of fact, this was the last time we ever met.

But for the present we carried on an active correspondence, and as his communications were always pleasant and entertaining, and for a long time constituted almost my sole link with the outside world, I begged him to write me long letters as often as possible. As postage was expensive at that

time, and voluminous letters touched our pockets severely, Uhlig conceived the ingenious idea of using the parcel post for our correspondence. As only packets of a certain weight might be sent in this way, a German translation of Beaumarchais' Figaro, of which Uhlig possessed an ancient copy, enjoyed the singular destiny of acting as ballast for our letters to and fro. Every time, therefore, that our epistles had swelled, to the requisite length, we announced them with the words: 'Figaro brings tidings to-day.'

Uhlig meanwhile found much pleasure in the Mittheilung an meine Freunde ('A Communication to my Friends'), which, immediately after our separation, I wrote as a preface to an edition of my three operas, the Fliegender Hollander, Tannhauser, and Lohengrin. He was also amused to hear that Hartel, who had accepted the book for publication on payment of ten louis d'or, protested so vigorously against certain passages in this preface, which wounded his orthodoxy and political feelings, that I thought seriously of giving the book to another firm. However, he finally persuaded me to give way, and I pacified his tender conscience by a few trifling alterations.

With this comprehensive preface, which had occupied me during the whole of the month of August, I hoped that my excursion into the realms of literature would be ended once and for all. However, as soon as I began to think seriously about taking up the composition of Junger Siegfried, which I had promised for Weimar, I was seized with depressing doubts which almost amounted to a positive reluctance to attempt this work. As I could not clearly discern the reason of this dejection, I concluded that its source lay in the state of my health, so I determined one day to carry out my theories about the advantages of a water cure, which I had always propounded with great enthusiasm. I made due inquiries about a neighbouring hydropathic establishment, and informed my wife that I was going off to Albisbrunnen, which was situated about three miles from our abode. It was then about the middle of September, and I had made up my mind not to come back until I was completely restored to health.

Minna was quite frightened when I announced my intention, and looked upon it as another attempt on my part to abandon my home. I begged of her, however, to devote herself during my absence to the task of furnishing and arranging our new flat as comfortably as possible. This, although small, was conveniently situated on the ground floor of the Vordern Escher Hauser im Zeltweg. We had determined to move back to the town, on account of the great inconvenience of the situation of our present quarters, especially during winter time. Everybody, of course, was astonished at the idea of my undertaking a water cure so late in the season. Nevertheless, I soon succeeded in securing a fellow-patient. I was not fortunate enough to get Herwegh, but Fate was kind in sending me Hermann Muller, an ex-lieutenant in the Saxon Guards, and a former lover of Schroder-Devrient, who proved a most cheerful and pleasant companion. It had become impossible for him to maintain his position in the Saxon army, and although he was not exactly a political refugee, every career was closed to him in Germany, and yet he met with all the consideration of an exiled patriot when he came to Switzerland to try and make a fresh start in life. We had seen a good deal of each other in my early Dresden days, and he soon felt at home in my house, where my wife always gave him a warm welcome. I easily persuaded him to follow me shortly to Albisbrunnen to undergo a thorough treatment for an infirmity from which he was suffering. I established myself there as comfortably as I could, and I looked forward to excellent results. The cure itself was superintended in the usual superficial way by a Dr. Brunner, whom my wife, on one of her visits to this place, promptly christened the 'Water Jew,' and whom she heartily detested. Early at five o'clock in the morning I was wrapped up and kept in a state of perspiration for several hours; after that I was plunged into an icy cold bath at a temperature of only four degrees; then I was made to take a brisk walk to restore my circulation in the chilly air of late autumn. In addition I was kept on a water diet; no wine, coffee, or tea was allowed; and this regime, in the dismal company of nothing but incurables, with dull evenings only enlivened by desperate attempts at games of whist, and the prohibition of all intellectual occupation, resulted in irritability and overwrought nerves. I led this life for nine weeks, but I was determined not to give in

until I felt that every kind of drug or poison I had ever absorbed into my system had been brought to the surface. As I considered that wine was most dangerous, I presumed that my system still contained many unassimilated substances which I had absorbed at various dinner-parties at Sulzer's, and which must evaporate in profuse perspiration. This life, so full of privations, which I led in rooms miserably furnished with common deal and the usual rustic appointments of a Swiss pension, awoke in me by way of contrast an insuperable longing for a cosy and comfortable home; indeed, as the year went on, this longing became a passionate desire. My imagination was for ever picturing to itself the manner and style in which a house or a dwelling ought to be appointed and arranged, in order to keep my mind pleasantly free for artistic creation.

At this time symptoms of a possible improvement in my position appeared. Karl Ritter, unfortunately for himself, wrote to me from Stuttgart while I was at the hydro, describing his own private attempts to secure the benefits of a water cure—not by means of baths, but by drinking quantities of water. I had found out that it was most dangerous to drink large quantities of water without undergoing the rest of the treatment, so I implored Karl to submit to the regular course, and not to have an effeminate fear of privations, and to come at once to Albisbrunnen. He took me at my word, and to my great delight arrived in a few days' time at Albisbrunnen. Theoretically he was filled with enthusiasm for hydropathy, but he soon objected to it in practice; and he denounced the use of cold milk as indigestible and against the dictates of Nature, as mother's milk was always warm. He found the cold packs and the cold baths too exciting, and preferred treating himself in a comfortable and pleasant way behind the doctor's back. He soon discovered a wretched confectioner's shop in the neighbouring village, and when he was caught buying cheap pastry on the sly, he was very angry. He soon grew perfectly miserable, and would fain have escaped, had not a certain feeling of honour prevented him from doing so. The news reached him here of the sudden death of a rich uncle, who had left a considerable fortune to every member of Karl's family. His mother, in telling him and me of the improvement in her position, declared that she was now able to assure me the income which the two families of Laussot and Ritter had offered me some time ago. Thus I stepped into an annual income of two thousand four hundred marks for as long as I required it, and into partnership with the Ritter family.

This happy and encouraging turn of events made me decide to complete my original sketch of the Nibelungen, and to bring it out in our theatres without paying any regard to the practicability of its various parts. In order to do this I felt that I must free myself from all obligations to the management of the Weimar theatre. I had already drawn six hundred marks salary from this source, but Karl was enchanted to place this sum at my disposal in order that I might return it. I sent the money back to Weimar with a letter expressing my most grateful acknowledgments to the management for their conduct towards me, and at the same time I wrote to Liszt, giving him the fullest particulars of my great plan, and explaining how I felt absolutely compelled to carry it out.

Liszt, in his reply, told me how delighted he was to know that I was now in a position to undertake such a remarkable work, which he considered in every respect worthy of me if only on account of its surprising originality. I began to breathe freely at last, because I had always felt that it was merely self-deception on my part to maintain that it would be possible to produce Junger Siegfried with the limited means at the disposal of even the best German theatre.

My water cure and the hydropathic establishment became more and more distasteful to me; I longed for my work, and the desire to get back to it made me quite ill. I tried obstinately to conceal from myself that the object of my cure had entirely failed; indeed, it had really done me more harm than good, for although the evil secretions had not returned, my whole body seemed terribly emaciated. I considered that I had had quite enough of the cure, and comforted myself with the hope that I should derive benefit from it in the future. I accordingly left the hydropathic establishment at the end of November. Muller was to follow me in a few days, but Karl, wishing to be consistent, was determined to remain until he perceived a similar result in himself to the one I had experienced or

pretended I had experienced. I was much pleased with the way in which Minna had arranged our new little flat in Zurich. She had bought a large and luxurious divan, several carpets for the floor and various dainty little luxuries, and in the back room my writing-table of common deal was covered with a green tablecloth and draped with soft green silk curtains, all of which my friends admired immensely. This table, at which I worked continually, travelled with me to Paris, and when I left that city I presented it to Blandine Ollivier, Liszt's elder daughter, who had it conveyed to the little country house at St. Tropez, belonging to her husband, where, I believe, it stands to this day. I was very glad to receive my Zurich friends in my new home, which was so much more conveniently situated than my former one; only I quite spoilt all my hospitality for a long time by my fanatical agitation for a water diet and my polemics against the evils of wine and other intoxicating drinks. I adopted what seemed almost a new kind of religion: when I was driven into a corner by Sulzer and Herwegh, the latter of whom prided himself on his knowledge of chemistry and physiology, about the absurdity of Rausse's theory of the poisonous qualities contained in wine, I found refuge in the moral and aesthetic motive which made me regard the enjoyment of wine as an evil and barbarous substitute for the ecstatic state of mind which love alone should produce. I maintained that wine, even if not taken in excess, contained qualities producing a state of intoxication which a man sought in order to raise his spirits, but that only he who experienced the intoxication of love could raise his spirits in the noblest sense of the word. This led to a discussion on the modern relations of the sexes, whereupon I commented on the almost brutal manner in which men kept aloof from women in Switzerland. Sulzer said he would not at all object to the intoxication resulting from intercourse with women, but in his opinion the difficulty lay in procuring this by fair means. Herwegh was inclined to agree with my paradox, but remarked that wine had nothing whatever to do with it, that it was simply an excellent and strengthening food, which, according to Anacreon, agreed very well with the ecstasy of love. As my friends studied me and my condition more closely, they felt they had reason to be very anxious about my foolish and obstinate extravagances. I looked terribly pale and thin; I hardly slept at all, and in everything I did I betrayed a strange excitement. Although eventually sleep almost entirely forsook me, I still pretended that I had never been so well or so cheerful in my life, and I continued on the coldest winter mornings to take my cold baths, and plagued my wife to death by making her show me my way out with a lantern for the prescribed early morning walk.

I was in this state when the printed copies of Oper und Drama reached me, and I devoured rather than read them with an eccentric joy. I think that the delightful consciousness of now being able to say to myself, and prove to the satisfaction of everybody, and even of Minna, that I had at last completely freed myself from my hateful career as conductor and opera composer, brought about this immoderate excitement. Nobody had a right to make the demands upon me which two years ago had made me so miserable. The income which the Ritters had assured me for life, and the object of which was to give me an absolutely free hand, also contributed to my present state of mind, and made me feel confidence in everything I undertook. Although my plans for the present seemed to exclude all possibility of being realised, thanks to the indifference of an inartistic public, still I could not help inwardly cherishing the idea that I should not be for ever addressing only the paper on which I wrote. I anticipated that before long a great reaction would set in with regard to the public and everything connected with our social life, and I believed that in my boldly planned work there lay just the right material to supply the changed conditions and real needs of the new public whose relation to art would be completely altered with what was required. As these bold expectations had arisen in my mind in consequence of my observations of the state of society in general, I naturally could not say much about them to my friends. I had not mistaken the significance of the general collapse of the political movements, but felt that their real weakness lay in the inadequate though sincere expression of their cause, and that the social movement, so far from losing ground by its political defeat, had, on the contrary, gained in energy and expansion. I based my opinion upon the experience I had had during my last visit to Paris, when I had attended, among other things, a political meeting of the so-called

social democratic party. Their general behaviour made a great impression upon me; the meeting took place in a temporary hall called Salle de la Fraternite in the Faubourg St. Denis; six thousand men were present, and their conduct, far from being noisy and tumultuous, filled me with a sense of the concentrated energy and hope of this new party. The speeches of the principal orators of the extreme left of the Assemblee Nationale astonished me by their oratorical flights as well as by their evident confidence in the future. As this extreme party was gradually strengthening itself against everything that was being done by the reactionary party then in power, and all the old liberals had joined these social democrats publicly and had adopted their electioneering programme, it was easy to see that in Paris, at all events, they would have a decided majority at the impending elections for the year 1852, and especially in the nomination of the President of the Republic. My own opinions about this were shared by the whole of France, and it seemed that the year 1852 was destined to witness a very important reaction which was naturally dreaded by the other party, who looked forward with great apprehension to the approaching catastrophe. The condition of the other European states, who suppressed every laudable impulse with brutal stupidity, convinced me that elsewhere too this state of affairs would not continue long, and every one seemed to look forward with great expectations to the decision of the following year.

I had discussed the general situation with my friend Uhlig, as well as the efficacy of the water-cure system; he had just come home fresh from orchestral rehearsals at the Dresden theatre, and found it very difficult to agree to a drastic change in human affairs or to have any faith in it. He assured me that I could not conceive how miserable and mean people were in general, but I managed to delude him into the belief that the year 1852 would be pregnant with great and important events. Our opinions on this subject were expressed in the correspondence which was once more diligently forwarded by Figaro.

Whenever we had to complain of any meanness or untoward circumstance, I always reminded him of this year, so great with fate and hope, and at the same time I hinted that we had better look forward quite calmly to the time when the great 'upheaval' should take place, as only then, when no one else knew what to do, could we step in and make a start.

I can hardly express how deeply and firmly this hope had taken possession of me, and I can only attribute all my confident opinions and declarations to the increased excitement of my nerves. The news of the coup d'etat of the 2nd of December in Paris seemed to me absolutely incredible, and I thought the world was surely coming to an end. When the news was confirmed, and events which no one believed could ever happen had apparently occurred and seemed likely to be permanent, I gave the whole thing up like a riddle which it was beneath me to unravel, and turned away in disgust from the contemplation of this puzzling world. As a playful reminiscence of our hopes of the year 1852, I suggested to Uhlig that in our correspondence during that year we should ignore its existence and should date our letters December '51, in consequence of which this said month of December seemed of eternal duration.

Soon afterwards I was overpowered by an extraordinary depression in which, somehow, the disappointment about the turn of political events and the reaction created by my exaggerated water cure, almost ruined my health. I perceived the triumphant return of all the disappointing signs of reaction which excluded every high ideal from intellectual life, and from which I had hoped the shocks and fermentations of the past few years had freed us for ever. I prophesied that the time was approaching when intellectually we should be such paupers that the appearance of a new book from the pen of Heinrich Heine would create quite a sensation. When, a short time afterwards, the Romancero appeared from the pen of this poet who had fallen into almost complete neglect, and was very well reviewed by the newspaper critics, I laughed aloud; as a matter of fact, I suppose I am among the very few Germans who have never even looked at this book, which, by the way, is said to possess great merit.

I was now compelled to pay a great deal of attention to my physical condition, as it gave me much cause for anxiety and necessitated a complete change in my methods. I introduced this change very gradually and with the co-operation of my friends. My circle of acquaintances had widened considerably this winter, although Karl Ritter, who had escaped from Albisbrunnen a week after my own departure and had tried to settle in our neighbourhood, ran off to Dresden, as he found Zurich much too slow for his youthful spirits. A certain family of the name of Wesendonck, who had settled in Zurich a short time before, sought my acquaintance, and took up their abode in the same quarters in the Hintern Escherhauser where I had lived when I first came to Zurich. They had taken the flat there on the recommendation of the famous Marschall von Bieberstein, who moved in after me in consequence of the revolution in Dresden. I remember, on the evening of a party there, that I displayed uncontrolled excitement in a discussion with Professor Osenbruck. I tormented him with my persistent paradoxes all through supper to such an extent that he positively loathed me, and ever afterwards carefully avoided coming into contact with me.

The acquaintance with the Wesendoncks was the means of giving me the entree to a delightful home, which in point of comfort was a great contrast to the usual run of houses in Zurich. Herr Otto Wesendonck, who was a few years younger than I was, had amassed a considerable fortune through a partnership in a silk business in New York, and seemed to make all his plans subservient to the wishes of the young wife whom he had married a few years before. They both came from the Lower Rhine country, and, like all the inhabitants of those parts, were fair haired. As he was obliged to take up his abode in some part of Europe which was convenient for the furtherance of his business in New York, he chose Zurich, presumably because of its German character, in preference to Lyons. During the previous winter they had both attended the performance of a symphony of Beethoven under my conductorship, and knowing what a sensation this performance had aroused in Zurich, they thought it would be desirable to include me in their circle of friends.

About this time I was persuaded to undertake the directorship of the augmented orchestra in view of the performance of some musical masterpieces at three concerts to be given early in the new year under the auspices of the Societe Musicale on conditions arranged in advance.

It gave me infinite pleasure on one of these occasions to conduct an excellent performance of Beethoven's music to Egmont. As Herwegh was so anxious to hear some of my own music I gave the Tannhauser Overture, as I told him, entirely to please him, and I prepared a descriptive programme as a guide. I also succeeded in giving an excellent rendering of the Coriolanus Overture, to which I had also written an explanatory programme. All this was taken up with so much sympathy and enthusiasm by my friends that I was induced to accede to the request of Lowe, who was at that time manager of the theatre, and implored me to give a performance of the Fliegender Hollander. For the sake of my friends I agreed to enter into negotiations with the opera company, an undertaking which, though it only lasted a very short time, was exceedingly objectionable. It is true that humane considerations animated me as well, as the performance was for the benefit of Schoneck, a young conductor, whose real talent for his art had completely won me over to him.

The efforts which this unaccustomed excursion into the regions of opera rehearsals, etc., cost me, greatly contributed to the overwrought state of my nerves, and I was obliged, in spite of all my rooted prejudices against doctors, to break faith with myself and, in accordance with the Wesendonck's special recommendation, to place myself in the hands of Dr. Rahn-Escher, who, by his gentle manner and soothing ways, succeeded after a time in bringing me into a healthier condition.

I longed to get well enough to be able to take in hand the completion of my combined Nibelungen poem. Before I could summon up the courage to begin, I thought I would wait for the spring, and in the meanwhile I occupied myself with a few trifles, amongst other things a letter to Liszt on the founding of a Goethe Institution (Goethe Stiftung), stating my ideas on the necessity of founding a German National Theatre, as also a second letter to Franz Brendel about the line of thought which in my opinion should be taken up in founding a new musical journal.

I recollect a visit from Henri Vieuxtemps at this time, who came to Zurich with Belloni to give an evening concert, and he again delighted me and my friends with his violin playing.

With the approach of spring I was agreeably surprised by a visit from Hermann Franck, with whom I had an interesting conversation about the general course of events since I had lost sight of him.

In his quiet way he expressed his astonishment at the enthusiastic manner in which I had got mixed up in the Dresden revolution. As I quite misunderstood his remark, he explained that he thought me capable of enthusiasm in everything, but he could hardly credit me with having taken a serious part in anything so foolish as trivial matters of that kind. I now learned for the first time what the prevalent opinion was about these much-maligned occurrences in Germany, and I was in a position to defend my poor friend Rockel, who had been branded as a coward, and to put not only his conduct but also my own in a different light to that in which it had been regarded hitherto even by Hermann Franck, who afterwards expressed his sincere regret that he had so misunderstood us.

With Rockel himself, whose sentence had by royal mercy been commuted to lifelong imprisonment, I carried on at this time a correspondence, the character of which soon showed that his life was more cheerful and happy in his enforced captivity than mine with its hopelessness, in spite of the freedom I enjoyed.

At last the month of May arrived, and I felt I needed change of air in the country in order to strengthen my weakened nerves and carry out my plans in regard to poetry. We found a fairly comfortable pied-a-terre on the Rinderknecht estate. This was situated halfway up the Zurich Berg, and we were able to enjoy an alfresco meal on the 22nd of May—my thirty-ninth birthday—with a lovely view of the lake and the distant Alps. Unfortunately a period of incessant rain set in which scarcely stopped throughout the whole summer, so that I had the greatest struggle to resist its depressing influence. However, I soon got to work, and as I had begun to carry out my great plan by beginning at the end and going backwards, I continued on the same lines with the beginning as my goal. Consequently, after I had completed the Siegfrieds Tod and Junger Siegfried, I next attacked one of the principal subjects, the Walkure, which was to follow the introductory prelude of the Rheingold. In this way I completed the poem of the Walkure by the end of June. At the same time I wrote the dedication of the score of my Lohengrin to Liszt, as well as a rhymed snub to an unprovoked attack on my Fliegender Hollander in a Swiss newspaper. A very disagreeable incident in connection with Herwegh pursued me to my retreat in the country. One day a certain Herr Haug, who described himself as an ex-Roman general of Mazzini's time, introduced himself to me with a view of forming a sort of conspiracy against him, on behalf, as he said, of the deeply offended family of the 'unfortunate lyric poet'; however, he did not succeed in getting any assistance from me. A much pleasanter incident was a long visit from Julia, the eldest daughter of my revered friend Frau Ritter, who had married Kummer, the young Dresden chamber musician, whose health seemed so entirely undermined that they were going to consult a celebrated hydropathic doctor who practised only a few miles from Zurich. I now had a good opportunity of abusing this water cure about which my young friends were so eager, and had always believed that I was perfectly mad on it also. But we left the chamber musician to his fate, and rejoiced at the long and pleasant visit of our amiable and charming young friend.

As I was quite satisfied with the success of my work, and the weather was exceptionally cold and rainy, we made up our minds to return to our cosy winter residence in Zurich at the end of June. I was resolved to stay there until the appearance of some real summer weather, when I intended to take a walking tour over the Alps, which I felt would be of great advantage to my health. Herwegh had promised to accompany me, but as he was apparently prevented from doing so, I started alone in the middle of July, after arranging with my travelling companion to meet me in Valais. I began my walking tour at Alpnach, on the Lake of Lucerne, and my plan was to wander by unfrequented paths to the principal points of the Bernese Oberland. I worked pretty hard, paying a visit, for instance, to the Faulhorn, which at that time was considered a very difficult mountain to climb. When I reached

the hospice on the Grimsel by the Hasli Thal, I asked the host, a fine, stately-looking man, about the ascent of the Siedelhorn. He recommended me one of his servants as a guide, a rough, sinister-looking man, who, instead of taking the usual zig-zag paths up the mountain, led me up in a bee line, and I rather suspected he intended to tire me out. At the top of the Siedelhorn I was delighted to catch a glimpse, on one side, of the centre of the Alps, whose giant backs alone were turned to us; and on the other side, a sudden panorama of the Italian Alps, with Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa. I had been careful to take a small bottle of champagne with me, following the example of Prince Puckler when he made the ascent of Snowdon; unfortunately, I could not think of anybody whose health I could drink. We now descended vast snow-fields, over which my guide slid with mad haste on his alpenstock; I contented myself with leaning carefully on the iron point of mine, and coming down at a moderate pace.

I arrived at Obergestelen dead tired, and stayed there two days, to rest and await the arrival of Herwegh. Instead of coming himself, however, a letter arrived from him which dragged me down from my lofty communings with the Alps to the humdrum consideration of the unpleasant situation in which my unhappy friend found himself as a result of the incident I have already described. He feared that I had allowed myself to be taken in by his adversary, and had consequently formed an unfavourable opinion of him. I told him to make his mind easy on that score, and to meet me again, if possible, in Italian Switzerland. So I set out for the ascent of the Gries glacier, and the climb across the pass to the southern side of the Alps, in the company of my sinister guide alone. During the ascent an extremely sad sight kept meeting my eyes; an epidemic of foot-rot had broken out among cows in the Upper Alps, and several herds passed me in single file on their way to the valley, where they were going to be doctored. The cows had become so lean that they looked like skeletons, and dragged themselves pitiably down the slopes, and the smiling country with the fat meadow-land seemed to take a savage delight in gazing on this sad pilgrimage. At the foot of the glacier, which stood out sheer and steep before me, I felt so depressed, and my nerves were so overwrought, that I said I wished to turn back. I was thereupon met by the coarse sarcasm of my guide, who seemed to scoff at my weakness. My consequent anger braced up my nerves, and I prepared myself at once to climb the steep walls of ice as quickly as possible, so that this time it was he who found difficulty in keeping up with me. We accomplished the walk over the back of the glacier, which lasted nearly two hours, under difficulties which caused even this native of Grimsel anxiety, at least on his own account. Fresh snow had fallen, which partially concealed the crevasses, and prevented one from recognising the dangerous spots. The guide, of course, had to precede me here, to examine the path. We arrived at last at the opening of the upper valley which gives on to the Formazza valley, to which a steep cutting, covered with snow and ice, led. Here my guide again began his dangerous game of conducting me straight over the steepest slopes instead of going in a safe zig-zag; in this way we reached a precipitous moraine, where I saw such unavoidable danger ahead, that I insisted upon my guide going back with me some distance, until we struck a path that I had noticed which was not so steep. He was obliged to give in, much against the grain. I was deeply impressed by the first signs of cultivation that we saw in our descent from the desolate wilds. The first scanty meadow-land accessible to cattle was called the Bettel-Matt, and the first person we met was a marmot hunter. The wild scenery was soon enlivened by the marvellous swirl and headlong rush of a mountain river called the Tosa, which at one spot breaks into a superb waterfall with three distinct branches. After the moss and reeds had, in the course of our continuous descent, given place to grass and meadows, and the shrubs had been replaced by pine trees, we at last arrived at the goal of our day's journey, the village of Pommath, called Formazza by the Italian population, which is situated in a charming valley. Here, for the first time in my life, I had to eat roast marmot. After having paid my guide, and sent him on his homeward journey, I started alone on the following morning on my further descent of the valley, although I had only partially recovered from my fatigue, owing to lack of sleep. It was not until the November of this year, when the whole of Switzerland was thrown into a state of consternation by the news

that the Grimsel inn had been set fire to by the host himself, who hoped by this means to obtain the renewal of the lease from the authorities, that I learned my life had been in danger under the guidance of this man. As soon as his crime was discovered, the host drowned himself in the little lake, on the borders of which the inn is situated. The serving-man, however, whom he had bribed to arrange the fire, was caught and punished. I knew by the name that he was the same man that the worthy innkeeper had given me as companion on my solitary journey across the glacier pass, and I heard at the same time that two travellers from Frankfort had perished on the same pass a short time before my own journey. I consequently realised that I had in a really remarkable manner escaped a fatal danger which had threatened me.

I shall never forget my impressions of my journey through the continually descending valley. I was particularly astonished at the southern vegetation which suddenly spreads out before one on climbing down from a steep and narrow rocky pass by which the Tosa is confined. I arrived at Domodossola in the afternoon in a blaze of sunshine, and I was reminded here of a charming comedy by an author whose name I have forgotten, which I had once seen performed with a refinement worthy of Platen, and to which my attention had been drawn by Eduard Devrient in Dresden. The scene of the play was laid in Domodossola, and described exactly the impressions I myself received on coming down from the Northern Alps into Italy, which suddenly burst upon one's gaze. I shall also never forget my first simple, but extremely well-served, Italian dinner. Although I was too tired to walk any further that day, I was very impatient to get to the borders of Lake Maggiore, and I accordingly arranged to drive in a one-horse chaise, which was to take me on the same evening as far as Baveno. I felt so contented while bowling along in my little vehicle that I reproached myself for want of consideration in having rudely declined the offer of company which an officer passing through the Vetturino made me by means of the driver. I admired the daintiness of the house decorations and the pleasant faces of the people in the pretty villages I passed through. A young mother, strolling along and singing as she spun the flax, with her baby in her arms, also made a never-to-be-forgotten impression on me. Soon after sunset I caught sight of the Borromean Islands rising gracefully out of Lake Maggiore, and again I could not sleep for excitement at the thought of what I might see on the following day. The next morning the visit to the islands themselves delighted me so much that I could not understand how I had managed to come upon anything so charming, and wondered what would result from it. After stopping only one day, I left the place with the feeling that I had now to flee from something to which I did not belong, and went round Lake Maggiore, up past Socarno, to Bellinzona, where I was once again on Swiss soil; from there I proceeded to Lugano, intending, if I followed out my original plan of travel, to stay there some time. But I soon suffered from the intense heat; even bathing in the sun-scorched lake was not refreshing. Apart from the dirty furniture, which included the Denksopha ('thinking sofa') from the Clouds by Aristophanes, I was sumptuously lodged in a palatial building, which in the winter served as the government house of the canton of Tessin, but in the summer was used as a hotel. However, I soon fell again into the condition that had troubled me so long, and prevented me from taking any rest, owing to my extreme nervous strain and excitement, whenever I felt disposed to idle pleasantly. I had taken a good many books with me, and proposed to entertain myself with Byron. Unfortunately it required a great effort on my part to take any pleasure in his works, and the difficulty of doing so increased when I began to read his Don Juan. After a few days' time I began to wonder why I had come, and what I wanted to do here, when suddenly Herwegh wrote saying that he and several friends intended to join me at this place. A mysterious instinct made me telegraph to my wife to come also. She obeyed my call with surprising alacrity, and arrived unexpectedly in the middle of the night, after travelling by post-chaise across the St. Gotthard Pass. She was so fatigued that she at once fell into a sound sleep on the Denksopha, from which the fiercest storm that I ever remember failed to awaken her. On the following day my Zurich friends arrived.

Herwegh's chief companion was Dr. Francois Wille. I had learned to know him some time before at Herwegh's house: his chief characteristics were a face much scarred in students' duels, and a great tendency to witty and outspoken remarks. He had recently been staying near Meilen on the Lake of Zurich, and he often asked me to visit him there with Herwegh. Here we saw something of the habits and customs of a Hamburg household, which was kept up in a fairly prosperous style by his wife, the daughter of Herr Sloman, a wealthy shipowner. Although in reality he remained a student all his life, he had made himself a position and formed a large circle of acquaintances by editing a Hamburg political newspaper. He was a brilliant conversationalist, and was considered good company. He seemed to have taken up with Herwegh with the object of overcoming the latter's antipathy to Alpine climbing, and his consequent reluctance to undertake it. He himself had made preparations to walk over the Gotthard Pass with a Professor Eichelberger, and this had made Herwegh furious, as he declared that walking tours were only permissible where it was impossible to drive, and not on these broad highways. After making an excursion into the neighbourhood of Lugano, during which I got heartily sick of the childish sound of the church bells, so common in Italy, I persuaded my friends to go with me to the Borromean Islands, which I was longing to see again. During the steamer trip on Lake Maggiore, we met a delicate-looking man with a long cavalry moustache, whom in private was humourously dubbed General Haynau, and the distrust with which we affected to treat him was a source of some amusement to us.

We soon found that he was an extremely good-natured Hanoverian nobleman, who had been travelling about Italy for some time for pleasure, and who was able to give us very useful information concerning intercourse with the Italians. His advice was of great service when we were visiting the Borromean Islands, where my acquaintances parted from my wife and myself to travel back by the nearest route, whereas we intended proceeding further across the Simplon and through Le Valais to Chamounix.

From the fatigue my tour had so far occasioned me, I felt that it would be some time before I started on a similar one again. I was therefore eager to see what was best worth seeing in Switzerland as thoroughly as possible now that I had the chance. Moreover, I was just then, and indeed had been for some time, in that impressionable humour from which I might anticipate important results to myself from novel scenery, and I did not like to miss Mont Blanc. A view of it was attended with great difficulties, amongst which may be mentioned our arrival by night at Martigny, where, owing to the crowded state of the hotels, we were everywhere refused accommodation, and it was only on account of a little intrigue between a postillion and a maidservant that we found clandestine shelter for the night in a private house from which the owners were absent.

We dutifully visited the so-called Mer de Glace in the Val de Chamounix and the Flegere, from which I obtained a most impressive view of Mont Blanc. However, my imagination was less busied with the ascent of that peak than with the spectacle I beheld when crossing the Col des Geants, as the great elevation that we attained did not appeal to me so much as the unbroken and sublime wildness of the latter. For some time I cherished the intention of undertaking just one more venture of the kind. While descending the Flegere, Minna had a fall and sprained her ankle; the consequence of this was so painful as to deter us from any further adventures. We therefore saw ourselves forced to hasten on our journey home via Geneva. But even from this more important and grander expedition, and almost the only one I had ever undertaken purely for recreation, I returned with a strangely unsatisfied feeling, and I could not resist the longing for something decisive in the distance, that would give a fresh direction to my life.

On reaching home I found announcements of a new and quite different turn in my destiny. These consisted of inquiries and commissions from various German theatres anxious to produce Tannhauser. The first to apply was the Schwerin Court Theatre. Rockel's youngest sister, who afterwards married the actor Moritz (whom I had known from my earliest youth), had now come to Germany as a youthful singer from England, where she had been educated. She had given such an

enthusiastic account of the impression produced upon her by Tannhauser at Weimar, to an official at the theatre there named Stocks, who held the position of treasurer, that he had studied the opera most assiduously, and had now induced the management to undertake to produce it. The theatres at Breslau, Prague, and Wiesbaden soon followed; at the last of these my old friend Louis Schindelmeisser was acting as conductor. In a short time other theatres followed suit; but I was most astonished when the Berlin Court Theatre made inquiries through its new manager, Herr von Hulsen. From this last incident I felt justified in assuming that the Crown Princess of Prussia, who had always had a friendly feeling towards me, fostered by my faithful friend Alwine Frommann, had again been intensely interested by the performance of Tannhauser at Weimar, and had given the impetus to these unexpected developments.

Whilst I was rejoicing over commissions from the smaller theatres, those of the largest German stage were a source of anxiety. I knew that at the former there were zealous conductors, devoted to me, who had certainly been roused by the desire of having the opera performed; in Berlin, on the other hand, matters were quite different. The only other conductor besides Taubert, whom I had known previously as a man devoid of talent, and at the same time very conceited, was Heinrich Dorn, of whom I retained most unpleasant recollections from my earliest years and from our joint stay in Riga. I felt little drawn towards either of these, nor did I perceive any possibility of undertaking the direction of my own work; and from my knowledge of their capabilities as well as of their ill-will, I had every reason to question any successful rendering of my opera under their conductorship. Being an exile, I was unable to go to Berlin in person in order to supervise my work, so I immediately begged Listz's permission to nominate him as my representative and alter ego, to which he willingly agreed. When I afterwards made Liszt's appointment one of my conditions, objection was raised on the part of the general manager at Berlin on the score that the nomination of a Weimar conductor would be regarded as a gross insult to the Prussian court conductors, and I must consequently desist from demanding it. Thereupon prolonged negotiations ensued with a view to compromising the matter, which resulted in the production of Tannhauser at Berlin being considerably delayed.

However, while Tannhauser was now rapidly spreading to the middle-class German theatres, I became a prey to great uneasiness as to the quality of these performances, and could never get a very clear idea of them. As my presence was prohibited everywhere, I had recourse to a very detailed pamphlet which was to serve as a guide to the production of my work, and convey a correct idea of my purpose. I had this somewhat voluminous work printed at my own expense and tastefully bound, and to every theatre that had given an order for the operatic score I sent a number of copies of it, with the understanding that they were to be given to the conductor, stage manager, and principal performers for perusal and guidance. But from that time I have never heard of a single person who had either read this pamphlet or taken any notice of it. In the year 1864, when all my own copies had been exhausted, owing to my painstaking distribution of them, I found to my great delight, among the theatrical archives, several copies that had been sent to the Munich Court Theatre, quite intact and uncut. I was therefore in the agreeable position of being able to procure copies of the missing pamphlet for the King of Bavaria, who wished to see it, as well as for myself and some friends.

It was a singular coincidence that the news of the diffusion of my opera through the German theatres should synchronise with my resolve to compose a work in the conception of which I had been so decidedly influenced by the necessity of being absolutely indifferent to our own theatres; yet this unexpected turn of events in no wise affected my treatment of my design. On the contrary, by keeping to my plan, I gained confidence and let things take their own course, without attempting in any way to promote the performances of my operas. I just let people do as they liked, and looked on surprised, while continual accounts reached my ears of remarkable successes; none of them, however, induced me to alter my verdict on our theatres in general or on the opera in particular. I remained unshaken in my resolve to produce my Nibelungen dramas just as though the present operatic stage did not exist, since the ideal theatre of my dreams must of necessity come sooner or later. I therefore composed the

libretto of the Rheingold in the October and November of that year, and with that I brought the whole cycle of the Nibelungen myth as I had evolved it to a conclusion. At the same time I was rewriting Junger Siegfried and Siegfrieds Tod, especially the latter, in such a way as to bring them into proper relation with the whole; and by so doing, important amplifications were made in Siegfrieds Tod which were in harmony with the now recognised and obvious purpose of the whole work. I was accordingly obliged to find for this last piece a new title suited to the part it plays in the complete cycle. I entitled it Gotterdammerung, and I changed the name Junger Siegfried to Siegfried, as it no longer dealt with an isolated episode in the life of the hero, but had assumed its proper place among the other prominent figures in the framework of the whole. The prospect of having to leave this lengthy poem for some time entirely unknown to those whom I might expect to be interested in it was a source of great grief to me. As the theatres now and then surprised me by sending me the usual royalties on Tannhauser, I devoted a part of my profits to having a number of copies of my poem neatly printed for my own use. I arranged that only fifty copies of this edition de luxe should be struck off. But a great sorrow overtook me before I had completed this agreeable task. It is true, I met on all sides with indications of sympathetic interest in the completion of my great lyric work, although most of my acquaintances regarded the whole thing as a chimera, or possibly a bold caprice. The only one who entered into it with any heartiness or real enthusiasm was Herwegh, with whom I frequently discussed it, and to whom I generally read aloud such portions as were completed. Sulzer was much annoyed at the remodelling of Siegfrieds Tod, as he regarded it as a fine and original work, and thought it would be deprived of that quality if I decided to alter it to any extent. He therefore begged me to let him have the manuscript of the earlier version to keep as a remembrance; otherwise it would have been entirely lost. In order to get an idea of the effect of the whole poem when rendered in complete sequence, I decided, only a few days after the work was completed in the middle of December, to pay a short visit to the Wille family at their country seat, so as to read it aloud to the little company there. Besides Herwegh, who accompanied me, the party there consisted of Frau Wille and her sister, Frau von Bissing. I had often entertained these ladies with music in my own peculiar fashion during my pleasant visits to Mariafeld, about two hours' walk from Zurich. In them I had secured a devoted and enthusiastic audience, somewhat to Herr Wille's annoyance, as he often admitted that he had a horror of music; nevertheless, he ended in his jovial way by taking the matter good humouredly.

I arrived towards evening, and we attacked Rheingold at once, and as it did not seem very late, and I was supposed to be capable of any amount of exertion, I went on with the Walkure until midnight. The next morning after breakfast it was Siegfried's turn, and in the evening I finished off with Gotterdammerung. I thought I had every reason to be satisfied with the result, and the ladies in particular were so much moved that they ventured no comment. Unfortunately the effort left me in a state of almost painful excitement; I could not sleep, and the next morning I was so disinclined for conversation that I left my hurried departure unexplained. Herwegh, who accompanied me back alone, appeared to divine my state of mind, and shared it by maintaining a similar silence.

However, I now wished to have the pleasure of confiding the whole completed work to my friend Uhlig at Dresden. I carried on a regular correspondence with him, and he had followed the development of my plan, and was thoroughly acquainted with every phase of it. I did not want to send him the Walkure before the Rheingold was ready, as the latter should come first, and even then I did not want him to see the whole thing until I could send him a handsomely printed copy. But at the beginning of the autumn I discerned in Uhlig's letters grounds for feeling a growing anxiety as to the state of his health. He complained of the increase in his serious paroxysms of coughing, and eventually of complete hoarseness. He thought all this was merely weakness, which he hoped to overcome by invigorating his system with the cold-water treatment and long walks. He found the violin work at the theatre very exhausting, but if he took a sharp seven hours' walk into the country he invariably felt much better. However, he could not rid himself of his chest attacks or of his hoarseness, and had a difficulty in making himself heard even when speaking to a person quite near him. Up to

that time I had been unwilling to alarm the poor fellow, and always hoped that his condition would necessitate his consulting a doctor, who would naturally prescribe rational treatment. Now, however, as I was continually hearing nothing from him but assurances of his confidence in the principles of the water cure, I could contain myself no longer, and I entreated him to give up this madness and place himself in the hands of a sensible doctor, for in his condition what he most needed was, not strength, but very careful attention. The poor man was extremely alarmed at this, as he gathered from my remarks that I feared he was already in an advanced stage of consumption. 'What is to become of my poor wife and children,' he wrote, 'if that is really the case?' Unhappily, it was too late; with the last strength that was left him he tried to write to me again, and finally my old friend Fischer, the chorus-master, carried out Uhlig's instructions, and when these were no longer audible he had to bend down close to his lips. The news of his death followed with frightful rapidity. It took place on the 3rd of January, 1853. Thus, in addition to Lehrs, another of my really devoted friends was carried off by consumption. The handsome copy of the Ring des Nibelungen I had intended for him lay uncut before me, and I sent it to his youngest boy, whom he had christened Siegfried. I asked his widow to let me have any pamphlets of a theoretical nature he might have left behind, and I came into possession of several important ones, among them the longer essay on 'Theme-Structure.' Although the publication of these works would involve a great deal of trouble, owing to the necessity of revising them, I asked Hartel of Leipzig if he would pay the widow a fair sum for a volume of Uhlig's writings. The publisher declared he could not undertake to bring it out without payment, as works of that nature were quite unremunerative. It was obvious to me, even at that time, how thoroughly every musician who had taken a keen interest in me had made himself disliked in certain circles.

Uhlig's melancholy death gave my home-circle the whip-hand over me with regard to my theories on the subject of water cures. Herwegh impressed upon my wife that she must insist upon my taking a glass of good wine after all the exertion I underwent at the rehearsals and concerts which I was attending throughout that winter. By degrees, also, I again accustomed myself to enjoy such mild stimulants as tea and coffee, my friends meanwhile perceiving to their joy that I was once more becoming a man amongst men. Dr. Rahn-Escher now became a welcome and comforting friend and visitor, who for many years thoroughly understood the management of my health, and especially the misgivings arising from the over-wrought state of my nerves. He soon verified the wisdom of his treatment, when in the middle of February I had undertaken to read my tetralogy aloud on four consecutive evenings before a larger audience. I had caught a severe cold after the first evening, and on the morning of the day for the second reading I awoke suffering from severe hoarseness. I at once informed the doctor that my failure to give the reading would be a serious matter to me, and asked him what he advised me to do to get rid of the hoarseness as speedily as possible. He recommended me to keep quiet all day, and in the evening to be taken well wrapped up to the place where the readings were to be held. When I got there I was to take two or three cups of weak tea, and I should be all right; whereas if I worried over the failure to keep my engagement I might become seriously worse. And, indeed, the reading of this stirring work went off capitally, and I was, moreover, able to continue the readings on the third and fourth evenings, and felt perfectly well. I had secured a large and handsome room for these meetings in the Hotel Baur au lac, and had the gratifying experience of seeing it fuller and fuller each evening, in spite of having invited only a small number of acquaintances, giving them the option of bringing any friends who they thought would take a genuine interest in the subject and not come out of mere curiosity. Here, too, the verdict seemed altogether favourable, and it was from the most serious university men and government officials that I received assurances of the greatest appreciation as well as kindly remarks, showing that my poem and the artistic ideas connected with it had been fully understood. From the peculiar earnestness with which they gave vent to their opinions, which in this case were so confidently unanimous, the idea occurred to me to try how far this favourable impression might be utilized to serve the higher aims of art. In accordance with the superficial views generally prevailing on the subject, every one seemed to think I might be

induced to make terms with the theatre. I tried to think out how it would be possible to convert the ill-equipped Zurich theatre into a highly developed one by adopting sound principles, and I laid my views before the public in a pamphlet entitled 'A Theatre in Zurich.' The edition, consisting of about a hundred copies, was sold, yet I never noticed the least indication of any result from the publication; the only outcome was, that at a banquet of the Musical Society my excellent friend, Herr Ott-Imhoff, expressed his entire disagreement with the statements uttered by various people, that these ideas of mine were all very grand, but unfortunately quite impracticable. Nevertheless, my propositions lacked the one thing that would have made them valuable in his eyes, namely my consent to take over the management of the theatre in person, as he would not entrust the carrying out of my ideas to anyone but myself. However, as I was obliged to declare then and there that I would not have anything to do with such a scheme, the matter dropped, and in my inmost heart I could not help thinking that the good people were quite right.

Meanwhile, the sympathetic interest in my works was increasing. As I now had to refuse firmly to yield to my friends' wishes for a performance of my principal works at the theatre, I begged to be allowed to arrange a selection of characteristic pieces, which could easily be produced at concerts, so soon as I could obtain the requisite support. A subscription list was accordingly circulated, and it had the satisfactory result of inducing several well-known art patrons to put their names down to guarantee expenses. I had to undertake to engage an orchestra to suit my requirements. Skilled musicians from far and near were summoned, and after interminable efforts I began to feel that something really satisfactory would be achieved.

I had made arrangements that the performers should stay at Zurich a whole week from Sunday to Sunday. Half of this time was allotted exclusively to rehearsals. The performance was to take place on Wednesday evening, and on Friday and Sunday evenings there were to be repetitions of it. The dates were the 18th, 20th, and 22nd of May, my fortieth birthday falling on the last-named date. I had the joy of seeing all my directions accurately carried out. From Mayence, Wiesbaden, Frankfort, and Stuttgart, and on the other side, from Geneva, Lausanne, Bale, Berne, and the chief towns in Switzerland, picked musicians arrived punctually on Sunday afternoon. They were at once directed to the theatre, where they had to arrange their exact places in the orchestral stand I had previously designed at Dresden—and which proved excellent here too—so as to begin rehearsing the first thing next morning without delay or interruption. As these people were at my disposal in the early morning and in the evening, I made them learn a selection of pieces from the Fliegender Hollander, Tannhauser, and Lohengrin. I had greater trouble in trying to train them for a chorus, but this too turned out very satisfactorily. There was nothing in the way of solo-singing, except the Ballad of Senta from the Hollander, which was sung by the wife of the conductor Heim in a good though untrained voice, and with an amount of spirit that left nothing to be desired. As a matter of fact, the performances could hardly be called public concerts, but were rather of the nature of family entertainments. I felt I was fulfilling a sincere desire on the part of a larger circle of acquaintances by introducing them to the true nature of my music, rendered as intelligibly as circumstances permitted. As, at the same time, it was desirable that they should have some knowledge of the poetical basis of it, I invited those who intended to be present at my concerts to come for three evenings to the Musical Society's concert-hall to hear me read aloud the libretto of the three operas, portions of which they were about to hear. This invitation met with an enthusiastic response, and I was now able to hope that my audience would come better prepared to listen to the selections from my operas than had ever been the case before. The fact that pleased me most in the performances on these three evenings was that I was able for the first time to produce something from Lohengrin myself, and could thus get an idea of the effect of my combination of the instrumental parts in the overture to that work.

Between the performances there was a banquet which, with the exception of a subsequent one at Pesth, was the only function of the sort ever held in my honour. I was sincerely and deeply affected by the speech of the aged President of the Musical Society, Herr Ott-Usteri. He drew the attention of

all those musicians who had come together from so many places to the significance of their meeting, and its objects and results, and recommended as a trustworthy guide to them on their homeward journey the conviction they had all doubtless arrived at, that they had come into close and genuine touch with, a wonderful new creation in the realm of art.

The sensation produced by these evening concerts spread through the whole of Switzerland in ever-widening circles. Invitations and requests for further repetitions of them poured in from distant towns. I was assured that I might well repeat the three performances in the following week without any fear of seeing a diminution in the audience. When this project was discussed, and I pleaded my own fatigue, and also expressed the desire to retain for these concerts their unique character by not allowing them to become commonplace, I was very glad to have the powerful and intelligent support of my friend Hagenbuch, who on this occasion was indefatigable. The festival was concluded, and the guests were dismissed at the appointed time.

I had hoped to be able to welcome Liszt among the visitors, as he had celebrated a 'Wagner week' at Weimar in the previous March by performing three operas of which I had only given portions here. Unfortunately he was unable to leave just then, but by way of amends he promised me a visit at the beginning of July. Of my German friends, only the faithful Mme. Julie Kummer and Mme. Emilie Ritter arrived in time. As these two ladies had gone on to Interlaken at the beginning of June, and I also began to feel in great need of a change, I started with my wife, towards the end of the month, for a short holiday. The visit was spoilt in the most dismal fashion by continuous rain; and on the 1st of July, as we were starting in desperation on our homeward journey to Zurich with our lady friends, magnificent summer weather set in, which lasted a considerable time. With affectionate enthusiasm we at once attributed this change to Liszt, as he arrived in Switzerland in the best of spirits immediately after we had returned to Zurich. Thereupon followed one of those delightful weeks, during which every hour of the day becomes a treasured memory. I had already taken more roomy apartments on the second floor in the so-called Vorderen Escher Hausern, in which I had before occupied a flat that was much too small on the ground floor. Frau Stockar-Escher, who was part owner of the house, was enthusiastically devoted to me. She was full of artistic talent herself, being an excellent amateur painter in water-colours, and had taken great pains to rearrange the new dwelling as luxuriously as possible. The unexpected improvement in my circumstances brought about by the continued demands for my operas, allowed me to indulge my desire for comfortable domestic arrangements, which had been reawakened since my stay at the hydropathic establishment, and which, after being repressed, had become quite a passionate longing.

I had the flat so charmingly furnished with carpets and decorative furniture that Liszt himself was surprised into admiration as he entered my 'petite elegance', as he called it. Now for the first time I enjoyed the delight of getting to know my friend better as a fellow-composer. In addition to many of his celebrated pianoforte pieces, which he had only recently written, we went through several new symphonies with great ardour, and especially his Faust Symphony. Later on, I had the opportunity of describing in detail the impressions I received at this time in a letter which I wrote to Marie von Wittgenstein, which was afterwards published. My delight over everything I heard by Liszt was as deep as it was sincere, and, above all, extraordinarily stimulating. I even thought of beginning to compose again after the long interval that had elapsed. What could be more full of promise and more momentous to me than this long-desired meeting with the friend who had been engaged all his life in his masterly practice of music, and had also devoted himself so absolutely to my own works, and to diffusing the proper comprehension of them. Those almost bewilderingly delightful days, with the inevitable rush of friends and acquaintances, were interrupted by an excursion to the Lake of Lucerne, accompanied only by Herwegh, to whom Liszt had the charming idea of offering a 'draught of fellowship' with himself and me from the three springs of the Grutli.

After this my friend took leave of us, after having arranged for another meeting with me in the autumn.

Although I felt quite disconsolate after Liszt's departure, the officials of Zurich took good care that I should soon have some diversion, of a kind to which I had hitherto been a stranger. It took the form of the presentation of a masterpiece of calligraphy in the shape of a 'Diploma of Honour,' awarded me by the Zurich Choral Society, which was ready at last. This was to be awarded to me with the accompaniment of an imposing torchlight procession, in which the various elements of the Zurich population, who, either as individuals or members of societies, were favourably disposed to me, were to take part. So it came to pass that one fine summer evening a large company of torchbearers approached the Zeltweg, to the accompaniment of loud music. They presented a spectacle such as I had never seen before, and made a unique impression on my mind. After the singing, the voice of the President of the Choral Society could be heard rising from the street. I was so much affected by the incident that my unconquerable optimism quickly overpowered every other sensation. In my speech of acknowledgment I indicated plainly that I saw no reason why Zurich itself should not be the chosen place to give an impetus to the fulfilment of the aspirations I cherished for my artistic ideals, and that it might do so on proper civic lines. I believe this was taken to refer to a special development of the men's choral societies, and they were quite gratified at my bold forecasts. Apart from this confusion, for which I was responsible, that evening's ceremony and its effects on me were very cheerful and beneficial.

But I still felt the peculiar disinclination and fear of taking up composing again that I had previously experienced after protracted pauses in musical production. I also felt very much exhausted by all I had done and gone through, and the ever-recurring longing to break completely with everything in the past, that had unfortunately haunted me since my departure from Dresden, as well as the desire and yearning for new and untried surroundings, fostered by that anxiety, now acquired fresh and tormenting vigour. I felt that before entering on such a gigantic task as the music to my drama of the Nibelungen, I must positively make one final effort to see whether I could not, in some new environment, attain an existence more in harmony with my feelings than I could possibly aspire to after so many compromises. I planned a journey to Italy, or such parts of it as were open to me as a political refugee. The means for carrying out my wish were readily placed at my disposal through the kindness of my friend Wesendonck, who has ever since that time been devoted to me. However, I knew it was inadvisable to take that journey before the autumn, and as my doctor had recommended some special treatment for strengthening my nerves—even if only to enjoy Italy—I decided first of all to go to St. Moritz Bad in the Engadine. I started in the latter half of July, accompanied by Herwegh. Strangely enough, I have often found that what other people could note in their diaries merely as an ordinary visit or a trivial expedition, assumed for me the character of an adventure. This occurred on our journey to the Bad, when, owing to the coaches being crowded, we were detained at Chur in an incessant downpour of rain. We were obliged to pass the time in reading at a most uncomfortable inn. I got hold of Goethe's West-ostlichen Divan, for the reading of which I had been prepared by Daumer's adaptation of Hafiz. To this day I never think of Goethe's words in elucidating these poems without recalling that wretched delay in our journey to the Engadine. We did not get on much better at St. Moritz; the present convenient Kurhaus was not then in existence, and we had to put up with the roughest accommodation; this was particularly annoying to me on Herwegh's account, as he had not gone there for health, but simply for enjoyment. However, we were soon cheered by the lovely views of the grand valleys, which were quite bare but for the Alpine pastures, that met our eyes on our way down the steep slopes into the Italian valleys. After we had secured the schoolmaster at Samaden as a guide to the Rosetch glacier, we embarked on more serious expeditions. We had confidently looked forward to exceptional enjoyment in thus penetrating beyond the precipices of the great Mont Bernina, to which we gave the palm for beauty above Mont Blanc itself. Unfortunately the effect was lost on my friend, owing to the tremendous exertions by which the ascent and crossing of the glacier were attended. Once again, but this time to an even greater degree, I felt the sublime impression of the sacredness of that desolate spot, and the almost benumbing calm which the disappearance of all

vegetation produces on the pulsating life of the human organism. After we had been wandering for two hours, deep in the glacier path, we partook of a meal we had brought with us, and champagne, iced in the fissures, to strengthen us for our wearisome return. I had to cover the distance nearly twice over, as, to my astonishment, Herwegh was in such a nervous condition that I had repeatedly to go backwards and forwards, showing him the way up and down before he would decide to follow. I then realised the peculiarly exhausting nature of the air in those regions, as on our way back we stopped at the first herdsman's cottage, and were refreshed with some delicious milk. I swallowed such quantities of it that we were both perfectly amazed, but I experienced no discomfort whatever in consequence.

The waters, whether for internal or external use, are known to be powerfully impregnated with iron, and in taking them I had the same experience as on previous occasions. With my extremely excitable nervous system, they were a source of more trouble than relief to me. The leisure hours were filled up by reading Goethe's Wahlverwandtschaften, which I had not read since I was quite young. This time I absolutely devoured the book from beginning to end, and it also became a source of heated discussions between Herwegh and myself. As Herwegh possessed an extensive knowledge of the characteristics of our great poetic literature, he felt it incumbent on him to defend the character of Charlotte against my attacks. My vehemence on the subject showed what a strange creature I still was at over forty, and in my heart of hearts I had to admit that Herwegh judged Gothe's poem objectively more correctly than I did, as I always felt depressed by a kind of moral bondage, to which Herwegh, if he had ever experienced it at all, submitted placidly, owing to his peculiar relations with his strong-minded wife. When the time came to an end, and I realised that I had not much to hope for from the treatment, we returned to Zurich. This was about the middle of August, and I now began to look forward impatiently to my tour in Italy. At last, in the month of September, which I had been told was quite suitable for visiting Italy, I set off on the journey via Geneva, full of indescribable ideas of what was before me, and of what I might see as the outcome of my search. Once again amid all sorts of strange adventures, I reached Turin by special mail-coach over Mont Cenis. Finding nothing to detain me there more than a couple of days, I hurried on to Genoa. There, at any rate, the longed-for marvels seemed to be within reach. The grand impression produced on me by that, city overcomes, even to this day, any longing to visit the rest of Italy. For a few days I was in a dream of delight; but my extreme loneliness amidst these impressions soon made me feel that I was a stranger in that world, and that I should never be at home in it. Absolutely inexperienced as I was in searching out the treasures of art on a systematic plan, I gave myself up in this new world to a peculiar state of mind that might be described as a musical one, and my main idea was to find some turning-point that might induce me to remain there in quiet enjoyment. My only object still was to find a refuge where I might enjoy the congenial peace suited to some new artistic creation. In consequence, however, of thoughtlessly indulging in ices, I soon got an attack of dysentery, which produced the most depressing lassitude after my previous exaltation. I wanted to flee from the tremendous noise of the harbour, near which I was staying, and seek for the most absolute calm; and thinking a trip to Spezia would benefit me, I went there by steamer a week later. Even this excursion, which lasted only one night, was turned into a trying adventure, thanks to a violent head-wind. The dysentery became worse, owing to sea-sickness, and in the most utterly exhausted condition, scarcely able to drag myself another step, I made for the best hotel in Spezia, which, to my horror, was situated in a noisy, narrow street.

After a night spent in fever and sleeplessness, I forced myself to take a long tramp the next day through the hilly country, which was covered with pine woods. It all looked dreary and desolate, and I could not think what I should do there. Returning in the afternoon, I stretched myself, dead tired, on a hard couch, awaiting the long-desired hour of sleep. It did not come; but I fell into a kind of somnolent state, in which I suddenly felt as though I were sinking in swiftly flowing water. The rushing sound formed itself in my brain into a musical sound, the chord of E flat major, which continually re-echoed in broken forms; these broken chords seemed to be melodic passages of increasing motion, yet the pure triad of E flat major never changed, but seemed by its continuance to impart infinite

significance to the element in which I was sinking. I awoke in sudden terror from my doze, feeling as though the waves were rushing high above my head. I at once recognised that the orchestral overture to the Rheingold, which must long have lain latent within me, though it had been unable to find definite form, had at last been revealed to me. I then quickly realised my own nature; the stream of life was not to flow to me from without, but from within. I decided to return to Zurich immediately, and begin the composition of my great poem. I telegraphed to my wife to let her know my decision, and to have my study in readiness.

The same evening I took my place on the coach going to Genoa along the Riviera di Levante. I again had the opportunity of getting exquisite impressions of the country during this journey, which lasted over the whole of the following day. It was, above all, the colouring of the wonders that presented themselves to my eyes which gave me such delight—the redness of the rocks, the blue of the sky and the sea, the pale green of the pines; even the dazzling white of a herd of cattle worked upon me so powerfully that I murmured to myself with a sigh, 'How sad it is that I cannot remain to enjoy all this, and thus gratify my sensuous nature.'

At Genoa I again felt so agreeably stimulated that I suddenly thought I had only yielded to some foolish weakness, and resolved to carry out my original plan. I was already making arrangements for travelling to Nice along the celebrated Riviera di Ponente, of which I had heard so much, but I had scarcely decided on my former plans, when I realised that the fact which refreshed and invigorated me was not the renewal of my delight over Italy, but the resolve to take up my work again. And indeed, as soon as I made up my mind to alter this plan, the old condition set in once more, with all the symptoms of dysentery. I thereupon understood myself, and giving up the journey to Nice, I returned direct by the nearest route via Alessandria and Novara.

This time I passed the Borromean Islands with supreme indifference, and got back to Zurich over the St. Gotthard.

When I had once returned, the only thing that could have made me happy would have been to start at once on my great work. For the present, however, I saw that it would be seriously interrupted by my appointment with Liszt, who was to be in Bale at the beginning of October. I was restless and annoyed at being so unsettled, and spent the time in visiting my wife, who, thinking that I would be away longer, was taking the waters at Baden am Stein. As I was easily prevailed upon to try any experiment of this kind if only the person who recommended it were sufficiently sanguine, I allowed myself to be persuaded into taking a course of hot baths, and the process heightened my excitment considerably.

At last the time for the meeting in Bale arrived. At the invitation of the Grand Duke of Baden, Liszt had arranged and conducted a musical festival in Karlsruhe, the aim of which was to give the public an adequate interpretation of our respective works. As I was not yet allowed to enter the territory of the German confederation, Liszt had chosen Bale as the place nearest to the Baden frontier, and had brought with him some young men who had been his devoted admirers in Karlsruhe, to give me a hearty welcome.

I was the first to arrive, and in the evening, while sitting alone in the dining-room of the hotel, 'Zu den drei Konigen,' the air of the trumpet fanfare (from Lohengrin) announcing the King's arrival, sung by a strong though not numerous chorus of men's voices, reached me from the adjacent vestibule. The door opened and Liszt entered at the head of his joyful little band, whom he introduced to me. I also saw Bulow again, for the first time since his adventurous winter visit to Zurich and St. Gall, and with him Joachim, Peter Cornelius, Richard Pohl, and Dionys Pruckner.

Liszt told me that he was expecting a visit from his friend Caroline von Wittgenstein and her young daughter Marie the next day. The bright and merry spirit which prevailed at that gathering (which, like everything that Liszt promoted, in spite of its intimate nature, was characterised by magnificent unconventionality) grew to a pitch of almost eccentric hilarity as the night wore on. In the midst of our wild mood I suddenly missed Pohl. I knew him to be a champion of our cause

through having read his articles under the pseudonym of 'Hoplit.' I stole away and found him in bed suffering from a splitting headache. My sympathy had such an effect upon him that he declared himself suddenly cured. Jumping out of bed, he allowed me to help him dress hurriedly, and again joining our friends we sat up till the night was far advanced and enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. On the following day our happiness was complete when the ladies arrived, who for the next few days formed the centre of our little party. In those days it was impossible for any one coming into contact with Princess Caroline not to be fascinated by her bright manner and the charming way in which she entered into all our little plans.

She was as much interested in the more important questions that affected us as in the accidental details of our life in relation to society, and she had the magnetic power of extracting the very best out of those with whom she associated. Her daughter gave one quite a different impression. She was barely fifteen and had a rather dreamy look on her young face, and was at the stage 'in which womanhood and childhood meet,' thus allowing me to pay her the compliment of calling her 'the child.' During our lively discussions and outbursts of merriment, her dark pensive eyes would gaze at us so calmly that we unconsciously felt that in her innocence she unwittingly understood the cause of our gaiety. In those days I suffered from the vanity of wishing to recite my poems aloud (a proceeding which, by the bye, annoyed Herwegh very much), and consequently it was no difficult task to induce me to read out my Nibelungen drama. As the time of our parting was drawing near, I decided I would read Siegfried only.

When Liszt was obliged to leave for Paris on a visit to his children, we all accompanied him as far as Strasburg. I had decided to follow him to Paris, but the Princess intended going on from Strasburg to Weimar with her daughter.

During the few spare hours of our short stay in Strasburg I was asked to read some of my work to the ladies, but could not find a suitable opportunity. However, on the morning of our intended parting, Liszt came to my room to tell me that the ladies had, after all, decided to accompany us to Paris, and added, laughing, that Marie had induced her mother to change her plans, as she wished to hear the rest of the Nibelungen poems. The prolonging of our journey, with all its delightful incidents, was quite in accordance with my taste.

We were very sorry to part from our younger friends. Bulow told me that Joachim, who had been holding himself rather aloof, could not forget my tremendous article on 'Judaism,' and that he consequently felt shy and awkward in my presence. He also said that when Joachim had asked him (Bulow) to read one of his compositions, he had inquired with a certain gentle diffidence, whether I should be able to trace 'anything Jewish' in it.

This touching trait in Joachim's character induced me to say a few particularly friendly words to him at parting and to embrace him warmly. I never saw him again, [Footnote: This was written in 1869.] and heard to my astonishment that he had taken up a hostile attitude to both Liszt and myself, almost immediately after we had left. The other young men were the victims, on their return to Germany, of a very funny although unpleasant experience, that of coming into contact with the police at Baden. They had entered the town singing the same bright tune of the fanfare from Lohengrin, and they had a good deal of difficulty in giving a satisfactory account of themselves to the inhabitants.

Our journey to Paris and our stay there were full of important incidents, and left indelible traces of our exceptionally devoted friendship. After great difficulty we found rooms for the ladies in the Hotel des Princes, and Liszt then suggested that we should go for a stroll on the boulevards, which at that hour were deserted. I presume that our feelings on this occasion must have differed as much as our reminiscences. When I entered the sitting-room the next morning, Liszt remarked, with his characteristic little smile, that the Princess Marie was already in a great state of excitement at the thought of further readings. Paris did not offer much attraction to me, and as Princess Caroline desired to arouse as little attention as possible, and Liszt was frequently called away on private business, we took up our reading, where we had left it off in Bale, on the very first morning of our stay in Paris, even

before we had been outside the hotel. I was not allowed to stop reading on the following days until the Ring des Nibelungen was quite finished. Finally Paris claimed our attention, but while the ladies were visiting the museums I was unfortunately obliged to stay in my room, tortured by continually recurring nervous headaches. Liszt, however, induced me occasionally to join them in their excursions. At the beginning of our stay he had engaged a box for a performance of Robert le Diable, because he wanted the ladies to see the great opera house under the most favourable conditions. I believe that my friends shared the terrible depression from which I was suffering on this occasion. Liszt, however, must have had other motives for going. He had asked me to wear evening dress, and seemed very pleased I had done so when at the interval he invited me to go for a stroll with him through the foyer. I could see he was under the influence of certain reminiscences of delightful evenings spent in this selfsame foyer, and that the dismal performance of this night must have cast a gloom over him. We stole quietly back to our friends, hardly knowing why we had started on this monotonous expedition. One of the artistic pleasures I enjoyed most was a concert given by the Morin-Chevillard Quartette Society, at which they played Beethoven's Quartettes in E flat major and C sharp minor; the excellent rendering of this work impressed me in very much the same way as the performance of the Ninth Symphony by the Conservatoire orchestra had once done. I had again the opportunity of admiring the great artistic zeal with which the French master these treasures of music, which even to this day are so coarsely handled by the Germans.

This was the first time that I really became intimately acquainted with the C sharp minor quartette, because I had never before grasped its melody. If, therefore, I had nothing else to remind me of my stay in Paris, this would have been an unfading memory. I also carried away with me other equally significant impressions. One day Liszt invited me to spend an evening with him and his children, who were living very quietly in the care of a governess in Paris.

It was quite a novelty to me to see Liszt with these young girls, and to watch him in his intercourse with his son, then a growing lad. Liszt himself seemed to feel strange in his fatherly position, which for several years had only brought him cares, without any of the attendant pleasures.

On this occasion we again resumed our reading of the last act of Gotterdammerung, which brought us to the longed-for end of the tetralogy. Berlioz, who looked us up during that time, endured these readings with quite admirable patience. We had lunch with him one morning before his departure, and he had already packed his music for his concert tour through Germany. Liszt played different selections from his Benvenuto Cellini, while Berlioz sang to them in his peculiarly monotonous style. I also met the journalist, Jules Janin, who was quite a celebrity in Paris, although it took me a long time to realise this; the only thing that impressed me about him was his colloquial Parisian French, which was quite unintelligible to me.

A dinner, followed by a musical evening at the house of the celebrated pianoforte manufacturer, Erard, also remains in my memory. At this house, as well as at a dinner-party given by Liszt at the Palais Royal, I again met his children. Daniel, the youngest of them, particularly attracted me by his brightness and his striking resemblance to his father, but the girls were very shy. I must not forget to mention an evening spent at the house of Mme. Kalergis, a woman of exceptional individuality, whom I met here for the first time since the early performance of Tannhauser in Dresden. When at dinner she asked me a question about Louis Napoleon, I forgot myself so far in my excitement and resentment as to put an end to all further conversation by saying that I could not understand how anybody could possibly expect great things from a man whom no woman could really love. After dinner, when Liszt sat down at the piano, young Marie Wittgenstein noticed that I had withdrawn silently and rather sadly from the rest of the company; this was due partly to my headache, and partly to the feeling of isolation that came over me in these surroundings. I was touched by her sympathy and evident wish to divert me.

After a very fatiguing week my friends left Paris. As I had again been prevented from starting on my work, I now decided not to leave Paris until I had restored my nerves to that state of calm

which was indispensable to the fulfilment of my great project. I had invited my wife to meet me on our way back to Zurich, to give her the opportunity of seeing Paris again, where we had both suffered so much. After her arrival, Kietz and Anders turned up regularly for dinner, and a young Pole, the son of my old and beloved friend, Count Vincenz Tyszkiewicz, also came to see us very often.

This young man (who had been born since the early days of my friendship with his father) had devoted himself passionately to music, as so many do nowadays. He had made quite a stir in Paris after a performance of Freischutz at the Grand Opera, by declaring that the many cuts and alterations which had been made were a fraud on the initiated public, and he had sued the management of the theatre for the return of the entrance money, which he regretted ever having paid. He also had an idea of publishing a paper with the view of drawing attention to the slovenly conduct of musical affairs in Paris, which in his opinion was an insult to public taste.

Prince Eugen von Wittgenstein-Sayn, a young amateur painter who had belonged to Liszt's circle of intimate friends, painted a miniature of me, for which I had to give him several sittings; it was done under Kietz's guidance, and turned out pretty well.

I had an important consultation with a young doctor named Lindemann, a friend of Kietz's; he strongly advised me to give up the water cure, and tried to convert me to the toxic theory. He had attracted the attention of Parisian society by inoculating himself with various poisons in the hospital before witnesses, in order to show their effects upon the system, an experiment which he carried out in an accurate and thoroughly effective manner. With regard to my own case, he stated that it could be easily remedied if we ascertained by careful experiments what metallic substance would specifically influence my nervous system. He unhesitatingly recommended me, in case of very violent attacks, to take laudanum, and in default of that poison he seemed to consider valerian an excellent remedy.

Tired out, restless and exceedingly unstrung, I left Paris with Minna towards the end of October, without in the least understanding why I had spent so much money there. Hoping to counterbalance this by pushing my operas in Germany, I calmly retired to the seclusion of my Zurich lodgings, fully decided not to leave them again until some parts, at least, of my Nibelungen dramas were set to music.

In the beginning of November I started on this long-postponed work. For five and a half years (since the end of March, 1848) I had held aloof from all musical composition, and as I very soon found myself in the right mood for composing, this return to my work can best be compared to a reincarnation of my soul after it had been wandering in other spheres. As far as the technique was concerned, I soon found myself in a difficulty when I started to write down the orchestral overture, conceived in Spezia in a kind of half-dream, in my usual way of sketching it out on two lines. I was compelled to resort to the complete score-formula; this tempted me to try a new way of sketching, which was a very hasty and superficial one, from which I immediately wrote out the complete score.

This process often led to difficulties, as the slightest interruption in my work made me lose the thread of my rough draft, and I had to start from the beginning before I could recall it to my memory.

I did not let this occur in regard to Rheingold. The whole of this composition had been finished in outline on the 16th of January, 1854, and consequently the plan for the musical structure of this work in four parts had been drawn in all its thematic proportions, as it was in this great prelude that these thematic foundations of the whole had to be laid.

I remember how much my health improved during the writing of this work; and my surroundings during that time consequently left very little impression on my mind.

During the first months of the new year I also conducted a few orchestral concerts. To please my friend Sulzer, I produced, amongst other works, the overture to Gluck's Iphigenia in Aulis, after having written a new finale to it. The necessity for altering the finale by Mozart induced me to write an article for the Brendel musical journal on this artistic problem. These occupations did not, however, prevent me from working at the Rheingold score, which I quickly dotted down in pencil on a few single sheets. On the 28th May I finished the instrumentation of the Rheingold. There had been very little change in my life at home; things had remained the same during the last few years, and everything

went smoothly. Only my financial position was rather precarious, owing to the past year's expenses for furniture, etc., and also to the more luxurious mode of living I had adopted, on the strength of my belief that my operas, which were now better known, would bring me in a larger income.

The most important theatres, however, still held back, and to my mortification all my efforts at negotiation with Berlin and Vienna proved fruitless. In consequence of these disappointments I suffered great worries and cares during the greater part of that year. I tried to counteract these by new work, and instead of writing out the score of Rheingold I began the composition of the Walkure. Towards the end of July I had finished the first scene, but had to interrupt my work on account of a journey to the south of Switzerland.

I had received an invitation from the 'Eidgenossische Musikgesellschaft' to conduct their musical festival at Sion that year. I had refused, but at the same time promised that if possible I would conduct Beethoven's Symphony in A major at one of the gala concerts. I intended on the way to call on Karl Ritter, who had gone to live with his young wife at Montreux on the Lake of Geneva. The week I spent with this young couple gave me ample opportunities for doubting whether their happiness would be of long duration.

Karl and I left shortly afterwards for the musical festival in Valais. On our way we were joined at Martigny by an extraordinary young man, Robert von Hornstein, who had been introduced to me on the occasion of my great musical festival the year before as an enthusiast and a musician. This quaint mortal was regarded as a very welcome addition to our party, particularly by young Ritter, and both young people looked forward with great enthusiasm to the treat in store for them; Hornstein had come all the way from Swabia to hear me conduct the festival in the canton of Valais. We arrived in the midst of the musical festivities, and I was terribly disappointed to find how very badly and inartistically the preliminary arrangements had been made. I was so taken aback, after having received the worst possible impression of the sound of the very scanty orchestra in a small church, which served as church and concert-hall combined, and was so furious at the thought of having been dragged into such an affair, that I merely wrote a few lines to Methfessel, the organising director of the festival, who had come from Berne, and took my leave, without further ceremony. I escaped by the next post-chaise that was just on the point of leaving, and I did this so expeditiously that even my young friends were unaware of my departure. I purposely kept the fact of my sudden flight from them; I had my own reasons for doing so, and as they were rather interesting from a psychological point of view, I have never forgotten them.

On coming back to dinner that day feeling miserable and depressed after the disappointing impression I had just received, my annoyance was treated with foolish and almost insulting roars of laughter by my young friends. I presumed that their merriment was the result of remarks made at my expense before I came in, as neither my admonitions nor even my anger could induce them to behave differently. I quitted the dining-room in disgust, paid my bill and left, without giving them any opportunity of noticing my departure. I spent a few days in Geneva and Lausanne, and decided to call on Frau Ritter on my way back; and there I again met the two young people. Evidently they also had given up the wretched festival, and been completely taken aback at my sudden departure, had almost immediately left for Montreux, in the hope of hearing news of me.

I made no mention of their rude conduct, and as Karl cordially invited me to stay with them a few days longer I accepted, principally because I was very much interested in a poetical work he had only just finished. This poem was a comedy called Alkibiades, which he had really treated with exceptional refinement and freedom of form. He had already told me at Albisbrunnen about the sketch of this work, and had shown me an elegant dagger into the blade of which the syllables Alki had been burnt.

He explained that his friend, a young actor whom he had left in Stuttgart, possessed a similar weapon, the blade of which bore the syllables Biades. It seemed that Karl, even without the symbolic help of the daggers, had again found the complement of his own 'Alkibiadesian' individuality, this

time in the young booby Hornstein, and it is very probable that the two, whilst in Sion, had imagined they were acting an 'Alkibiadesian' scene before Socrates. His comedy showed me that his artistic talent was fortunately far better than his society manners. To this day I regret that this decidedly difficult play has never been produced.

Hornstein now behaved properly and desired to go to Lausanne via Vevey. We did part of the journey together on foot, and his quaint appearance with his knapsack on his back was most amusing, continued my journey alone from Berne to Lucerne, taking the shortest possible route to Selisberg on the Lake of Lucerne, where my wife was staying for a sour-milk cure.

The symptoms of heart disease, which I had already noticed some time previously, had increased, and this place had been recommended to her as specially invigorating and beneficial. With great patience I endured several weeks of life at a Swiss pension, but my wife, who had quite adapted herself to the ways of the house and seemed very comfortable, looked upon me as a disturbing element.

I found this a great trial, although the beautiful air and my daily excursions into the mountains did me a great deal of good. I even went so far as to choose a very wild spot, where, in imagination, I ordered a little house to be built in which I should be able to work in absolute peace.

Towards the end of July we went back to Zurich. I returned to my Walkure and finished the first act in the month of August. I was terribly depressed by my worries just at this time, and as it was more than ever necessary for me to have absolute quiet for my work, I at once agreed to my wife's departure, when she told me of her intended visit to her relations and friends in Dresden and Zwickau. She left me at the beginning of September, and wrote to me about her stay in Weimar, where the Princess Wittgenstein had received her with the greatest hospitality at Altenburg Castle. There she met Rockel's wife, who was being cared for in the most self-sacrificing way by her husband's brother. It showed a spirited and original trait in Minna's character that she decided to visit Rockel in his prison at Waldheim, solely that she might give his wife news of him, although she disliked the man intensely.

She told me of this visit, saying sarcastically that Rockel looked quite happy and bright, and that life in prison did not seem to suit him badly.

Meanwhile I plunged with renewed zeal into my work, and had finished a fair copy of the Rheingold score by the 26th of September. In the peaceful quietness of my house at this time I first came across a book which was destined to be of great importance to me. This was Arthur Schopenhauer's Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung. Herwegh recommended this work to me, and told me that strangely enough it had only been recently discovered, although it had been published over thirty years. In a pamphlet on this subject a certain Herr Frauenstadt had drawn the attention of the public to the book, to which I immediately felt attracted, and I at once began to study it. For a long time I had wanted to understand the real value of philosophy. My conversations with Lehrs in Paris in my very young days had awakened my longing for this branch of knowledge, upon which I had first launched when I attended the lectures of several Leipzig professors and in later years by reading Schelling and Hegel. I seemed to understand the reason of their failure to satisfy me from the writings of Feuerbach, which I studied at the same time. What fascinated me so enormously about Schopenhauer's work was not only its extraordinary fate, but the clearness and manly precision with which the most difficult metaphysical problems were treated from the very beginning.

I had been greatly drawn towards the work on learning the opinion of an English critic, who candidly confessed that he respected German philosophy because of its complete incomprehensibility, as instanced by Hegel's doctrines, until the study of Schopenhauer had made it clear to him that Hegel's lack of lucidity was due not so much to his own incapacity as to the intentionally bombastic style in which this philosopher had clothed his problems. Like every man who is passionately thrilled with life, I too sought first for the conclusions of Schopenhauer's system. With its aesthetic side I was perfectly content, and was especially astonished at his noble conception of music. But, on the other hand, the final summing-up regarding morals alarmed me, as, indeed, it

would have startled any one in my mood; for here the annihilation of the will and complete abnegation are represented as the sole true and final deliverance from those bonds of individual limitation in estimating and facing the world, which are now clearly felt for the first time. For those who hoped to find some philosophical justification for political and social agitation on behalf of so-called 'individual freedom' there was certainly no support to be found here, where all that was demanded was absolute renunciation of all such methods of satisfying the claims of personality. At first I naturally found his ideas by no means palatable, and felt I could not readily abandon that so-called 'cheerful' Greek aspect of the world, with which I had looked out upon life in my Kunstwerk der Zukunft. As a matter of fact, it was Herwegh who at last, by a well-timed explanation, brought me to a calmer frame of mind about my own sensitive feelings. It is from this perception of the nullity of the visible world —so he said—that all tragedy is derived, and such a perception must necessarily have dwelt as an intuition in every great poet, and even in every great man. On looking afresh into my Nibelungen poem I recognised with surprise that the very things that now so embarrassed me theoretically had long been familiar to me in my own poetical conception. Now at last I could understand my Wotan, and I returned with chastened mind to the renewed study of Schopenhauer's book. I had learned to recognise that my first essential task was to understand the first part, namely, the exposition and enlarging of Kant's doctrine of the ideality of that world which has hitherto seemed to us so solidly founded in time and space, and I believed I had taken the first step towards such an understanding by recognising its enormous difficulty. For many years afterwards that book never left me, and by the summer of the following year I had already studied the whole of it for the fourth time. The effect thus gradually wrought upon me was extraordinary, and certainly exerted a decisive influence on the whole course of my life. In forming my judgment upon all those matters which I had hitherto acquired solely through the senses, I had gained pretty much the same power as I had formerly won in music—after abandoning the teaching of my old master Weinlich—by an exhaustive study of counterpoint. If, therefore, in later years I again expressed opinions in my casual writings on matters pertaining to that art which so particularly interested me, it is certain that traces of what I learned from my study of Schopenhauer's philosophy were clearly perceptible.

Just then I was prompted to send the venerated philosopher a copy of my Nibelungen poem. To its title I merely added by hand the words, 'With Reverence,' but without writing a single word to Schopenhauer himself.

This I did partly from a feeling of great shyness in addressing him, and partly because I felt that if the perusal of my poem did not enlighten Schopenhauer about the man with whom he was dealing, a letter from me, no matter how explicit, would not help him much. I also renounced by this means the vain wish to be honoured by an autograph letter from his hand. I learned later, however, from Karl Ritter, and also from Dr. Wille, both of whom visited Schopenhauer in Frankfort, that he spoke impressively and favourably of my poetry. In addition to these studies, I continued writing the music to the Walkure. I was living in great retirement at this time, my sole relaxation being to take long walks in the neighbourhood, and, as usual with me when hard at work at my music, I felt the longing to express myself in poetry. This must have been partly due to the serious mood created by Schopenhauer, which was trying to find ecstatic expression. It was some such mood that inspired the conception of a Tristan und Isolde.

Karl Ritter had just laid before me a sketch for the dramatic treatment of this subject (with which I was thoroughly acquainted through my Dresden studies), and had thereby drawn my attention to the material for this poem. I had already expressed my views to my young friend about the faultiness of his sketch. He had, in fact, made a point of giving prominence to the lighter phases of the romance, whereas it was its all-pervading tragedy that impressed me so deeply that I felt convinced it should stand out in bold relief, regardless of minor details. On my return from one of my walks I jotted down the incidents of the three acts in a concise form, with the intention of working them out more elaborately later on. In the last act I introduced an episode, which, however, I did not develop

eventually, namely, the visit to Tristan's deathbed by Parsifal during his search for the Holy Grail. The picture of Tristan languishing, yet unable to die of his wound, identified itself in my mind with Amfortas in the Romance of the Grail.

For the moment I forced myself to leave this poem on one side, and to allow nothing to interrupt my great musical work. Meanwhile, through the help of friends, I succeeded in bringing about a satisfactory change in my financial position. My prospects with regard to the German theatres also seemed brighter. Minna had been in Berlin, and through the influence of our old friend, Alwine Frommann, had had an interview with Herr von Hulsen, the manager of the court theatre. After losing two years in fruitless efforts, I at last felt more certain of seeing Tannhauser produced there without further obstacle, as it had become so popular with all the theatres that its failure in Berlin could not injure its reputation; it could only reflect disadvantageously on the Berlin management.

In the beginning of November Minna returned from her journey, and acting on the news she gave me about the production of Tannhauser in Berlin, I allowed matters to take their course, a decision which afterwards caused me great annoyance, as the rendering of my work was simply wretched. I got some compensation, however, in the royalties, which were an important and continuous source of income to me.

The Zurich Musical Society now again enlisted my interest for their winter concerts. I promised to conduct, but only on condition that they would give serious consideration to improving the orchestra. I had already twice proposed the formation of a decent orchestra, and I now sent in a third plan to the committee, in which I described in detail how they might achieve this object at a comparatively slight outlay by cooperation with the theatre. I told them that this winter would be the last time that I should interest myself in their concerts unless they entertained this very reasonable proposition. Apart from this work, I took in hand a quartette society, made up of the soloists of the orchestra, who were anxious to study the right interpretation of the various quartettes I had recommended.

It was a great pleasure to me to see how soon the public patronised the efforts of these artists, who, by the way, thus added a little extra to their incomes for a considerable time. As far as their artistic achievements went, the work was rather slow; the mere fact of their being able to play their respective instruments well did not make them at once understand the art of playing together, for which so much more is needed than mere dynamic proportions and accents, attainable only by the individual development of a higher artistic taste in the treatment of the instrument by its exponent.

I was too ambitious about them, and actually taught them Beethoven's Quartette in C sharp minor, which meant endless trouble and rehearsing. I wrote some analytical annotations for the better appreciation of this extraordinary work, and had them printed on the programme. Whether I made any impression on the audience, or whether they liked the performance, I was never able to find out. When I say that I completed the sketch of the whole of the music to the Walkure by the 30th of December of that year, it will suffice to prove my strenuous and active life at that time, as well as to show that I did not allow any outside distraction to disturb my rigorous plan of work.

In January, 1855, I began the instrumentation of the Walkure, but I was compelled to interrupt it, owing to a promise I made to some of my friends to give them a chance of hearing the overture to Faust, which I had written in Paris fifteen years before. I had another look at this composition, which had been the means of so important a change in my musical ideas. Liszt had produced the work in Weimar a little while before, and had written to me in very favourable terms about it, at the same time expressing his wish that I should rewrite more elaborately some parts that were only faintly indicated. So I immediately set to work to rewrite the overture, conscientiously adopting my clear friend's delicate suggestions, and I finished it as it was afterwards published by Hartel. I taught our orchestra this overture, and did not think the performance at all bad. My wife, however, did not like it; she said it seemed to her 'as if nothing good could be made out of it,' and she begged me not to have it produced in London when I went there that year. At this time I had an extraordinary

application, such as I have never received again. In January the London Philharmonic Society wrote asking me if I would be willing to conduct their concerts for the season. I did not answer immediately, as I wanted to obtain some particulars first, and was very much surprised one day to receive a visit from a certain Mr. Anderson, a member of the committee of the celebrated society, who had come to Zurich on purpose to ensure my acceptance.

I was expected to go to London for four months to give eight concerts for the Philharmonic Society, for which I was to receive in all L200. I did not quite know what to do, as, from a business point of view, it was of no advantage to me, and, as far as the conducting went, it was not much in my line, unless I could rely on at least a few high-class artistic productions.

One thing only struck me as favourable, and that was the prospect of again handling a large and excellent orchestra, after having been denied one for so long, while the fact that I had attracted the attention of that remote world of music fascinated me exceedingly. I felt as if fate were calling me, and at last I accepted the invitation of this simple and amiable-looking Englishman, Mr. Anderson, who, fully satisfied with the result of his mission, immediately left for England wrapped in a big fur coat, whose real owner I only got to know later on. Before following him to England, I had to free myself from a calamity which I had brought upon myself through being too kind-hearted. The managing director of the Zurich theatre for that year, an obtrusive and over-zealous person, had at last made me accede to his wish to produce Tannhauser, on the plea that as this work was now performed at every opera house, it would be a very bad thing for the Zurich theatre if it were the only one to be deprived of the privilege, merely because I happened to live in the town. Besides this, my wife interfered in the matter, and the singers who played Tannhauser and Wolfram at once put themselves under her wing. She really succeeded, too, in working on my humanitarian feelings with regard to one of her proteges, a poor tenor who had been badly bullied by the conductor till then. I took these people through their parts a few times, and in consequence found myself obliged to attend the stage rehearsals to superintend their performances. What it all came to in the end was that I was driven to interfere again and again, until I found myself at the conductor's desk, and eventually conducted the first performance myself. I have a particularly vivid recollection of the singer who played Elizabeth on that occasion. She had originally taken soubrette parts, and went through her role in white kid gloves, dangling a fan. This time I had really had enough of such concessions, and when at the close the audience called me before the curtain, I stood there and told my friends with great frankness that this was the last time they would get me to do anything of the sort. I advised them in future to look to the state of their theatre, as they had just had a most convincing proof of its faulty construction—at which they were all much astonished. I made a similar announcement to the 'Musikgesellschaft,' where I also conducted once more—really for the last time—before my departure. Unfortunately, they put down my protests to my sense of humour, and were not in the least spurred to exert themselves, with the result that I had to be very stern and almost rude the following winter, to deter them, once and for all, from making further demands upon me. I thus left my former patrons in Zurich somewhat nonplussed when I started for London on 26th February.

I travelled through Paris and spent some days there, during which time I saw only Kietz and his friend Lindemann (whom he regarded as a quack doctor). Arriving in London on 2nd March I first went to see Ferdinand Prager. In his youth he had been a friend of the Rockel brothers, who had given me a very favourable account of him. He proved to be an unusually good-natured fellow, though of an excitability insufficiently balanced by his standard of culture. After spending the first night at his home, I installed myself the following day with his help in a house in Portland Terrace, in the neighbourhood of Regent's Park, of which I had agreeable recollections from former visits. I promised myself a pleasant stay there in the coming spring, if only on account of its close proximity to that part of the park where beautiful copper beeches over-shadowed the path. But though I spent four months in London, it seemed to me that spring never came, the foggy climate so overclouded all the impressions I received. Prager was only too eager to escort me when I went to pay the customary

visits, including one to Costa. I was thus introduced to the director of the Italian Opera, who was at the same time the real leader of music in London; for he was also director of the Sacred-Music Society, which gave almost regular weekly performances of Handel and Mendelssohn.

Prager also took me to see his friend Sainton, the leader of the London orchestra. After giving me a very hearty reception he told me the remarkable history of my invitation to London. Sainton, a southern Frenchman from Toulouse, of naive and fiery temperament, was living with a full-blooded German musician from Hamburg, named Luders, the son of a bandsman, of a brusque but friendly disposition. I was much affected when I heard, later on, of the incident which had made these two men inseparable friends. Sainton had been making a concert tour by way of St. Petersburg, and found himself stranded at Helsingfors in Finland, unable to get any further, pursued as he was by the demon of ill-luck. At this moment the curious figure of the modest Hamburg bandsman's son had accosted him on the staircase of the hotel, asking whether he would be inclined to accept his offer of friendship and take half of his available cash, as he (Luders) had of course noticed the awkwardness of the other's position. From that moment the two became inseparable friends, made concert tours in Sweden and Denmark, found their way back in the strangest fashion to Havre, Paris, and Toulouse, by way of Hamburg, and finally settled down in London—Sainton to take an important post in the orchestra, while Luders got along as best he could by the drudgery of giving lessons. Now I found them living together in a pretty house like a married couple, each tenderly concerned for his friend's welfare. Luders had read my essays on art, and my Oper und Drama in particular moved him to exclaim, 'Donnerwetter, there's something in that!' Sainton pricked up his ears at this, and when the conductor of the Philharmonic concerts (the great Mr. Costa himself), for some unknown reason, quarrelled with the society before the season began and refused to conduct their concerts any longer, Sainton, to whom Mr. Anderson, the treasurer, had gone for advice in this awkward predicament, recommended them, at Luders' instigation, to engage me. I now heard that they had not acted upon this suggestion at once. Only when Sainton happened to remark casually that he had seen me conduct in Dresden did Mr. Anderson decide to make the journey to Zurich to see me (in the fur coat lent by Sainton for the purpose), as a result of which visit I was now here. I soon discovered, too, that Sainton had in this case acted with the rashness characteristic of his nation. It had never occurred to Costa that he would be taken seriously in his statement to the Philharmonic Society, and he was thoroughly disgusted at my appointment. As he was at the head of the same orchestra which was at my disposal for the Philharmonic concerts, he was able to foster an attitude of hostility to the undertakings for which I was responsible, and even my friend Sainton had to suffer from his animosity without actually realising the source of the annoyance.

As time went on I saw this more plainly, while there was abundant material for unpleasantness of every description in other quarters. In the first place Mr. Davison, the musical critic of the Times, adopted a most hostile attitude, and it was from this that I first realised, clearly and definitely, the effect of my essay entitled 'Judaism in Music.' Prager had further informed me that Davison's extremely powerful position on the Times had accustomed him to expect every one who came to England on business connected with music to propitiate him by all sorts of delicate attentions. Jenny Lind was one whose submission to these pretensions did much to ensure her popular success; whereas Sontag considered that her rank as Countess Rossi elevated her above such considerations. As I had been completely absorbed in the delight of handling a good, full orchestra, with which I hoped to give some fine performances, it was a great blow to learn that I had no control whatever over the number of rehearsals I thought necessary for the concerts. For each concert, which included two symphonies and several minor pieces as well, the society's economical arrangements allowed me only one rehearsal. Still I went on hoping that the impression produced by the performances I conducted might even here justify the demand for a special effort. It proved absolutely impossible, however, to depart in any way from the beaten track, and, realising this, I at once felt that the fulfilment of the task I had undertaken was a terrible burden. At the first concert we played Beethoven's Eroica, and my

success as a conductor seemed so marked that the committee of the society were evidently prepared to make a special effort for the second. They demanded selections from my own compositions as well as Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and conceded me two rehearsals as an exceptional favour. This concert went off quite passably. I had drawn up an explanatory programme for my Lohengrin Overture, but the words 'Holy Grail' and 'God' were struck out with great solemnity, as that sort of thing was not allowed at secular concerts. I had to content myself with the chorus from the Italian Opera for the symphony, besides putting up with a baritone whose English phlegm and Italian training drove me to despair at the rehearsal. All I understood of the English version of the text was, 'Hail thee joy' for Freudeschoner Gotterfunken. The Philharmonic Society appeared to have staked everything on the success of this concert, which, in fact, left nothing to be desired. They were accordingly horrified when the Times reporter fell on this performance, too, with furious contempt and disparagement. They appealed to Prager to persuade me to offer Mr. Davison some attentions, or at least to agree to meet that gentleman and be properly introduced to him at a banquet to be arranged by Mr. Anderson. But Prager now knew me well enough to dash their hopes of obtaining any concession of that sort from me. The banquet fell through, and, as I saw later, the society began from that time forward to regret my appointment, realising that they had an entirely intractable and pig-headed person to deal with.

As the Easter holidays began after the second concert, thereby involving a long pause, I asked my friend's advice as to whether it would not be more sensible to give up the whole thing—this conductorship of the Philharmonic concerts which I had so soon discovered to be a foolish and fruitless undertaking—and go quietly back to Zurich. Prager assured me that the execution of this resolve would in no wise be regarded as a reflection on the situation, but simply as a deplorable piece of rudeness on my part, and that the principal sufferers would be my friends. This decided me, and I stayed—without, it is true, any hope of giving a fresh impetus to musical life in London. The only stimulating incident occurred on the occasion of the seventh concert, which was the evening chosen by the Queen for her annual visit to these functions. She expressed a wish through her husband, Prince Albert, to hear the Tannhauser Overture. The presence of the court certainly lent a pleasing air of ceremony to the evening, and I had, too, the pleasure of a fairly animated conversation with Queen Victoria and her Consort in response to their command. The question arose of putting my operas on the stage, and Prince Albert objected that Italian singers would never be able to interpret my music. I was amused when the Queen met this objection by saying that, after all, a great many Italian singers were really Germans. All this made a good impression and, it was obvious, served as a demonstration in my favour, without, however, influencing the real situation to any appreciable extent. The leading papers still announced, as before, that every concert I conducted was a fiasco. Ferdinand Hiller actually thought himself justified in proclaiming, for the consolation of his friends, that my day in London was coming to an end, and that my banishment was practically a certainty. This was on the occasion of the Rhenish Musical Festival, which was held at that time. As a set-off against this I reaped great satisfaction from a scene which took place at the close of the eighth and last concert which I conducted—one of those strange scenes which now and again result from the long-suppressed emotion of those concerned. The members of the orchestra had at once realised, after my successes, the advisability of avoiding any expression of sympathy with me if they wished to keep in good odour with their real though unacknowledged chief, Mr. Costa, and save themselves from a possible speedy dismissal at his hands. This was the explanation given me when the signs of appreciation, which I had become accustomed to receive from the players in the course of our work together, suddenly ceased. Now, however, at the end of the series their suppressed feelings burst forth, and they crowded round me on all sides with deafening cheers, while the audience, who usually left the hall noisily before the end, likewise formed up in enthusiastic groups and surrounded me, cheering warmly and pressing my hand. Thus both players and listeners combined to make my farewell a scene of cordiality which could hardly be surpassed.

But it was the personal relations which grew out of my stay in London that provided the strangest aspect of my life there.

Immediately after my arrival, Karl Klindworth, a young pupil of Liszt, who had been recommended to me as particularly gifted, came to see me. He became a faithful and intimate friend, not only during my stay in London, but ever after. Young as he was, the short time he had spent in London had sufficed to give him an opinion of English musical life, the justice of which I was soon compelled to admit, terrible though it was. Incapable of adapting himself to the curiously organised English musical cliques, he at once lost all reasonable prospect or hope of meeting with the recognition due to his talent. He resigned himself to making his way through the dreary wastes of English musical life solely by giving lessons like a day-labourer, being too proud to pay the smallest attentions to the ruling critics, who had fallen on him immediately as a pupil of Liszt. He was really an excellent musician, and in addition a distinguished pianist. He immediately approached me with the request to be allowed to make a pianoforte arrangement of the score of Rheingold, for the use only of virtuosi of the first rank. Unfortunately, he was overtaken by a tedious illness, which robbed me for a long time of the desired intercourse with him.

Although Prager and his wife stood by me with great constancy, my real centre of intimacy was the original Sainton-Luders' household. I had a standing invitation to dine with them, and I found occasion, with few exceptions, to take my meals with these friends, whose devotion surpassed that of all the others. It was here that I generally found relaxation from the unpleasantness of my business relations in London. Prager was often present, and we frequently took an evening stroll through the foggy streets. On such occasions Ludors would fortify us against the inclemency of the London climate by an excellent punch which he could prepare under any conditions. Only once did we get separated, and that was in the terrific crowd that accompanied the Emperor Napoleon from St. James's Palace to Covent Garden Theatre one evening. He had come over to London with his Consort, on a visit to Queen Victoria, during the critical stage of the Crimean War, and the Londoners gaped at him as he passed no less greedily than other nations are apt to do under similar circumstances. It so befell that I was taken for a pushing sightseer, and proportionately punished by blows in the ribs when I was crossing the road to try and get into Regent Street from the Haymarket. This caused me much amusement, on account of the obvious misunderstanding.

The grave annoyances which arose, partly from the peculiarly momentous quarrel between Sainton and Mr. Anderson (instigated by Costa), and which deprived me of every possibility of obtaining any influence over the society, were productive, on the other hand, of some amusing experiences. Anderson had, it seemed, succeeded in elevating himself to the post of conductor of the Queen's band, through the influence of the Queen's private coachman. As he possessed absolutely no knowledge of music, the annual court concert which he had to conduct became a very feast of absurdity to the unruly Sainton, and I heard some very funny stories about it. Another thing brought to light in the course of these imbroglios was that Mrs. Anderson, whom I had christened Charlemagne on account of her great corpulency, had appropriated to herself, among other things, the office and salary of a court trumpeter. I soon arrived at the conviction, from these and other similar reports, that my lively friend would be beaten by this snug little clique in the war of disclosures, and was able subsequently to see the decision go against him at the point when either he or Anderson had to give way. This confirmed my idea that in this free country of England, things were managed in much the same way as elsewhere.

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